

Ephesians Chapter 5
Week 5, v. 8-10

Eph 5:8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light

Have you ever been in a completely darkened room – no light shining at all? How well can you see in a darkened environment?

I can walk from the darkness into a lighted room but when I walk out again I am in the darkness. However, those things that are obscure in the dark become clearly defined when a light is turned on.

The beginning of verse 8 says we were *formerly* darkness, meaning *in the past*.

This is a description of who we once were. As God's child, I am never in the dark because I am light itself. My heart is changed from darkness to light permanently. There is no switch to be turned off and on.

Jesus said these words to Paul at his conversion:

Ac 26:16-18 'But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; delivering you from the [Jewish] people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes *so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God*, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

Before we are saved, we are unable to see God for Who He truly is. We are unable to see sin for what it truly is. As His child, we are able to focus clearly on Who He is and what He has done. When we see God with the right perspective, sin does not control us; darkness is not part of our life.

Joh 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."

2Co 4:6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

If I were to tell you to close your eyes, hand you something, and have you tell me what you are holding, what would you have to do to figure it out? You would have to touch it and feel it to try to get a clear picture of what you have

in your hands. When we were in the dark, we played with sin. We were unable to see our actions clearly for what they truly were.

[We were] Not only dark, but darkness itself; exceeding blind, dark, and ignorant, respecting spiritual things; (John Gill's Exposition of the Bible)

Light helps us to see clearly. It is good for us to remember that we were once living in the dark and practicing sin. We had hearts that were dark. We had no understanding of spiritual things. As children of God, the darkness in our lives is past, we no longer have fellowship with sin. We are enlightened by the work of the Holy Spirit. We belong to the One who is Light. Therefore, we should be light to those around us, reflecting our Father.

Mt 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Php 2:15 that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

There is a stark contrast between darkness and light. They are direct opposites. Look at some of the synonyms of these words:

Darkness

dimness as opposed to
shadows as opposed to
obscurity as opposed to

Light

brightness
illumination
clarity

When comparing these words, which environment is more secure? Which environment would you choose? How often do we thank God for lifting the darkness from our lives, for giving us the light of the gospel, for giving us His Holy Spirit to help us understand scripture, for the hope and the promise of a future spent in His presence?

Eph 2:12 [remember] that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Eph 4:18

Look at the description of our future residence displaying the full light of God:

Re 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp [is] the Lamb.

Re 22:5 And there shall no longer be [any] night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever.

Last week, we looked at the word 'partakers' in Eph 5:7. It says that we are not to be *partakers* with those who are in darkness. Eph 3:6 describes God's children as "fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and *fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel*". We cannot be partakers of the gospel *and* partakers of darkness.

Because we *are* children of the Light, we need to follow the command at the end of Eph 5:8 and *walk* as children of light and hate darkness.

What happens when you are outside in the evening and turn a light on? It seems all of a sudden every flying insect is attracted to that light. Is your light shining to attract others towards God?

According to the next two verses, what will our life produce when we are walking in the light?

Eph 5:9-10 (for the fruit of the light [consists] in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

The "fruit" or *result* of walking in the light is:

goodness <agathosune> virtue or beneficence; anything good that is of virtue or benefit (beneficence – especially relating to the church); something that has worth, that promotes good

Do my thoughts, words and actions have any spiritual benefit to myself or others, do they have worth, and do they promote the things that are good?

righteousness <dikaiosune> equity of Christian character or actions; justification; always behaving according to what is moral, decent, right and honest

Do my thoughts, words and actions say that I am a Christian? Am I behaving in a way that is moral, decent, right and honest?

truth <aletheia> truth, verity. the thing that corresponds to fact or reality; honesty and sincerity; faithfulness, accuracy; veracity – authenticity

Do my thoughts, words and actions point to the Truth? Am I faithful, honest and sincere in my display as God's child?

Ga 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

In Adam Clarke's Commentary, Eph 5:9 is explained this way:

"The fruit of the light, i.e. of the Gospel, is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth. Goodness, agaywsunh, in the principle and disposition; righteousness, dikaiosunh, the exercise of that goodness in the whole conduct of life; truth, alhyeia, the director of that principle, and its exercise, to the glorification of God and the good of mankind."

Summed up we could say

- Goodness is your character
- Righteousness is the action resulting from your character
- Truth is what directs your character (the Holy Spirit)

The fruit of the light is in direct contrast with the unfruitfulness of the darkness. We will take more time to look at this next week in Eph 5:11.

Now we **were** that which is contrary to His character, we **were** darkness; not only in the dark, but darkness in our nature, the opposite of God who is light. Not one ray of that which He is was found in our will, our desires, our understanding. We were morally destitute of it... We **are now** partakers of the divine nature, we have the same desires, we know what it is that He loves, and we love what He loves, we enjoy that which He enjoys, we **are** light (poor and weak indeed, yet such by nature) in the Lord — looked at as in Christ. They are the fruits of light that are developed in the Christian; he is to avoid all association with the unfruitful works of darkness. (John Darby's Synopsis)

2Th 1:11 To this end also we pray for you always that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power;

1Jo 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Eph 5:10 continues with the description of what it means to walk in the light:

"trying to learn what is pleasing (KJV – acceptable) to the Lord".

The words trying to learn are translated "proving" or "testing". <dokimazo> to test (literally or figuratively); by implication, to approve:--allow, discern, examine, X like, (ap-)prove, try.

What does it mean to prove or test something?

To prove:

- to establish the truth of something by providing evidence or argument
- to demonstrate competence, to show yourself to be competent and worthy
- to test something to determine its worth
- to confirm, to verify, to substantiate

To test:

- to examine or evaluate
- to investigate

Think of the process you go through to learn something. It takes time, desire, practice, training, and understanding. We learn about God by spending time in the Word, by the teaching of His Word that we receive, by following others' example, by setting our mind on the things of God, by being in His presence, by the understanding given to us by His Spirit.

Ro 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Php 1:9-10 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

1Th 5:21 But examine everything [carefully]; hold fast to that which is good;

We prove or test something for accuracy according to God's word, not according to what we think. In other words, instead of what do you think or what do I think, the question that needs to be asked is, what does God's word say?

What things are pleasing and acceptable to God?

Ps 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

Ro 14:17-18 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this [way] serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

Pr 21:3 To do righteousness and justice Is desired by the LORD rather than sacrifice.

1Ti 2:1-3 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties [and] prayers, petitions [and] thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in

authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

1Ti 5:4 but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. (worship towards God, respect and support towards parents)

Heb 12:28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

1Pe 2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer [for it] you patiently endure it, this [finds] favor with God.

What's the bottom line for this section of scripture?

- We are children of light;
- the light in our life will present itself as goodness, righteousness and truth
- as we put forth the effort to learn what is pleasing to God.

1Pe 1:7 that the proof of your faith, [being] more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

The one point of all moral investigation is, *does it please God?* Vincent's Word Studies on 'acceptable'.

Application Questions

This week: Read Ephesians 5. Consider the questions below and use the "Apply It" bookmark and your journal notes to guide you. Ask God to show you His will for your personal application. You may want to record additional insights in your journal. We will use these questions as a quick review next week. Review **memory** verses **Eph 5:1-2** in the NAS version and if you are trying the memory challenge, review Eph 5:15-16 and add **Eph 5:17** this week.

Have you accepted God's gift to change your heart from darkness to light? If not, what is keeping you from accepting His offer of salvation? If your answer is yes, what specific changes in your life have you seen in how you think, how you act and what you say?

Read Phil 2:15. Are you light to those around you? Is it clear to others Who you love, Who you serve, Who you are living for? How can you shine for God today?

Look up Gal 5:22. What opportunities can you take to show God's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and faithfulness to someone else?

Think about the time you spend learning about God. What does this say about your desire to know Him? Who comes first – you and all the 'things' that need to be done, or God and His instruction to get to know Him? Are there adjustments that need to be made? (Phil 1:9-10, Ro 12:2, 1 Th 5:21)

Read 1 Pe 1:7. This week, pray that in every opportunity you have, the Holy Spirit will remind you to ask yourself, "will these words, actions or thoughts please God"?

Look through your journal and continue to work on the things that God has brought to your mind through His word in these last 5 weeks. In what areas are you growing in the Lord? Take time to thank Him for His power to change you.