

Series: Ephesians
Title: Walk as Children of Light
Text: Ephesians 5: 5-10
Date: October 12, 2014
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Ephesians 5: 5: For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6: Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7: Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8: For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)* 10: Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE

First, who are these children of disobedience and darkness? Children of disobedience are those who are breakers of the law of God and who do not believe on Christ. They are described in verse five by their works.

They are “whoremongers and unclean.” It means before God’s law they are guilty in heart (if not in deed) of literal fornication, adultery, incest and all things unclean. By not believing on Christ, they are guilty spiritually of playing the harlot, of being whoremongers and unclean

Also, they are “covetous idolaters.” It means before God’s law they are guilty of lusting after everything God forbids, after all things unclean and worldly and impure. They bow down in worship to those things; they are under the dominion of those things, worshipping them as their gods. By not believing on Christ, they are guilty of having no contentment in Christ who is “the one thing needful.” They are guilty of idolatry for not worshipping the one triune God in Christ Jesus.

So the children of disobedience and darkness are unregenerate, unbelieving, self-serving sinners without God and without hope in the world. They will not heed the word of Christ’s preachers nor will they obey the word of God.

This sad thought crossed my mind. As I preach, some sitting before me are saying in their heart, “I will not have Christ reign over me. I will not have Christ tell me what I can and cannot do.” You justify your own rebellion in your minds even as you hear the gospel preached.

NO INHERITANCE AND WRATH

We are told what becomes of sinners if we meet God in this state. “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.” (Eph 5-6)

No child of disobedience has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Be sure to get this. Some teach that those who meet God in rebellion, as children of disobedience, are actually saved so long as they are the elect children of God for whom Christ died. They say it does not matter if they lived their life in disobedience, never believing God, never submitting to his authority, never repenting from their disobedience. Listen to God! “Let no man deceive you with vain words with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”

Those who never bow to Christ from a newly created heart, who leave this world in disobedience to Christ have no inheritance with Christ, only wrath! In addition, all those who profess to believe on Christ, who profess to no longer be trusting in their own works, yet he say “Let us sin that grace may abound”—they are children of

disobedience—the wrath of God shall come upon them. Again, do not take my word for it, hear the word of God! “Let no man deceive you for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”

The wrath of God usually comes in temporal judgment but always in eternal ruin. This is usually the case. Those who follow darkness and disobedience, have a sad life. They are in darkness as to a true saving knowledge of Christ, in darkness concerning spiritual comfort. They have no true light and joy. And “the wages of sin is death.” (Rom 6: 23) The poor sinner who pursues sin goes from darkness to greater darkness. Unless God stops you the end is certain, “to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.” (Ju 1: 13)

Sinner, try to imagine the severity of the wrath of God. “*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*” (Heb 10: 31) Look to the cross to see the wrath of God. When Christ stood as the Substitute, sin-bearer for his people, God spared not his own Son! Do you want to suffer what Christ bore on the cross, and do so for eternity? How would you like to start serving life in prison? Think of life in prison with the worst of the worst. When you are in hell, you’ll beg for something that soft and that endurable. “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.” (2 Cor 5: 11)

CHILDREN OF LIGHT

Now, let’s move to a happier subject. Who are the children of light? “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” (Eph 5: 8) Every true child of God who is now “light in the Lord” was once a child of darkness in ourselves. There was no difference in us than any other child of darkness.

Ephesians 2: 2: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Who made you to differ?

Ephesians 2: 4: But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5: Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Grace brought us to behold what Christ has done freely for us. We were whoremongers. But God shed his blood and renewed us making us chaste virgins in Christ. The apostle Paul said to the Corinthian believers, “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” (2 Cor 11: 2) We were unclean. But God washed us clean from all our sins in his precious blood, in the molten sea of his blood. (1 Ki 7: 23; 2 Chr 4: 2) We were covetous. But God made us content when he made Christ our All and in all. He speaks into our hearts, saying, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” (Heb 13: 5-6) We were idolaters. But God made us willing to worship the true and living God in Christ Jesus. We were children of disobedience. But God sent the gospel, “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor 10: 5)

Oh, how great is the constraint of sovereign, unchangeable grace and love in Christ Jesus. “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” (Eph 5: 8) “Ye were darkness.” We were darkness itself. But now “ye are light in the Lord.” Now, brethren, we have Christ our Light, the Sun of Righteousness. (Mal 4: 2) The eyes of our understanding were once darkened, but now they are enlightened by the Light of Christ dwelling in us and His light shall never be taken from us. “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light.” (Jn 8: 12)

WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT

Now, let's hear and heed the exhortation. "Be not ye therefore partakers with them...walk as children of light." (Eph 5: 7, 8)

Concerning the children of disobedience and darkness, Christ says to his redeemed saints, "Be not ye therefore partakers with them." Light and darkness can have no fellowship! It is not possible. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor 6: 14) God is Light therefore God has no fellowship with darkness. The child, born of Light, will walk in the light of Christ. He is not without sin. But if the tenor of our life is to walk in darkness—to love it, to enjoy fellowship with the workers of darkness and with the works of darkness—then we are lying if we say we have true communion and fellowship with God. The only way a sinner can have fellowship with God is by walking in light in Christ the Light. But walking in the light as God is Light, we have fellowship one with another—God with us and us with God—and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. The apostle John tells us to be honest with ourselves because we certainly cannot fool God.

1 John 1: 5: This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6: If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Instead, our text tells us what it is to walk as children of light, "(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.)" (Eph 5: 9)

To walk as children of light is to walk in "the Spirit," as opposed to walking in the flesh. The only way for a believer not to fulfill the lust of the flesh, is to walk in the Spirit, led of the Spirit, submitting to the Spirit as a little child being led by their father—it is to be always looking to Christ! "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Gal 5: 16)

To walk in light is to walk "in all goodness." Goodness is from Christ to us. Listen to Christ speaking to the LORD God, "O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." (Ps 16: 2-3) So to walk in all goodness is to walk believing Christ is all our Goodness. "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." (1 Pet 2: 25) When we err into sin, it is Christ's goodness that always leads us to repentance, "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom 2: 4) For example, you have a disagreement with another, be it your spouse, your brethren, even an unbeliever. Sinful lust heat up within you. But soon, that "still small voice" reminds you of the forgiveness you have from God for Christ's sake. It is Christ leading you to repentance, turning you from your flesh back to Christ, back to your brother, to ask forgiveness. Don't fight that! Walk in his goodness. "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." (3 Jn 1: 11)

To walk as children of light is to "walk in all righteousness." Christ is our Righteousness. He is the righteousness of God. His elect are made the righteousness of God in Christ. It is because Christ purged our sin, justified us, robed us in his righteousness. Therefore, Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of righteousness. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." (Heb 1: 8) So we live unto Christ our Righteousness, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Pet 2: 24) It means his people are not only made righteous in Christ, but for Christ's sake, we now love that which Christ says is right,

1 John 2:29: If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him....3:9: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10: In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

The only way we delight in and are filled with fruits of righteousness, but the reason the child born of Christ's Seed surely shall be filled with a righteous walk, is by "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Php 1: 11) "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal 5: 22-23)

To walk as children of light is to "walk in all truth." Throughout this Ephesian letter, the Lord Jesus commands his people through the apostle Paul, teaching us our purpose for being in his church is that by "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another." "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness." (Eph 4: 15, 25; 6: 14)

Here is the result of the Truth, of what Christ did for us on the cross. There are two parts to this work. First, "Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity." (Ps 32: 2) That is the result of what Christ did for us on the cross. Here is the result of what Christ did in our hearts. "And in whose spirit there is no guile." (Ps 32: 2) Therefore, we walk in truth: in the truth of redemption accomplished by Christ, in the truth of regeneration and sanctification accomplished by Christ Jesus, in the truth of T.U.L.I.P. Also, believers are truthful with all men. We aim to walk in all truth in this world in all our dealings with men.

It is because walking as children of light is to be always "proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." (Eph 5: 10) This word "proving" involves three things. First, it is to "test" all things by the word of God. We take it to the word of our Master to see "Is this acceptable unto the Lord?" Then we "discern" all things. Christ has given us spiritual discernment so that we know what really is acceptable unto the Lord—not only in the letter, but in the spirit. It may be lawful for me, but it may not be the best thing for me to do. For example, God does not forbid us to have a glass of wine; God only forbids drunkenness. But if my weak brother may take offense, though it is lawful, it is better for him for me not to have a glass of wine. Thirdly, it is not only to "test" and "discern" but to "approve" of what our Lord approves of. When we see in his word, when we discern what God says is best, then we submit to what he approves of with joy, willingly, not grudgingly, not from a legalistic, mercenary spirit. We want our Master's will to be done rather than our obstinate fleshly will. Let's end with Paul's word to the Thessalonians,

1 Thessalonians 5:5: Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6: Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7: For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8: But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. 9: For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10: Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep [whether we are alive or have already died in the Lord upon his return], we should live together with him.

Amen!