

THE BELIEVER IS TO WALK AS A CHILD OF LIGHT EPHESIANS 05:08–14

Introduction

Two walks through life are available to men. There is the life and walk of darkness or the life and walk of light. There is a world of difference between the two. In fact, a person's eternity is determined by which life and walk he pursues.

- I. Light, not darkness, is the nature of believers (v. 8).
- II. Light bears the things of life — the fruit of the Spirit (v. 9).
- III. Light shows what is acceptable, pleasing (v. 10).
- IV. Light exposes the deeds of darkness (vv. 11-12).
- V. Light reveals and converts everything it touches (v. 13).
- VI. Light awakens the sleeping (v. 14).

I. *Ephesians 05:08 Believer's Nature: Light*

Light, not darkness, is the nature of believers.

1. Before a person is saved, he is not only in darkness, but he is darkness — the very embodiment of darkness. What does this mean? Think for a moment: a person who does not know God is all alone. He may have plenty of people and friends moving about him, but they — everyone of them — will soon die and be gone. In fact, so will he, and he will have died in darkness — never having known God. A person who does not know God is in darkness:
 - => He does not know where he has come from. To him everything is a result of human and natural process. It is the way of the world and of man: we are born and here we are. Man is blind — in darkness about the truth of where he and his world originated.
 - => He does not know why he is on earth — not really. He arises in the morning, goes about his daily affairs, and retires at night. Arises the next morning, goes about his daily affairs, and retires at night. Arises the next morning, and on and on. Where he is heading and why he is here — the inner core of life — is all a mystery. The real purpose, meaning and significance of life are not understood — not really. He lives in darkness as to why he and everyone else are really on earth.
 - => He does not know where he is going — not after death. Is there really a God or not, a heaven or not? How can he know and be absolutely sure? He is in darkness about the future, that inevitable day of death and eternity that rushes ever so rapidly toward every one of us.

This is what is meant about man being in darkness, about his being the very embodiment of darkness. He is wrapped up in darkness: past, present and future. Apart

from God, no man knows the truth: no man knows where he has come from, why he is here or where he is going. His whole life is shadowed and covered, permeated and filled with darkness. He is not walking as light; he is walking as darkness.

Mat 6:23 *“But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”*

John 1:5 *The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

John 3:19 *This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.*

Rom 13:12 *The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.*

1 Th 5:4 *But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.*

2. However, the truth is glorious: the believer was darkness, *but now* he is light *in the Lord*. Jesus Christ said: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (Jn. 8:12). It is Christ who brings light to life. He shows us the truth of life, of God, of creation, of death and of destiny. He shows us...

- the beginning and origin of all things
- the purpose, meaning and significance of all things
- the truth of death and eternity

But note: Jesus Christ has not only shown us light; He has made us light. He has changed our nature from darkness to light. The light of life has been immersed into our very nature. We are now the very embodiment of light itself; we shall live eternally. We are the light of the eternal God in the midst of a world of darkness. Therefore, we are to walk as children of light.

Mat 5:14 *“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.”*

John 1:5 *The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

Eph 5:8 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.*

Phil 2:15 *So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.*

Col 1:13 *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.*

1 Th 5:5 *You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.*

II. *Ephesians 05:09 Fruit of the Holy Spirit*

Light bears all good things — the fruit of the Spirit. (See *Holy Spirit, Fruit*, Gal. 5:22-23.)

A life that illuminates light will give off three things in particular.

1. Goodness (see *Goodness*, Gal. 5:22-23).
2. Righteousness, (see *Righteousness*, Eph. 5:9).
3. Truth, (see *Truth*, Eph. 5:9).

EPHESIANS 05: 09 RIGHTEOUSNESS (DIKAIOSUNE)

For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth.
Ephesians 05:09

Righteousness means two simple but profound things. It means both to be right and to do right. (See *Righteousness*, Mt. 5:6.)

1. There are those who *stress being righteous* and *neglect doing righteousness*. This leads to two serious errors:
 - a. False security. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he has *believed in* Jesus Christ. But he neglects doing good and living as he should. He neglects obeying God and serving man.
 - b. Loose living. It allows one to go out and do pretty much as he desires. He feels secure and comfortable in his *faith in Christ*. He knows that what he does may affect his fellowship with God and other believers, but he thinks his behaviour will not affect his salvation. He thinks that no matter what he does he is still acceptable to God.

The problem with this stress is that it is a false righteousness. Righteousness in the Bible means *being* righteous, but it also means *doing* righteousness. The Bible knows nothing about being righteous without living righteously.

2. There are those who stress *doing righteousness* and *neglect being righteous*. This also leads to two serious errors.
 - a. Self-righteousness and legalism. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he does good. He works and behaves morally and keeps certain rules and regulations. He does the things a Christian should do by obeying the main laws of God. But he neglects the basic law: the law of love and acceptance — that God does not love him and accept him because he does good, but because he loves and trusts the righteousness of Christ (see *Righteousness*, Mt. 5:6).
 - b. Being judgemental and fault-finding. A person who stresses that he is righteous (acceptable to God) because he keeps certain laws often judges and finds fault

with others. He feels that rules and regulations can be kept, *he* keeps them. Therefore, anyone who fails to keep them is judged, criticized and censored.

The problem with this stress is that it, too, is a false righteousness. Again, righteousness in the Bible is *being righteous as well as doing righteousness*. The Bible knows nothing of being acceptable to God without *being made righteous in Christ Jesus* (see *Righteousness*, Mt. 5:6; see Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Mat 5:20 *“For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

1 Cor 15:34 *Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God — I say this to your shame.*

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Eph 6:14 *Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place.*

Phil 1:11 *Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God.*

1 Tim 6:11 *But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.*

Titus 2:12-13 *It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. □*

EPHESIANS 05: 09 TRUTH (ALETHEIA)

For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth.
Ephesians 05:09

Moral truth, saving truth, working truth, living truth. It is not simply something to be *known*; it is something to be *done* (Jn. 8:31). It is the knowledge and the experience of true reality as opposed to false reality. It is truth in “the inner parts” (see Psa. 51:6; Eph. 5:9). It is diametrically opposed to sham and hypocrisy. It permits no compromise with evil. It even avoids every kind of evil (1 Th. 5:22). It is a regard for truth in every respect: believing it, reverencing it, speaking it, acting it, hoping in it and rejoicing in it. Such truthful behaviour frees one from all the bondages and impediments of life.

John 7:16-17 *Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.*

Phil 3:10 *I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.*

Col 1:10 *And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in even good work, growing in the knowledge of God.*

Hosea 6:3 *"Let us acknowledge the Lord: let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth."*

God's Word is said to be the truth (Jn. 17:17). and Jesus Christ Himself claimed to be the Truth (Jn. 14:6). To distinguish between the two, God's Word is sometimes said to be the Written Truth or Word, and Jesus Christ is sometimes said to be the Living Truth or Word.

1. The truth sets man free from the shadow of doubt and despair. Man no longer has to grasp and grope about to know the truth, whether it be the truth of God or of his own world. Jesus Christ has revealed the truth: the nature, the meaning and the destiny of all things.

John 1:9, 14 *The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

2 Cor 3:17 *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

2. The truth sets men free from the bondages of sin. Man no longer has to grasp after the power to overcome; nor does he have to struggle against the weight of guilt. The search for deliverance and for the power to conquer, to overcome, to attain and to live is now over. It is all found in Jesus Christ. (See Rom. 6:1f; 8:28-39.)

John 1:12 *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Rom 7:23-25 *But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of*

death? Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Rom 8:6, 15 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."*

3. The truth sets man free from the bondage of death. Man no longer has to be subjected to the fear of death. By His death and resurrection Jesus Christ has now conquered death. And in His death and resurrection man now has the most glorious of hopes: he can now live eternally (Heb. 2:14-15).

John 5:24-29 *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."*

Rom 8:2 *Because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*

Heb 2:14-15 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

4. The truth sets man free from the bondage of judgment and hell. The darkness of an unknown future and the apprehension of an impending judgment constantly faces man. At best, man can only hope for annihilation, and he shudders at the thought. At worst, he can expect torture by the gods that be, and he trembles at the possibility. But Jesus Christ has revealed the truth. He Himself has borne the judgment and the punishment of judgment for man.

John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

Rom 5:6, 8-9 *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!*

1 Pet 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

1 Pet 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

5. The truth sets man free to be saved completely. Existence, love, joy, peace, satisfaction, pleasure, hope — nothing has to be incomplete any longer. No good thing ever again has to be denied man. Jesus Christ, the Truth, is able to save man to the uttermost — completely, perfectly, finally and for eternity. All a person has to do is to come to Christ for salvation, for He lives forever to intercede for every man.

Heb 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Col 2:9-10 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. □

III. *Ephesians 05:10 Believer Walking in the Light*

Light proves things; it shows what is acceptable, pleasing. What does this mean? As the believer walks in the light...

- he finds out what is pleasing and not pleasing to the Lord.
- he discriminates between what is pleasing and not pleasing to the Lord.
- he shows to the world what is pleasing and not pleasing to the Lord.
- he shows what path to take and what path not to take.
- he shows what a person should do and not do.

Thought 1. Everything the believer does is to be “for the Lord”; that is, he is to set his attention and energy upon pleasing the Lord. He is to strive to will and to do the pleasure of the Lord. He is to struggle to bring his will under control and to control his behaviour in order to fulfil the joy of the Lord. Why? Because the Lord loved and gave Himself for the believer; therefore, the believer is to love and give himself to please the Lord.

Eph 5:10 And find out what pleases the Lord.

1 Th 4:1 Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

1 Th 5:21 Test everything. Hold on to the good.

Heb 11:5 *By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*

Heb 13:16 *And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

1 John 4:1 *Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*

IV. Ephesians 05:11–12 Light and Deeds of Darkness

Light exposes the deeds of darkness.

1. The charge is clear and forceful: believers are to have no fellowship with the fruitless deeds of darkness. Note that the deeds of darkness are...
 - dark: leaving a man stumbling and groping about in the world, lost and unable to see where he is going.
 - fruitless: bearing no lasting fruit beyond this world when death overtakes him.

The fruitful deeds of darkness are those deeds covered in the previous passage (Eph. 5:3-6) and in the acts of the flesh or sinful nature (Gal. 5:19-21). They lead to death; therefore, the believer is to have no fellowship - no fellowship whatsoever — with the fruitless deeds of darkness.

Acts 2:40 *With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”*

1 Cor 5:9 *I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people.*

2 Cor 6:14, 17-18 *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? “Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”*

Eph 5:11 *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

2 Th 3:6 *In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.*

1 John 1:5-6 *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.*

1 John 2:15-16 *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings*

of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.

2. The believer's task on earth is striking: he is not to fellowship with the deeds of darkness; he is to live in so much light that his life *exposes* (*elegcho*, that is, reproves, rebukes and convicts) people of their sins or dark deeds.

Thought 1. Sin is never to be taken lightly. The very fact that we are charged to expose it is clear evidence. Our task is to reflect so much light that all the works of darkness around us are exposed and expelled. Remember when light appears, the darkness is always extinguished. But if the light leaves or is turned off, the darkness reappears.

Luke 17:3 *So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."*

Eph 5:11 *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

1 Tim 5:2 *Older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.*

2 Tim 4:2 *Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction.*

3. The reason why we should not have fellowship with the dark deeds of the world is this: it is a *shame* to even speak of those things which are done by them in secret. What a rebuke! We are not even to talk about dark deeds! We are not to be sharing conversation about the dark deeds of this world (see Eph. 5:8; Jn. 3:18-20; Jn. 8:12).

Mat 5:37 *"Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one."*

Col 4:6 *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

2 Tim 1:13 *What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.*

V. Ephesians 05:13 Light Reveals and Converts

Light reveals and converts everything it touches. Note two things.

1. When light touches something it becomes light. It is lit up and to some degree the object gives off light itself. It is converted and changed. When the light of Jesus Christ touches the life of a person in darkness, that life is changed: it becomes light. The darkness is done away with and eliminated. Note another fact as well: that person begins to touch the lives of those in darkness who surround him.
2. So long as evil is done in secret it thrives, but when it is dragged out of the dark corners and closed rooms into the light, it dies. When a person confronts Christ, his dark deeds are exposed in all their hurt, damage, filth and corruption. We must always remember, this is the very reason many refuse to confront Christ. They prefer their

dark deeds (Jn. 3:20f). But when a man confronts Christ and abandons his dark sins, he becomes “light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8). He is transformed by the person of Christ. William Barclay points out that this is seen in the *healing* that is found in the rays of the sun. The light of Jesus Christ is just like the rays of the sun. The light of Jesus Christ not only illuminates and reveals, it also cleanses. The light of Jesus Christ is not only a revealing and condemning thing, it is a healing thing as well. (*The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 195f.)

VI. *Ephesians 05:14 Light Awakens the Sleeping*

Light awakens the sleeping, those who are spiritually dead. Most people in the world are as sleeping men when it comes to walking in the light of God. They are living in the darkness of spiritual sleep and spiritual death — ever rushing on to that inevitable day of eternal darkness and death. Note a most unfortunate fact: this passage is being written to believers. Too many professing believers are passing through life just like unbelievers: asleep — living in the darkness of spiritual sleep and spiritual death — fellowshipping with and too often participating in the deeds of darkness. They are unaware and ignorant of the great heritage and promises God has given us in Christ Jesus.

Rom 13:11 *And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

1 Cor 15:34 *Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God — I say this to your shame.*

Eph 5:14 *For it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

Thought 1. Note that the only Source to awakening out of spiritual sleep and death is Jesus Christ and Him alone.

John 1:4 *In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

John 8:12 *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

John 12:35 *Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.”*

John 12:46 *“I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.”*

2 Cor 4:6 *For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

1 John 2:8 *Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. ■*