

## GOD

### Walking as Children of Light (Ephesians 5 verse 8)

God's great desire for us as members of the Body of Christ is that we stand together in fellowship with our heavenly Father and with each other so we can reap the benefits of the more than abundant life. To enable us to do this, God gave us great keys and principles to follow in His Word, many of which can be found in the Book of Ephesians.

We know that the first three chapters of Ephesians represent doctrine, especially the truths of the Great Mystery and what they mean to us in this Grace Administration. Then, the rest of Ephesians provides us with the practical application of this doctrine, showing how to stand and walk forth on the greatness of God's Word so that we and other members of the household are edified.

How we are to walk, to live our lives for God to the best of our ability, is described in Chapter 5:

#### Ephesians

5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children.

The word "followers" is from the Greek word *mimētēs*, meaning "imitators". This verse is telling us that with all that God has done for us and made available to us, He wants us to strive to be like Him. To do this, we need to go to God's Word. As we do, we are figuratively "following" Him, and "to follow" we need to "walk", to apply the principles in our daily lives so we can reap the maximum benefits.

How are we to walk? In Chapter 5 of Ephesians God provides guidance in three major aspects of our walk: to walk in love, to walk as children of light, and to walk circumspectly, or with accuracy and precision. We'll focus here on the second of these, to walk as children of light, and consider what this means to us.

We see this admonition to walk as children of light in verse 8:

5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

The first word of this verse is "For", which refers to something that came before. To fully appreciate what this verse is saying, we'll start in verse 1 and consider what the preceding verses are telling us.

5:1 Be (Become) ye therefore followers (imitators) of God as dear children:

5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

First, we are admonished to walk in love, manifesting the love of God as we renew our minds. Then the next three verses deal with idolatry and other types of behavior which are not conducive to the edification of the household. These verses set a contrast to “walking in love”, as shown by the word “But” at the start of verse 3. In verses 6 and 7 we are admonished to avoid these things in our daily lives:

5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things (*the things listed in the previous verses*) cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

In verse 6, the phrase “children of disobedience” is a figure of speech in which the literal meaning is “disobedient children” but God is using the genitive word “of” to emphasize the “disobedience”. These people failed to walk in love, choosing rather to disobey God’s Word. In verse 7 we are admonished not to be partakers with them: we are not to participate or share in their behavior that is contrary to walking in love.

Even so, God recognizes that there was a time when we practiced behaviors like those expressed in these verses. We see this in the first part of the next verse:

5:8a For ye were sometimes darkness...

According to this verse, we were “sometimes (*more accurately once*) darkness”. This doesn’t mean that we were darkness in the sense that the devil is darkness. Instead, there’s a figure of speech used here. This one is called metonymy, in which a noun (here, “darkness”) is used instead of related adjectives, to provide more emphasis. This verse could be read “For ye were once dark and ignorant”. The sense of this verse is that at one time, when we walked contrary to God’s Word, we were spiritually blind. If you’re “in the dark” it’s hard to see: in John 12:35 it says “he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.”

In contrast to walking in darkness, being spiritually blind, verse 8 then says, “but now are ye light in the Lord.” Here we see the same figure of speech that we saw in the first part of this verse. The word “light” is used for “enlightened”: “...but now are ye enlightened in the Lord.” How are we enlightened? What gives us light so that we are no longer walking in darkness, not knowing where we are going? For the answer, please turn to the book of Psalms in the Old Testament. We’ll look at Psalm 119, verse 105:

### Psalms

119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

God’s Word is the light that we need to be able to walk without stumbling. With God’s Word we no longer are walking about in darkness not knowing where we are going.

We are “enlightened ones” because we have God’s Word. But it’s up to us what we do with the Word of God that is the light for our path. Verse 8 says that we are light “in the Lord”.

To be “in the Lord” is more than being “in Christ”, in fellowship with God. It means that we are standing in the household with other believers, in fellowship with one another. Then our path that we can follow as we walk on God’s Word is enlightened.

When we are “light in the Lord”, then we can “walk as children of light”.

It’s interesting that the word “children” here in verse 8 is from the Greek word *teknon*, which is used in the sense of being a dear, or beloved, child. This is in contrast to that previous use of the word “children” in verse 6, where we saw the phrase “children of disobedience.” In that verse, the Greek word used for “children” is the word *huios*, which simply means “children” without any endearment implied. When we walk in the light of God’s Word in the Lord, we are dear children to God.

Let’s consider this word “light” more closely. We saw from Psalms 119:105 that God’s Word is light to us, allowing us to walk as dear children in the Lord, but why is God’s Word light?

### I 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.

The word “light” is from the Greek word *phōs*, which is used for un-derived and absolute light, the opposite of darkness. Because God is un-derived and absolute, and is the opposite of spiritual darkness, the word *phōs*, or light, is used of God in the Bible.

If we look at the Gospel of John, Chapter 1 verse 1, we read “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” God’s Word was with Him in His foreknowledge way back in the beginning. You can know a lot about someone from their words: to know God’s Word is to know God. So, we can say that God’s Word is God. If God is light, then God’s Word is light. Remember, it’s this Word of God that lights up our path so we can walk.

Because our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ perfectly lived and spoke God’s Word, which we just saw is light, Jesus Christ can be referred to as light. Indeed, when he carried out his earthly ministry, Jesus Christ was light to those who were living in spiritual darkness.

### Matthew

4:16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

Jesus Christ knew that he represented the light of God’s Word.

### John

8:12 Then spoke 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 of life.

Because he made known God, Who is light, by way of His Word (also light), Jesus Christ was the light of the world while he was carrying out his earthly ministry.

### John

12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

12:36a While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be children of light...

While Jesus was present with them, the people had light and could walk a path illuminated by this light. In these verses we see that, because Jesus would ultimately be rejected and crucified, that light represented by his presence would be taken away.

But God had a secret plan to bring that light of His Word back to mankind, and that plan is embodied in the Great Mystery.

When we got born again of God's spirit, it became available for us to love with the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation, something that was not available before. This allows us to do what we are admonished to do in verse 2 of Ephesians, Chapter 5, which is to walk in love.

As we walk in love, we are enlightened by God's Word, so we can walk as dear, beloved children of light, the second aspect of our walk.

In the time of the Gospels, Jesus Christ in his earthly ministry provided the light that allowed others to walk as "children of light" as it says in John 12:36, but that light was available only as long as Jesus Christ was physically present.

In our day and time, when we confessed Jesus as lord and believed in our hearts that God raised him from the dead, we received the gift of holy spirit. According to Colossians 1:27, we now have "Christ in you, the hope of glory". Since Jesus Christ, representing God's Word in the flesh here on earth, was light to the people of the Gospel time, and we have Christ in us, when we walk according to the Word of God, not only with the love of God but in the Lord, we are light. We not only walk with our path illuminated by the light of God's Word, but we shine as lights to those who are still wandering about in spiritual darkness. They see our example as we stand on God's Word with others in the household.

Let's read the next few verses of Ephesians, Chapter 5, which show more about our walk as children of light:

### Ephesians

5:9 (For the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

This verse is a parenthesis, a figure of speech emphasizing what just came before, namely our walking in light. There is a mistranslation here, however: this verse is not talking about the "fruit of the spirit". In the Aramaic texts and all of the critical Greek texts except one, the word

“spirit” is actually the word “light”. This verse really says “the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.”

This verse also contains a figure of speech called ellipsis, in which a word or words are left out to place the focus on other related words. In this case, the verse is saying that the fruit of the light is characterized by all goodness and righteousness and truth. As we walk as children of light, fruit is produced that has these characteristics. This is in contrast to the “unfruitful works of darkness” mentioned later, in verse 11.

Because verse 9 is a parenthesis, we could read from verse 8 directly to verse 10:

5:8b ...walk as children of light;  
5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

As we walk as children of light, we will be able to consider and judge, or prove by test, what is acceptable, or well-pleasing, to the Lord. We can then choose to follow that path, doing those things that are well-pleasing. This way, we won't be walking in darkness doing those things that are not well-pleasing, which produce no fruit, as stated in the next couple verses:

5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (*as we prove what is acceptable to the Lord, we won't do these unfruitful things anymore*), but rather reprove them (*these unfruitful works*).  
5:12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

In verse 11, the word “reprove” can mean “to put to shame”, something that can be done by revealing these works for what they are: unfruitful works of darkness when compared to the light of God's Word.

We see this in the next two verses:

5:13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest (revealed) by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.  
5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepeth, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

As we walk as children of light, relying on the light of God's Word to direct our path, we can recognize and avoid the unfruitful works of darkness. Instead, we benefit from the fruit of the light mentioned in verse 9.

This walk, looking to God's Word to help us decide which way to go, both in our own lives and in our dealings with others, is a walk that requires precision and accuracy. This is stated in verse 15, which represents the third part of our walk as we endeavor to be followers, or imitators of God. It's in verse 15 that we are exhorted to “walk circumspectly”, or with accuracy and precision.

We saw that in order to be our best for God, dwelling together in the Lord, we need to walk in love. As we do this in the Lord we are illuminated by the light of God's Word and can walk as children of light. As we do this, that light of God's Word will reveal the choices available, whether to walk according to the unfruitful works of darkness or according to what is best for us and for the household. Then, we walk circumspectly, or precisely, standing on God's Word to make those right decisions, especially as they impact the others in the household.

We also saw that because God is light and Jesus Christ, who represented God's Word in the flesh, is also light, we who have Christ in us are not only walking in the light but are lights today, shining to those who are still wandering about in darkness, spiritually blind and stumbling about, not knowing where they are going. We need to let our lights shine forth to reach others who, as I Peter 2:9 states, have been "called out of darkness into the marvelous light."

We'll conclude by reading II Corinthians Chapter 4, verse 6:

II Corinthians

4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of (*through the accomplishments of*) Jesus Christ.

- Dr. Rick Batt