

## Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5

**“5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light... 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14 Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, & Christ will give you light.” 15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.”**

# **“Walking in the Light!”**

We ended last week with the warning that the Apostle Paul gave us and a reminder of the importance of our confession and confidence in God’s gracious forgiveness: I John 1: “8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

In the past few messages, we have seen warnings from the Apostle about grieving the Holy Spirit and our toes have been stepped on many times, so this morning we want to drink in that promise of forgiveness and focus on some good news:

- As new men we are to walk in the light!

The theme of walking in the light that the Apostle Paul turns to here in Ephesians was also John’s theme there in First John chapter one before he gives us the comfort of forgiveness:

I John 1: “5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to 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 practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

And we see the same with our text and theme for this morning from the Apostle Paul:

Ephesians 5: “7 Therefore do not be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light...”

The Apostle, as he has been doing draws a contrast between our new life and what we have left behind...

A clear contrast between light and dark, something easy to understand but also VERY profound.  
[mention the Shaw message on God is light]

Then Paul continues with verse 9: “for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth, 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.”

As we walk in the light, the Spirit of God teaches us about what is acceptable to the Lord:

- Goodness righteousness and truth!

We can think about that summary as being very similar to the familiar proclamation of Jesus where He said He is the Way, the Truth and the life!”

- And of course He added that no one can come to the Father except through Him!

So, can we relate Goodness, righteousness and truth mentioned by the Apostle Paul to Jesus as the Way the Truth and the life?

- Well everyone should get Truth!

And here in both cases we are speaking about real truth, objective truth, truth based on the character of God. *[explain objective truth and subjective truth to the children: 2+2=4 v. ice cream]*

So next up would be righteousness, so does it relate to the Way or the Life?

Here I think it relates to the Way because the basis of the Gospel is that we stand in the righteousness of Jesus and as Jesus said it is the only way to come to the Father.

- Every week in our worship at our time of absolution after our confession we celebrate how we now stand in the righteousness of Jesus!

We don't have to worry about whether we have been good enough this week to again approach God because the ONLY way to approach God is in the perfect righteousness of Jesus. That is why the writer of Hebrews tells us to come boldly into the presence of God!

- And that leaves us with relating goodness to life, and that quite frankly is the theme of my message this morning!
- Everyone would tell us that they want the GOOD LIFE, but it is impossible to have or live the good life without Jesus because He declared that He is the Life.

Lets go back to that familiar opening of John's Gospel account as we consider how we live the Biblical good life as those who walk in the light: These are verses that are simple to understand but very profound in what they reveal...

John 1: “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

- Here light and life are intimately related and it should remind us about why light is such a major theme in the Scriptures as Pastor Shaw pointed out years ago!

5 “And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”

- Here we see the problem of mankind, but the Apostle John quickly turns to the Good News announced by John the Baptist...

6 “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.”

Let me pause here and remind us of two significant mentions of light at either end of the Bible that should give us much to ponder all the days of our lives...

What happened on the first day of Creation? God said let there be light!

So, what do we generally think about when someone speaks about light?

- The sun, moon and stars?

**But they were not brought forth until the Fourth Day and then given the task of ruling over the day and the night. We are warned not to worship them, which has been a MAJOR problem down through history! Then we are reminded about worshipping only the creator of light at the other end of our Bibles... Revelation 21 tells us about the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven:**

**“9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”**

**And then at verse 23 we read, “The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.”**

**All of this should flood into our minds when we hear verse 9 of John 1 tell us that. “Jesus was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.”**

**John, as the Apostle Paul often did, including here in Ephesians 5, tells us the bad news before announcing the glorious Good News...**

**10 {Jesus} was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.”**

**The pagan Gentile world was busy worshipping the sun moon and stars rather than their Creator and God’s own people did not receive the Messiah when He was sent to them, but we should be thankful this was NOT the end of the story...**

**12 “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

**Again we have three qualities attributed to Jesus:**

- **Glory, Grace and yes, truth!**

**The Apostle Paul also wanted our focus on Truth, and on life, which we have only by God’s Grace and righteousness which is a reflection of God’s glory.**

**Now going back to our text Paul once again warns us to avoid the opposite:**

**11 “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”**

- **And how are we to expose them?  
By running around being the judges of other men that both Jesus and James warned us against being or does it have something to do with walking in the light?**

**12 “For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.”**

- **When we are walking as new men or women, not grieving the Holy Spirit our lives are a light that exposes the deeds of darkness.**

**Sometimes we have to remember to let the Spirit work on the consciences of those who see our light rather than trying to change hardened hearts on our own.**

- **And how do we walk in the light? Well once again that which is impossible for man is possible for God!**

**14 Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, & Christ will give you light.”**

- **Our new life, which is a life of walking in the light, is a resurrection life, something we simply cannot produce on our own or in our own strength!**

**15 “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”** *[mention time in a political race]*

**17 “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.”**

The theme of submitting to one another is the introduction to the next major section of Ephesians where we will consider it in all areas of our lives, from marriage and family to the work place and our businesses. We will have to wait a bit for those lessons because my hope over the next five weeks is to once again review the various elements of our covenant renewal worship, including all that singing and giving of thanks!

- **And that will take us to another glorious advent season where we remember the coming of Jesus as the Light of the World!**

For this morning let me close with something the Apostle Paul shared with the Saints at Corinth as a reminder to be those who walk in the light:

II Corinthians 4:1 **“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. 2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. 3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. 6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

**Communion Meditation: I Timothy 1**

**“8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. ”**