

SEPARATE TO LIGHT

Ephesians 5.7-14: Walk as a child of light—separated unto the Light

Theme: Christian, wake up and be light in the darkness of this world!

The entire first half of Ephesians 5 is about the Christian's relationship to the lost world around him.

- The chapter itself deals with us walking *as* the children of light that we *are* in Jesus Christ.
- And that means: (v1) We are to be *godly* and (v2) we are to be "*Christians*."
- And that also means: (v3-6) There ought to be some *separation from darkness* in our lives (not the superficial, dorky separation of legalism, but a separation from wicked works—from sin).
- And that means also: (v7-14) We are to live *sanctified* lives, separated *unto* the Light.

Let's read the passage (v7-14) and then start at the end, with Paul's exhortation and application in v14...

I. (v14) **Christian, Wake Up!**

A. "Wherefore": Everything Paul has to tell us this morning ends up here, with this exhortation.

1. Paul is citing Isaiah 60.1-2...
2. The darkness is that which covers the whole earth and all the people (darkness of sin).
3. The light in that darkness is the light of God, His glory (us, manifesting His glory, glorifying Him).

B. Context: (Eph 5.14) Paul's exhortation to wake up (!) is for *Christians*.

1. (v1) Paul is speaking to *us*, the followers of God... (v6) He is not speaking to the lost.
2. (v8) Paul is exhorting *saved believers* to walk in the light...
 - a) The point he is making: There are believers who are *asleep* in *darkness*.
 - b) They need to wake up! They need to realize their condition and separate from darkness!
 - c) And then they need to live in such a way as to manifest the light of God in this darkness.
3. Paul repeatedly exhorts Christians to wake up! (Apparently we have the tendency to doze off...)
 - a) (Rom 13.11-14) Paul says to the Christian: Wake up! The rapture is coming soon!
 - Put off the works of darkness and act like Christ (the Light)—act like a Christian!
 - b) (1Cor 15.34) Paul says to the Christian: Wake up to righteousness! Stop sinning!
 - c) (1Thes 5.6-8) Paul says to the Christian: Wake up! Let us not sleep!
 - (1) Let us not drift off into that comfortable state of numbness to the world around us.
 - (2) Wake up! Be vigilant (watch!). Be sober (be serious about the work given us to do)!
4. (Eph 5.14) Paul also exhorts the Christian to *arise from the dead!*
 - a) (1Tim 5.6) Most Christians today and just like this:
 - (1) They "liveth" in the sense that they have eternal life in Christ.
 - (2) But they are "dead" in the sense that they have no Christ-like fruit in their lives because they are living for themselves and the pleasures they themselves can get out of life.
 - (3) They are "dead" in the sense that they show no visible fruit.
 - (a) They are "dead" like a tree in winter (life on the inside, no fruit on the outside).
 - (b) They are "dead" like a dead light bulb: It gives no light!

- b) (Rom 6.4) We are born again in Christ, so we should walk in newness of life. Are we?
- c) (Rom 6.13) We do that by yielding our members to God (our bodies to Him as living sacrifices each and every day) to do right—to do His will.

C. (Eph 5.14) "Wherefore": Everything Paul has to say to us this morning ends here, with this application—this exhortation—to wake up!

1. That means we need to "arise from the dead"...
 - a) Stop sinning.
 - b) Stop "partaking" with sinners.
2. That means we need the Light of Christ.
 - a) We need the light from Christ.
 - b) We need to shine that light in this dark world in order to manifest and reprove the works of darkness.

II. (v7) Christian: Wake up and arise from the dead!

- A. Don't partake of the sins of the children of disobedience (v3-5, in context: immorality). Don't do it!
- B. And don't partake with the children of disobedience: Don't fellowship with them (v11).
 1. We are called to be in the world, yes... We are called to be among sinners, yes...
 2. But we are called to be different.
 - a) Our fellowship ("partaking") ought to be with the children of light, not the children of disobedience.
 - b) We ought to have more in common with those who are following God in Christ than those who are still living in darkness (walking after the flesh in the world).
 - c) The sad fact of the matter is that most of those who say they are "Christians" are not actually following Christ, so good fellowship "in the light" is hard to come by today.
 - d) Regardless, we should seek out (we should desire!) to fellowship and partake with Christians who challenge us to be more like Christ and to do more for Him in the mission.
- C. **Christians need to wake up to the reality of their situation:** Most are asleep among the dead (most are comfortable hanging out with lost people in the world and partaking with them in their darkness).

III. (v8-13) Christian: Wake up and be light in darkness!

A. (v8) Realize this is a growth process: Wake up and walk right!

1. You are called to walk according to what you are.
 - You are light in the Lord (if you are a Christian, you are a child of God, a child of the light).
2. But we all need to realize that we will spend the rest of our lives growing in Christ and in Christ-likeness (becoming more and more light, and less and less darkness).
 - a) We need to remember this so we have grace with others and so we don't get discouraged ourselves.
 - b) It is about direction, not perfection: If the believer is growing in Christ (moving in the right direction), that is what is expected! Don't expect of others what God does not expect of them!
 - c) And don't ever think anyone (you, me, anyone) will "arrive" before Christ comes back for us.
3. Understand, too, that this is the focus and goal of Pauline Discipleship:
 - a) First: Understand what you are positionally in Christ... and then... grow into that!
 - b) Strive in practical ways to make your character and (especially) your conduct match that.

B. (v9-13) Realize also that this is a *balanced* but very *intentional* lifestyle: Wake up and be light!

1. (v9) We need to *be* different in this world—we need to *be* light.
 - a) Our lives should adorn the Gospel. There should be fruit in our lives that manifests Christ.
 - (1) There ought to be *goodness* in our lives: An inclination to do good and help people.
 - (2) There ought to be *righteousness* in our lives: A striving to do what is right.
 - (3) There ought to be *truth* in our lives: Integrity.
 - b) But we also need to realize that *being* different (Christ-like) is *not enough*...
 - (1) It is not enough to live good, clean lives. Mormons live better lives than we do!
 - (2) (v11-13) We need to preach... We need to speak...
 - (3) But, before we get there, let's not miss the key to being the light we ought to be...
2. (v10) We need to be about the Word of God.
 - a) (v9) In order to know *how* God expects us to live (in order to prove what is acceptable to Him), you need the Scripture.
 - b) (v11-13) In order to know *what* God expects us to reprove, we need the Scripture.
 - c) (v17) To understand the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God, we need the Word of God.
 - (1) I've said it before, and I'll say it again: We need to learn the Bible and do what it says.
 - (2) You need to make an effort to learn the Bible, and I will make every effort I can to teach you. And then I will labor alongside of you to do what it says. That's the key!
3. (v11-13) We need to preach!
 - a) We need to shine the light of Christ in order to manifest the works of darkness in this world.
 - b) (v11 cf. v7) We are not to fellowship with or partake in the works of darkness...
 - (1) Rather, we are called by God to *reprove* them.
 - (2) **Reprove:** [def] To criticize and correct. To disapprove of strongly. To refute.
 - (3) "*Them*": The works of darkness...
 - c) (v12) We are called to reprove "those *things*" done by the children of disobedience.
 - (1) And by reprov^{ing} their *works*, we reprove *them* because you cannot separate the works from the workers who worked them.
 - (2) However, don't miss the biblical emphasis on the *works* of darkness.
 - (a) Biblical evangelism begins with the *work* ("have you ever told a lie?") and then moves toward the *worker* ("what does that make you?").
 - (b) We reprove the *works* and in so doing we reprove the *worker* (but biblical evangelism starts with the works, because the worker cannot deny what he *did*).
 - d) (v13) Our reproof of those "things" done in darkness is simply using the *light* to manifest them.
 - (1) God has not given us a complicated task. It may be difficult and uncomfortable, but it is not complicated. It's really rather simple.
 - (2) What is the light that manifests the works of darkness?
 - (a) FIRST: Christ is the Light, John 1.9-10.
 - i) (John 3.19-21) Christ is the Light that manifests the works of darkness.
 - ii) We are called to shine the light of Christ in the darkness of this world: 1Cor 1.17-25; 2Cor 4.5-6, Php 1.12-18. We are called to preach Christ!

(b) SECOND: God's Word is Light, Psalm 119.105, 130

i) We need to preach the Word!

ii) We need to proclaim with authority (out among the children of disobedience) what God has said!

- Tracts
- Direct Mail
- Open-Air Preaching
- Dooghangers
- Conversations with friends, strangers, family, neighbors, coworkers.

iii) And by God's grace this is what I aim to do.

iv) And by God's grace this is what I aim to lead this church in doing.

Conclusion: (Eph 5.14) So, Christian: Wake up and arise from dead!

- We need to get up and out of our comfortable, me-centered, carnal, worldly slumber.
- We need to prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God (learn the Bible!).
- Then we need to preach God's Son and God's Word anywhere and everywhere we can!
 - ✓ It is not an easy task. It is not a comfortable task.
 - ✓ But it is a very simple task: Go and preach the Gospel to the lost (and then teach and train the converts God gives us to go out with us and continue doing the same).
- And then we also need to grow in holiness (Christ-likeness) so our lives adorn the Gospel we're preaching.
- (v8) We are children of light... we should live like it (our practice) and we should live for it (our purpose).