

## Eph Ch 5 Vs 8-16

(Living as light)

You recall that last week we spent our time going over and examining those qualities that aren't fitting for the Kingdom of God. We as believers are to be imitators of God and not imitators of the world, and that is the contrast that Paul makes in vs 1- really all the way through vs 21. But we've covered in specifics so far the 1<sup>st</sup> 7 vs, and it's in these vs that we learn that we are to be eager to forgive, even as God in Christ has forgiven us. and We are to walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, having laid down His own life for the sake of others, and in like manner we are to lay our own lives down for the sake of others, esteeming others above *our* selves.

We spoke of these things that constitute true love, but whenever God demonstrates or illustrates something genuine to us, Satan will always fabricate a counterfeit. and Even as God demonstrated true love through the person of Jesus Christ, Satan has deceived many with the counterfeit of carnal lust and as to where true love is self-less and sacrificial, esteems others and gives. Carnal lust is selfish, thinking only of oneself, I place my wants above another's needs and desire to take, and not give.

The Holy Spirit through Paul the apostle tells us in vs 3 of ch 5 that fornication (any sexual engagement outside of marriage) and all uncleanness, which is to say even the impure motives of the heart and covetousness, which is at the root of the other 2, desiring that which is not mine and being greedy for more of it is not love, it's lust and it's sin, and it's not even to be named among the people of God, it's not fitting. Nor is filthiness, (or obscenity) or foolish talking, nor coarse jesting; being quick witted and taking a comment that's made and using it to take peoples minds down the gutter, it's not right and it's not to characterize your life if you're a Christian. Because a foul mouth only testifies of a foul heart, you should be characterized by the giving of thanks, again an eagerness to forgive, and sacrificial love.

Notice vs 5 of ch 5 (read), if these are the things that characterize your life, then you are not a Christian and you have no part in the kingdom of God. Again that's not to say that Christians can't fall into any of these areas via walking in the flesh instead of surrendering to the Spirit, but if you lead this kind of life willfully and wantingly, with no desire to repent, then don't be deceived. It's because of these things that the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience, and if you or I lead this type of life, then what makes us think that we'll escape the wrath of God, being in church on Sunday won't save anybody on the day of Judgment. Don't be deceived by empty words, you remember last week we mentioned how people try to justify an immoral lifestyle by saying things like "well, really aren't we married in the sight of God", or "God is a God of love, He understands."

These are empty words, and they don't justify sin, but as many of you know Paul was more than likely dealing with the heresy of Gnosticism when He wrote this. and To keep it short the Gnostics taught that everything that was material was evil and there was nothing that could be done about it, it was just evil. Only the spiritual was pure, and so they taught that Jesus didn't walk around in a physical body but He was more like a phantom, and when He walked He didn't leave footprints. and They created all of these stories to try and convince people that Jesus didn't appear in the flesh and John encountered this heresy and that's why we read 1 John 4:2-3 where he countered it or diffused it by saying, "*By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God.*"

He went on to say that that teaching is of the spirit of Anti-Christ, but in keeping with this teaching of all flesh being inherently evil they said that it doesn't really matter what you do with your body because it's evil anyway, God doesn't really look to that.

What really matters is what's in your spirit, so you can go ahead and commit fornication, and be engaged in all kinds of uncleanness and it doesn't really matter because God's not looking to that anyway because He's so disassociated from the material and the physical that that's of no real concern. and There would be all of this pseudo-intellectual rationale, which in reality was simply seeking to justify sin in a person's life, and things really haven't changed in that regard, people still try and come up with all types of psychological rationale to seek to justify sin in their lives. But Paul is saying this type of reasoning is just empty words, they don't hold any weight in the sight of God, it's the very things that they're seeking to justify that will result in the wrath of God coming upon them, so don't be partakers of it with them, lest you be consumed in the same fate.

Vs8

Now here Paul seems to be rehashing just a little bit, or maybe developing just a little bit further that which he had stated previously in ch 2 vs 1-3, there we read, "*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*"

Now here in ch 5 he's been illustrating what is and isn't fitting for the child of God, what constitutes real and counterfeit love, what is darkness and what is light, "for you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord." and I believe that it's important that you catch the flow here because I'm not sure the way your bible lays out but mine has a sub-heading between vs 7-8 which seems to break them up almost as though now the thought pattern has changed but I don't believe it has.

Paul is saying, don't be partakers with them, for *you were* once darkness, you were once fornicators, unclean people, coveters and idolaters, you had filthy minds and filthy mouths, but that's not who you are anymore, so don't revert to that heathenistic lifestyle, don't relapse into your old self because that man or that woman was crucified with Christ, so how can you who are dead to sin live any longer in it. We read something similar to this in 1 Cor 6:9-11 where Paul writes, "*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*"

You were once darkness but now you're light in the Lord, so walk as children of light. and I want you to notice that, it doesn't say that you were once *in* darkness, it says you *were* darkness. That was your character, that was the essence of your being, not only were you stumbling around in darkness, you were darkness, all of the things mentioned in vs 3-6 minus the giving of thanks are related to darkness and people who by nature are darkness, being characterized by spiritual blindness and deadness.

But that's not who you are anymore in Christ Col 1:13 speaking of God says "*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.*" The kingdom of light, 1 Peter 2:9 says, "*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*" and Had the Lord not called you and me out of darkness then ultimately we'd be eternally separated from Him being cast into outer darkness. Those who by nature are darkness, who refuse to receive Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, and they reject Christ because they love darkness rather than light will have their end being cast into outer darkness the bible says, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

If this morning the Lord is calling you, beckoning you to come out from among the kingdom of darkness and be translated into the kingdom of light, don't resist that call, but come to Jesus Christ . John 3:19-21 "*And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.*"

Such is the testimony of every believer, we were once darkness but now we've come to the light, and even more than that as vs 1 of ch 5 tells us we *are* light in the Lord. How so,

because Jesus is the light of the world and you have become a partaker of His divine nature, Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:4 that through the exceedingly great and precious promises of God we are “partakers of the divine nature.” Now don’t be confused there’s nothing divine about you, or me, nor is there any light intrinsic with in myself, it’s kind of like the relationship that the moon has with the sun, now I’m going to tell you something that may be a revelation to some of you, and that’s that the moon has no light in itself. I’ve met more than one person in my life that believed that the moon shined by light that was intrinsic or inherent with in itself, but it doesn’t. I guess they slept through science that year, but it simply reflects the light of the sun, so in effect it is the light of the sun that is reflected from the moon. In a similar manner it is the light of Jesus Christ that is reflected by you to the world, you absorb His light kind of like a glow in the dark object and then you give off that light to the dark world around you.

I read of a story whereby a man brought a glow in the dark matchbox for his wife sort of as a souvenir from a trip. and After giving it to her she turned out the light, but the match box didn’t glow, it couldn’t be seen in the dark, and so they felt ripped off. But then the wife noticed some words written in French on the box and they had a friend translate them for them. The inscription read, “If you want me to shine in the night, keep me in the light.”

We need to be spending time with Jesus, alone, in the Light, in prayer, in His word, exposing our lives to His presence, so that His image and His character might be burnt into us so that we might shine the Light of Jesus Christ in the darkness of this world. Like Moses on Mt Sinai, spending time in the presence of God, so much so that when he came down his face shone with the glory and radiance of God. It’s interesting to me what Moses was doing while spending time in the presence of God, he was receiving the word of God. and By spending that time in the presence of God, receiving the word of God, Moses began to shine, David said, “*Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*”

How much time are you spending in the word of God, just receiving from Him? Believe me when I tell you that our lives reflect it, be it a little or maybe none at all, or a lot. You are light *in* the Lord, The Lord Jesus is light and He in our lives makes us light, remove the Lord from our lives and we’re nothing more than darkness again. A few correlative scriptures John 8:12 “*Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

He is the light of the world, Jesus Christ shows people where they are and illuminates the way to the Father, and it’s through Him, if we follow Him we will not walk in darkness. John 12:46 Again Jesus speaking, “*I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.*” One more, though there’s many, 2 Cor 4:6 “*For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*”

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is wrapped up in the person of Jesus Christ and He abides in your heart by the power of the Holy Spirit, you are light in the Lord. So (to paraphrase the last little part of vs 8) live like it, live according to the reality of who you are

in Christ. Just so that there's no confusion as to how the life is lived by the person who is light in the Lord, Paul throws in this little parenthetical remark.

Vs9

For the fruit of the Spirit (or maybe your bible says "the Light") is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. These are the attributes of the person who is light in the Lord, as opposed to vs 3-5 being characteristics of people who are and walk in darkness. Goodness, righteousness, and truth, why, because these are the characteristics of the Lord, now again that's not to say that the Christian is sinless, but the Christian will sin less and less and less, how so? 1 John 1:7 "*But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*" Speaking of that continual cleansing flow of the blood of Jesus Christ washing us and purging us of sin and unrighteousness. and As you are purged from wickedness, unrighteousness and deceit, those old attributes of darkness the Lord fills you and replaces those things by the power of the Holy Spirit with His attributes and His character which culminates in all goodness, all kinds of goodness or kindness, we're speaking here of the uprightness of heart and life.

3 John 11 says, "*Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.*" He who does good is of God, the fruit of the Spirit or of the Light is in all goodness, and since Jesus said that there is none who is good except for God alone, (that is, no one innately or intrinsically by their nature is good,) therefore any goodness that comes from our lives, anything that's of eternal value has to be a direct result of the Lord working in our lives. The one who characteristically demonstrates goodness is of God, for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness again 1 John 2:29 "*If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.*"

You see we're not speaking here of the imputed righteousness of Christ that takes place upon conversion, but rather the imparted righteousness of Christ that is demonstrated in the way we lead and live our lives on a daily basis. Because being counted as righteous before the throne doesn't make our walk righteous here on earth, and so we need (not our own best manufactured efforts striving for a righteous standard) but rather the imparted righteousness of Christ. It's *imputed* in heaven above but *imparted* on earth below, how, again by the work of the Spirit in our lives, it's an aspect of the fruit, or the outcropping of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and then finally in this list is truth. No real need for exposition on this one, Jesus is truth, and the truth of God's word will be lived out by the one who is light in the Lord.

One correlation here 2 Cor 4:2 "*But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*" Notice that, "*by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of*

*God.*” In other words we’re not only preaching the truth, but we’re commending that message by the way we live our lives, or to understand it another way Paul is saying I’m not requiring anything of you but that it’s not already real in my life, my walk matches my talk by the power of God’s Spirit in my life. That’s how Paul could preach so boldly, because he knew that when people went nit picking into his life, that he was clean, in the 1<sup>st</sup> vs of Acts 23 Paul said that He lived in all good conscience before God, in other words he knew that when he was called before God that he would stand boldly before the throne because his life was blameless.

Can you say that? I can’t say that this morning, I can tell you that I will stand blameless before God in Christ, but I can’t say that my conscience is pure because I’ve lived a blameless life. Paul was a very unique individual when it came to his commitment to Jesus Christ; it’s no wonder that God used him so radically. Now don’t let me confuse you Paul was in no way without sin, nor did he claim to be but he was a full on radical for Christ. I wish he was average and we all lived like him, but in reality he was very unique and he could boldly say you can read the gospel of Jesus Christ by watching my life, in another place he said, imitate me as I imitate Christ, we are to live out the truth that we minister to others.

Vs10

Or proving by examination or scrutiny, this vs is talking about what we just mentioned in Paul the apostle, goodness, righteousness and truth. By the resources that we have in Christ as revealed in the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 chapters of this book we are to lead lives that as they come under scrutiny by others, the more and more closely they examine us the more and more genuine-ness they discover. The point is, is that the things that are acceptable to the Lord can be known by the litmus test of goodness righteousness and truth, they are sort of the acid test that proves out what is and isn’t of God. Or to understand it another way, the things that the *Spirit* produces in our lives, things like goodness righteousness and truth, those are the things that are pleasing and acceptable to the Lord. and We are to be demonstrating these things in our lives by allowing the Spirit of God to work in and control our lives, as we’ll see in a minute, if we’re going to be well pleasing or acceptable to the Lord.

Vs11

Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, the word fellowship meaning holding together in common, don’t have anything in common with the unfruitful works of darkness. You and I are to be bearing the fruit of the Spirit, how can we do that and hook up with or partner together with that, which is unfruitful, you see all these things directly contrast one another.

The bible says can 2 walk together unless they be agreed, the answer is no, so you being a fruit bearer are to have nothing to do with nothing in common with not going the same way as those who are involved with the unfruitful works of darkness. Again things like what are mentioned in vs 3-5, and remember that’s not an exhaustive list, Gal 5 would add to that list, as would 1<sup>st</sup> Cor 6, Rev 22:15 and other places. As children of God, being light in the Lord we’re

to have no identity in those types of things, the obvious correlation being 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor 6:14-18 lets look at it together. (Read)

In the world, yes, but not of the world, Jesus being the prime example of that life, in the world but not of the world. He was always a light shining into the darkness of the world; His life was a conviction to those who practiced unrighteousness and an encouragement to those who were looking for forgiveness and hope and fullness of life. and We're to follow that example, in the world to reach the world, but not to engage in and partake in the worldly life, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather *expose* them. By the way you lead your life, you and I are to reveal and reprove the activities that are sourced in fallen humanity. Our lifestyles should be a rebuke to the lifestyles and activities of the people who don't know Jesus Christ We're to be a convicting influence that states, that's not the way to live, and when you deal in honesty, and integrity and uprightness of heart, believe me when I tell you that that's going to call to the carpet the deeds of others when you won't engage in a like manner in whatever it is that's going on. Be it cheating on the time card, explaining why you don't want to get high, or go to the bars, telling them why you walk away every time they begin to talk all vulgar or tell a dirty joke or whatever. That's going to shed a little light on the sin in their lives, and believe me they won't like it, but your integrity forces an accountability on them, and that makes them uncomfortable, but that's ok, you're not to engage with them, call sin for what it is.

Vs12

Some of the things that take place in the lives of those who are and walk in darkness are so vile and abominable that they're not even to be discussed or entertained, and I believe that this is an area that many Christians fail in.

When you read of certain sins in the bible, if you notice the bible will acknowledge the sin for what it is, but it avoids vivid detail There's reason for that, it'll pollute your mind, and plant seeds that you don't need in your heart. But so many times I believe that we take it too far when we speak of some of the wicked and disgusting things that some people of the world are engaged in, the bible says don't do it, it's shameful to even speak of so many of the acts which are done by worldly people in secret.

Vs13

Light makes things clear, brings clarity to a situation, and exposes things that are hidden by darkness that wouldn't ordinarily be able to be seen clearly. and Our lives are to expose the unfruitful works of darkness, reveal them for what they are and make them clear.

Vs14

Sort of a NT paraphrase of Isaiah 60 vs 1 applied to the church, the point of this vs being that now is not the time to be lulled to sleep or become spiritually dull, but rather the scriptures call us to sobriety and spiritual alertness. We're not to slumber and slip into a spiritual apathy, 1 Thess 5:5-6 says, "*You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of*

*darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.*” The world and the carnal church world is asleep, but we’re not to sleep like others do, but we’re to watch and be sober. Jesus issued the same warning concerning His return, He said watch and pray for you do not know when the time is.

Remember the parable of the 10 virgins, 5 of them began to slumber and sleep and when the Lord came, they missed the bus, be careful to guard against spiritual complacency. Rom 13:11-12 says, *“And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.”* The Lords return is so close, and it gets closer everyday, it’s high time to awake out of sleep, to be aroused out of any spiritual deadness or calloused ness and lack of vitality, look again to Jesus and Christ will give you light.

Jesus said that He was the light of the world and that the one who *followed Him* wouldn’t walk in darkness, so when the light of Christ begins to diminish in a Christian’s life, that really testifies that they’re not really following the Lord anymore. They’re beginning to wander or stagnate and follow other things besides the Lord, because He’s the light and He promised that as we pursue Him we won’t walk in darkness, but rather we’ll have the light of life.

So if you’re losing heart in your relationship with the Lord this morning I’d encourage you to allow the Lord to search your heart and reveal to you those areas that you’re allowing to be given over to other things. That you might confess it to Him and be renewed, that you might follow hard after Him and once again walk in the light of abundant life. We can so easily be distracted and detoured from our love relationship with Jesus, that’s why the bible tells us not to look to the right or to the left in our pursuit of Christ. and We’re definitely not to look back lest we lose sight of Him all together, but rather we’re to look straight ahead, keeping our eyes on Jesus lest we subtly drift off course and before we know what hit us, we find ourselves being pulled under by the crashing waves of the storms of life. That was what happened to Peter, and it wasn’t until He cried out to the Lord that his life was put back in order, and the same will fall true for you and me. Be sober concerning your walk with the Lord, over and over again the bible admonishes us in this area.

Vs15-16

Again the word “circumspectly” meaning carefully in wisdom, walk accurately with exactness, we’re not to be just floundering around drifting with the tide. But we’re to allow the Lord to mark out our course, and then we’re to set our sails and allow the Holy Spirit to guide the rudder until we reach our destination. We’re not to simply leave our lives to chance, but

we're to use wisdom in our decisions, seeking the heart and the will of God, taking advantage of the opportunities that He gives us to His glory because life is short, the bible says it's but a vapor, so live with your whole heart for the Lord and seize the advantage of the opportunities that He gives you, because the days are evil and Satan's received enough glory in this world, so let's wake up and live for the glory of the Lord. (We'll pick up here next week.)