

Right

Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.
Romans 13:13

There is a right way to live and a wrong way to live. We all know that. We all have convictions that drive us to determine what is right and what is wrong. Our sinful nature causes us to believe that we get to determine what is right and what is wrong. That is autonomy, rooted in our pride. It is what caused Adam and Eve to choose to eat the fruit that brought death and sin into the world. It is that pride, sin, and death that has shaped this present evil age. It is what we need to work hard not to be conformed to. As followers of Jesus, we must seek to live in what God has determined is right. Living according to God's definition of right is the real fight of this age. Sadly, most times we do not win the battle. We give in to sin. We may do this out of ignorance, but many times it is with full knowledge that what we are doing is not right. We put ourselves into situations that draw us in. Consider some of your willful sins. That disease of self really does run deep in each of us. It is a daily battle to put that disease to death. We must come to the point in our lives where we are truly exchanging our lives of sin for Jesus' life of righteousness. We must seek to be slaves of righteousness, allowing righteousness to be our master (Romans 6:19), so that we are repulsed by our sin, realizing that our hatred of sin does not even begin to scratch the surface of the depth of the hatred God has for it. There is nothing good about sin. Nothing. Sin hurts you. It hurts me. It hurts the body of Christ. It negatively impacts the gospel. It caused the crucifixion of Christ. My sin. Your sin. Children of light cannot and must not embrace sin. We must be repulsed by it, so that we can live in the light of freedom from sin. Are you living according to God's definition of right?

Saturday, November 21, 2020**Might**

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.
Romans 13:14

Put on Jesus. We cannot do this alone—nor does God expect us to!! If we are going to live in the light, we must focus our sight, get in the fight, do what is right, all in his might!! Paul makes this statement to the church in Philippi: *"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."* Philippians 2:12-13 Of this passage, Spurgeon said, *"The Christian should work as if all depended upon him, and pray as if it all depended upon God."* We cannot live the life that we are called to live apart from God. It is not possible. It is his power and his might within us that allows us to live in the light. This is indeed good news. It is the power of the Holy Spirit in our life. We need a Savior each minute of the day. Our battle proves that we need a Savior. It proves that the gospel is not just for our initial salvation. The gospel is the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16). The gospel is the good news that Jesus died so that we can live abundant lives. Abundant lives are not lives that are seeking comfort in this present evil age, as the prosperity gospel wrongly declares. These genuine abundant lives are lives that live sacrificially (12:1), seeking the transformational living of the metamorphosis of the new life of Jesus! An abundant life is a redeemed life, sacrificially lived in obedience to the Loving God. How are you living in the might of Jesus? What can you do to love even more in his power today?



Pastor Chuck Cervenka

**Living in the Light**

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the day time, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Romans 13:11-14

Living in the Light requires great focus.

Each week we look a little more deeply into the message that was preached so that you can dive in and learn how to study the Bible for yourself. Consider using this as a small group or family study guide.

Monday, November 16, 2020

Light

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

Please read 1 John 1:5-10 today. As we end our study of chapters 12-13 of Romans, we see that Paul closes the thoughts that began in 12:1 with a look at walking in the daytime—in the light. It is a theme that we find often in Scripture. The contrast between light and darkness, daytime and nighttime, is a metaphor for holiness and wickedness. To live in a holy way is to live in the light or in the daytime. To live in sin and wickedness is to live in the dark or in the nighttime. In 1 Thessalonians 5:5, Paul makes it clear that genuine followers of Jesus are children of the day—children of light. In his conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus states that men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. Evil needs the cover of darkness to hide but there is a light that the darkness cannot overcome (John 1:5). The salvation that comes through the gospel of Jesus is a salvation that allows us to come into the light and to live in the light—to walk in the light. It is in the light of Jesus that we dance in our forgiveness and our purity before an almighty God. No longer must we hide in shame—we have been forgiven. We are not pure because of anything we have done, but because of what Jesus has done for us. As we walk in the light—as he is in the light—we walk with great company. We walk with the forever family of God in a beautiful fellowship of love that allows the world to see that we have been with Jesus and it causes them to want to walk in the light as well! So, today, how can you walk in the light?

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Night

The night is far gone; the day is at hand.

Romans 13:12a

Please read Romans 12 and 13 today. In the verse we are focusing on, Paul says that the night is far gone, meaning that it is almost dawn. Here we see another metaphor for night and day. The night being this present evil age (Galatians 1:4), and the day being the coming day of the Lord! In this metaphor, we are living in the nighttime, but that nighttime is coming to an end. In 1 Thessalonians 5:5, Paul says, “We are not of the night or of the darkness.” Yet we live in this age of darkness, but Jesus has rescued us from this present evil age. As we seek to live lives that have been transformed by the renewing of our lives, we need to see the darkness that we live in and not be conformed to that darkness—not let ourselves be conformed by that darkness. We must seek to live out the light of day in this time of darkness. Consider the darkness of this present evil age. How does that darkness influence you? Paul is helping us understand that the darkness is coming to an end. The night is almost over. That means we are in a time of dawning. Yet the darkness still calls to us. We must seek to live in the light of the truth of God—not in the shadows. How can knowing that the night is almost at a close cause you to live differently today?

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Sight

Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. Romans 13:11

The way that we can live differently—transformed living—is by living with a future sight! Paul starts these chapters with having us look back—in view of God’s mercy—the salvation that comes into our lives because of the mercy and grace of God. It is as we remember what we have been saved from that we are moved to stop being conformed to the pattern of this world and instead choose to be transformed by the renewing of our souls. But also, it is the “not yet” aspect of our salvation!! Yes, we have been set free from the penalty of sin, and yes, we are living free from the power of sin, but we also must focus our sight on the fact that we will, one day, be free from the presence of sin. We will be in the presence of the Lord forever. We are citizens of Heaven and we await a Savior from there (Philippians 3:20). Hallelujah!! It is time to wake up. We need to be early risers. We see what is coming. We live in the light because that is where our Savior is and we follow him—we walk with him! Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The consummation of our faith is that we will be with Jesus forever. We will be glorified and have redeemed bodies that are like our savior’s body (Philippians 3:21). It is close. It is! Oh, I know it can seem so far off, but it is not!! It is closer than you think. If you are a flower of Jesus, you will be with him soon and forever. The real beauty of this truth is that God has given you the Holy Spirit so that you can begin to live in that light right now—in this present darkness. Teach yourself to look upward! Cast your gaze toward heaven. Fix your sight on Jesus—he is coming—just as he said. How can you live in the light today in new ways keeping your eyes fixed toward heaven (Colossians 3:1-2)?

Thursday, November 19, 2020

Fight

The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Romans 13:12

Living transformed lives that are focused on living in the light is not easy. It is hard. It requires that we fight. In the song by DC Talk entitled *In the Light*, these lyrics give a glimpse into the struggle: *The disease of self runs through my blood, It's a cancer fatal to my soul, Every attempt on my behalf has failed, To bring this sickness under control. Tell me, what's going on inside of me? I despise my own behavior, This only serves to confirm my suspicions, That I'm still a man in need of a Savior. We need a Savior if we are to walk in the light. The fight that is required is more than we can stand alone. We will look at that more on Saturday, but here it is important to see that there is a fight, and the fight is real. The attack is relentless and overwhelming, and it is far easier to give in than it is to fight. Yet we must fight! But we must fight with the armor of light. We must be prepared for battle. In 1 Thessalonians 5:8, Paul says, “But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.” Armor up! The battle is real. We cannot go into this battle nonchalantly. Imagine a soldier going into battle without the proper uniform. Yet fighting can cause us to get weary. We can drop our sword when it gets too heavy and we can give in to sin. That is when we need to remember that we do not fight alone. Paul says, “us.” We are in this as a family of followers. We fight together. When we see one of our brothers or sisters going down, we need to run toward them and help them stand. We do not need to join in the attack against them. The battle is hard enough without having to dodge “friendly fire.” So, how are you standing up in the fight against darkness in your life? Who do you need to be going to help? Is there anyone that you may have been attacking with friendly fire?*