

"Walk as Children of the Light"
(Ephesians 5:7-14)

Introduction: *When you are a citizen of a particular country, you are under their dominion. You are bound by their rules and regulations, and you conduct yourselves in the ways of that culture, because that is what you are used to. But when you naturalize to another country, you are no longer under the old country's jurisdiction, but now under the new. You are now bound by their law, and as you become accustomed to that culture, you begin to conduct yourself in their ways.*

The same is true in the spiritual realm as well. When you were in the kingdom of darkness, you lived like those in darkness. But when you were graciously transformed into the kingdom of light, you were called to a different standard of life. And what the Spirit of God is saying in this text this morning is,

You have become children of the light, and you are no longer to live as children of darkness, but now you are to conduct yourselves in a manner that reflects the character of that light.

I. *You Are to Stop Living Like Children of Darkness.*

A. *You Are No Longer in Darkness.*

1. *The kingdom of darkness is exemplified by wicked and shameful conduct.*

a. *Darkness is a metaphor used to describe wickedness.*

- (i) *It refers to ignorance [Job 37:19].*
- (ii) *To calamity (Ps. 107:10).*
- (iii) *To death (Ps. 88:12).*
- (iv) *To wickedness (Prov. 2:13; John 3:19).*
- (v) *And to damnation [Matt. 22:13] [Baker 154].*

b. *The kingdom of darkness is the domain of every wicked act in the world.*

- (i) *All theft, vandalism, extortion.*
- (ii) *All sexual perversion: homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, adultery.*
- (iii) *All violence, hatred, war, cruelty, abuse.*

c. *It is that domain which is especially ruled by Satan.*

- (i) *Satan is the perpetrator of evil.*
- (ii) *All evil doesn't originate with him, however.*
- (iii) *Within each human being is an ocean of sin, whether regenerate or not.*
- (iv) *But the deceitful one and his minions are well equipped in enticing to sin and filthiness.*

2. *You were formerly in Satan's realm, but no longer (v. 8a).*

a. *You were in the domain of darkness.*

- (i) *You were bound in slavery to sin (Rom. 6:17)*
 - (a) *You had no desire for righteousness.*

- (b) But evil filled your heart.
- (c) You wanted to get as far from the righteous light of God as possible.
- (ii) Your father was the devil and it was in your heart to do his will [John 8:44].
 - (a) He was a murderer from the beginning.
 - (b) He is a liar and the father of lies.
 - (c) And you, likewise, shared his nature.
- (iii) You were dead to the things of God.
 - (a) You walked according to the course of this world.
 - (b) According to the prince of the power of the air.
 - (c) You were living in the lusts of your flesh.
 - (d) Indulging the flesh and the desires of the mind with all the world had to offer.
 - (e) You were the children of wrath.
 - (f) Maybe you weren't the most wicked creature in history, but yet you had committed infinite crimes against your Creator.
- b. But you were rescued from Satan's dominion.
 - (i) The Son of God undertook to release you from the chains of hell.
 - (ii) He took upon Himself our nature and through death He rendered powerless him who had the power of death, the devil.
 - (iii) He set you free from the dominion of darkness in which you lived.
 - (iv) And delivered you into the kingdom of God.

B. So Stop Participating in Their Evil Deeds.

1. Stop becoming sharers with them (v. 7).

- a. Paul says to stop casting in your lot with them [BAG 786].
 - (i) As Christians, we live in a secular society.
 - (a) This is not a Christian society.
 - (b) As many as 80% of the US may claim to be born-again Christians, but it is apparent that this cannot be true.
 - (c) Our society is very pleasure oriented and immoral.
 - (d) All around us we see darkness abound.
 - (e) To refuse to believe it is naive.
 - (ii) And because we do, we will be influenced by their behavior.
 - (a) When you point to the world and say that is normal, you are greatly influenced by it.
 - (b) You have forgotten the meaning of holiness.
 - (c) If you use the excuse, "Everyone is doing it", you betray your worldly mindedness.

(iiil But we must not let the world dictate our thoughts, our values, our manner of life.

- b. Paul reminded us that it is because of these things that God pours out His wrath.
 - (i) "Therefore" points back to God's wrath.
 - (ii) It is because of the deeds of darkness that God pours out His wrath.
- (iiil Do not be deceived!

2. Stop participating in the unfruitful works of darkness (v. 11a).

- a. The time which you wasted in the past in wickedness was sufficient.
- b. So Paul says stop taking part in the practices of darkness.
- c. They are fruitless works that are storing up judgment for the unbeliever in the day of God's wrath.

3. It is shameful even to speak of their secret deeds (v. 12).

- a. The works of darkness are *so* vile, that the Christian should not even talk about what they do.
- b. It may seem as if these deeds are already out of the closet.
 - (i) Things which a few years ago would be considered grossly immoral are accepted as a normal way of life today.
 - (ii) It is openly portrayed and paraded about.
 - (iiil But if these are the deeds done in the open, it is unimaginable what happens in secret.
 - (iv) But these things are not to be the subject of the Christian's attention, **neither their open nor secret sin.**
 - (v) Paul said, "But I want you to wise in what is good, and innocent in what is evil" (Rom. 16:19).
- c. But such filthy ideas should shock Christians.
 - (i) When you hear or see these things, does it wound your spirit?
 - (ii) If not, it means that you have already been hardened by the intensity of ungodliness.

II. But Now You Must Live as Children of the Kingdom of Light.

A. Now You Are In the Kingdom of God's Beloved Son.

1. Now you are light in the Lord (v. 8b).

- a. Light is characteristic of God.
 - (i) "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5).
 - (ii) Light is a metaphor for all that is holy and good, as opposed to darkness which is impure and evil.
- b. In your union with Christ, you have become light as

- well
- (i) Your heart was full of darkness.
- (ii) But in Christ, light has dispelled that darkness.
- (iiil) Now you are the light of the world.

2. ***The fruit of the light is goodness, righteousness and truth (v. 9).***

- a. The kingdom of light is exemplified by these virtues.
 - (i) Goodness is that which conforms to the perfect goodness of God.
 - (ii) Righteousness that which conforms to His perfect law.
 - (iiil) And truth that which conforms to the absolute reality of the way things really are.
- b. There is no law against these things for they reflect the perfect and blessed nature of God.

B. So Start Living Like the Children of God.

1. ***Walk as children of light (v. 8c).***

- a. Let your pattern of life reflect these virtues.
- b. As children who lay claim to being in the kingdom of light, it is fitting that you do.

2. ***Rather than exploring evil, explore the things which will bring greater pleasure to God (v. 10).***

- a. Don't flirt with things that you know that God abhors.
 - (i) The allurements of sin is powerful.
 - (ii) Sin gratifies the old nature.
 - (iiil) Because of our sinfulness, temptation gets a strong hold in our heart.
 - (iv) But we must resist! We must kill the sin in our members.
 - (v) Don't let sin gain any more ground!
 - (vi) Sin is a filthy stench in the nostrils of the most holy God, infinitely worse than the most decayed animal or rotten cesspool.
- b. But take up the whole of your life in seeking to know what is His delight.
 - (i) The Lord delights in righteousness because it reflects His holy character.
 - (ii) And when we perform acts of righteousness, God delights in us.
 - (iiil) What could be more desirable to the regenerate heart than to do what he knows His Lord will approve of?
 - (iv) This is a fragrant aroma in the nostrils of the Most Holy God.

3. ***Don't participate in evil, but even reprove it (v. 11b, 13-14).***

- a. Now that you are in the light, the reproachable

- things become clear (v. 13).
- (i) When you walked in darkness, you hated the light because it revealed your wickedness.
 - (ii) Now that you are in the light, it still exposes the things in your heart which are a reproach to God.
 - (iii) The light makes everything clear (v. 13b).
 - (a) The illumination of the Spirit of God exposes the darkness.
 - (b) And where God's purity, holiness and truth penetrate, it brings correction (Hodge 214-15).
- b. Now you are to reprove the things worthy of being reprov'd (v. 11b).
- (i) Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness.
 - (ii) But be one who calls sin, sin!
 - (iii) Expose the wickedness.
- c. If you have been raised by the power of Christ, this is your calling (v. 14).
- (i) Paul quotes a hymn to strengthen his conclusion.
 - (a) It is either a compilation of OT quotes.
 - (b) Or, more likely, an early baptismal hymn (Bruce 108).
 - (c) Awake, *O* sleeper;
And rise up from the dead!
And the Christ shall appear to you!
 - (d) For the adult believer, baptism is a testimony of his spiritual rebirth.
 - (e) Christ now gives to you the light of life to walk in.
 - (ii) This cannot take place unless the Lord sovereignly calls you out of darkness into the kingdom of light.
 - (iii) Those in darkness are asleep, that is, in the slumber of spiritual dullness and deadness.
 - (iv) If this is **so** with you, you are commanded to awaken from your spiritual slumber!
 - (v) You are commanded to rise up from the dead!
 - (vi) And then Christ, the blessed Messiah/Deliverer of God, will give you the light to walk in.
 - (vii) Walk in the light of Christ, and walk as children of the light.
 - (viii) Keep yourselves far from the wickedness of the world and the filth of the evil one.
 - (ix) Do not participate in the putrid stench of the world's sins, but even expose them!
 - (x) And prove yourselves to be children of light!
Amen!