

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 5:7-8

Message 82

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INTRO: Since it is some time since we were in Ephesians, let me take a moment to show you where we are in the big picture. I have included the main points in your outlines. Verses 1-2 of chapter 1 are an introduction to the book. Then in chapters 1-3 we have the doctrinal section dealing with the wonderful work of salvation. In chapters 4-6 we have the worthy walk of the saved. First, the believer is to walk worthy of his calling. Then the believer is not to walk like the Gentiles walk.

And the point we are in is that the believer is to walk in love. In verses 1-5 we have the twofold command to be followers of God as dear children and to walk in love. Then in verses 6-14 we have the danger of the believer and that is that the believer must avoid sin so that it is never so much as named among the believers.

After the two-fold command for the beloved of God to walk in love came the danger. It begins like this in verse 6:

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

It is possible to know that no fornicator, no unclean person, and no covetous person has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God; and yet be deceived by empty words which say that sin does not affect your standing with God! And if we should get deceived that we can live in the flesh and in sin or that once you are saved you are always saved, we are in danger that Paul describes here.

Recently on communion we consider Matthew 25:42-51. Three servants were given various amounts of money by their master and then the master left. It is a picture of the Lord giving gifts to believers and then ascending to heaven. Well, two of those gained more and the master rewarded them when He returned. The third buried his talent and when the Lord returned verses 5-51 say this:

50 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of,

51 *"and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.]]]*

And we noted that he will be appointed his portion, not with the lost, though that is true; but his portion with the hypocrites. That is the consequence of failing to heed the passage before us. In the last message we began to look at the content of the danger. Verse 6 gives it like this:

6 *Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience."*

- I. INTRODUCTION (1:1-2)
- II. THE WONDERFUL WORK OF SALVATION (1:3-3)
- III. THE WORTHY WALK OF THE SAVED (4-6).
 - A. Walk Worthy Of Your Calling (4:1-16)
 - B. Walk Not Like The Gentiles (4:17-32)
 - C. Walk In Love (5:1-14)
 - 1. The twofold command (5:1-5)
 - 2. The danger (6-14)
 - a. The content of this danger (6-10)

We continue now in verse 7:

7 *Therefore do not be partakers with them.*

Note the word *therefore*. We ask, what is it there for? It is there because if we give in to the teaching that such sinful living as Paul has just mentioned and live in them, one has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Further, if we fall for these empty words he has spoken of, we will become subject to the consequences which are that the wrath of God will come upon such people. Therefore, do not be partakers with them.

Now note the pronoun 'them' when Paul says, "Do not be partakers with them." To whom does this pronoun refer? It is to the teachers who say you can live in these sins and you will still go to heaven. These teachers claimed to be Christians. They no doubt came to church and went along with

all that was being taught but in their own lives they lived in such sins as those listed here and claimed it was not a problem.

"Well," someone will say, "it is not that bad today! Christians don't go to see temple prostitutes! Christians don't lives in the uncleanness spoken of here!" It might be a fearful thing to see how many professing Christians live in all this uncleanness on the internet. Yet on Sunday they preach or teach Sunday School and sing all the songs of the church. No doubt these things are done out of sight, but they are being done.

Now a partaker is a fellow-sharer. To follow these teachers is to be a fellow-sharer with them in these sins. The word used in the original here occurs only one other time. Go to Ephesians 3 to its only other occurrence. We'll begin in verse 1:

- 1 *For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—*
- 2 *if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,*
- 3 *how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,*
- 4 *by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),*
- 5 *which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:*
- 6 *that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,*

When the Church was formed, a new work began on earth. It is still ongoing today. Every true believer is part of that work. And the Gentiles, that is

all of us who are non Jews, became fellow heirs of the same body. Once God worked through the Jewish nation and now Jew and Gentile have become one entity, the Church. And we Gentiles became fellow heirs with the Jews. When the magnitude of what that means is comprehended, it is a staggering thought.

But not only that, we became partakers of God's promise in Christ through the Gospel! The God of the Jews, Jehovah God, became our God and His promise in Christ became ours! We became fellow heirs. We become partakers of His promise! When once we were destined for hell and we were without God and without hope in the world, in a moment of time we became God's beloved children.

Now consider how horrible this is. We were Gentiles, lost and without hope in the world. Then were delivered from sin by faith in Christ. And having been delivered from sin, now through some false teaching we turn back to become partakers with those who live in fornication, uncleanness, and covetousness! How horrible is that? No wonder Paul says let it never be named among you!

So notice now how Paul describes the contrast. Here is a before and after picture. First we have the 'before' picture. Verse 8:

8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

I have built the outline of the second section of Ephesians which deals with how to live the Christian life around the word "walk." Listen to Ephesians 4:1-3:

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering,

bearing with one another in love,

3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called. Ephesians 4:17-23:

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

That is the *before* picture. And now we are told, "Don't walk like the other Gentiles walk any longer. You are a Christian now. Your walk must be different too." Here is the *after* picture. And then comes the beginning of the section we are in now in 5:1-2:

1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

And in our verse the *after* picture is this:

8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

Now Lloyd Jones makes an interesting observation. Look carefully at verse 8 of our passage. Note carefully that it does not say, "For you once walked in darkness." It says, "For you were once darkness." I have recently mentioned to you the saying, "God loves the sinner but hates

the sin." I mentioned an article that said the LGBT people had trouble with that. They know that how they live is not just what they do, it is what they are. They are right. Our text here agrees with them. So Paul says, "You were darkness." That is what the lost are. It is not just their sin that is darkness; they are darkness.

So what is this darkness? It is moral darkness. It is spiritual darkness. Is moral blindness. Darkness is what you have when you have the absence of light. It is an energy-less state. You don't have to do anything to be dark. When one does not do something about one's moral condition, one is naturally darkness. Look at all of mankind and you will see it everywhere. It takes no energy to be darkness.

For those who listen to these messages on Ephesians let me clarify something. I quote D. Martyn Lloyd Jones quite often. He is one of the best expositors of Scripture I have read. But he is a Calvinist. I am not a Calvinist at all. I believe all five points of Calvinism are wrong. But I do not view them all as non-Christians, though very many of them are, just like very many Arminians are lost.

But I say there is a redeeming factor in Calvinism. The Calvinist sees predestination and the whole of the TULIP of their doctrine as unquestionable theology. They can never admit it is their Calvinistic doctrine that causes the problem with logic. So when their doctrine defies logic, then Jones said something like, don't let logic get between you and obedience to the Scriptures. Always obey the Bible.

For example, according to Calvinism the elect will all get saved and no non-elect will ever get saved. So one might say, "OK, if they are going to get saved no matter what I do, why bother with missions or evangelism?" So he said something

like this: when a certain doctrine defies logic, the key is always obey the Scriptures. So when it says to evangelize, then evangelize, even if you can't reconcile that with the doctrine of election.

So in spite of their doctrine, modern missions was started by Calvinists. They have produced the best commentaries and many evangelize and witness and pray. So what I call the redeeming factor of Calvinism is they say that when their doctrine does not logically fit what the Scriptures say, then simply obey the Scriptures. So they have done a lot of Evangelism, though it makes no sense with their doctrine.

Now back to our text. There are some very basic, outstanding, differences in the characteristics of light and darkness. We find the very first one, one of the very first things recorded in the Bible. Go to Genesis 1. We begin in verse 1:

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep..

In its natural created state, the earth lay in darkness. I have a grand-son. I won't tell you which one. He was watching a video and the screen showed a person in the dark, and all you could see was the whites of his eyes. And my grand-son panicked and said, "I can't see anything!" That is how things are in the dark. So you can't picture what the earth looked like at creation. It lay in darkness.

So look at verse 3 now:

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 *And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.*

So here is a principle; light takes energy. No expenditure of energy, no light. To live right takes energy. Drop the energy and darkness overtakes.

So there is a part of the day that is called the daytime. God called the light day. The darkness He called night. Turn to 1 Thessalonians 5. The subject here is prophecy and the things that lie before us in the future. In chapter 4 he has just instructed the believers in Thessalonika about the coming of Christ at the rapture. And in 5:1 he begins like this:

1 *But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.*

2 *For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.*

3 *For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.*

We are just going through the book of Revelation in Low German. Here is how the tribulation begins, as I understand the book. When it looks like this world has finally reached peace, and it looks like war won't happen anymore, then suddenly this world is plunged into the tribulation prophesied over and over again in Scripture. And then sudden destruction comes upon 'them.' Who is 'them'? It is the unbelieving world. The Church has been removed as chapter 4 has just said. And why does the believer have no need that Paul should write to them about the times and the seasons? Verse 4:

4 *But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.*

5 *You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.*

Believers are sons of the day! Jesus said in John 11:

9 *... "Are there not twelve hours in the day?"*

Well, no. There are 24 hours in a day. But there are only 12 hours in the light time of the day. In Israel, daylight hours were a little different than where we live. I have a niece who lives where, I think it was in February that they saw the sun for the first time in months, and all they saw was a wee little piece of the top of the sun.

But the general is 12 hours in the daytime. And then Jesus said:

...If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

10 *"But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."*

Why does the believer not need to be told about the times and the seasons? Because he is of the day! He is a Christian! He has the light of the prophetic truth of Scripture.

One of the most obvious principles of light and darkness is that darkness hides and light reveals. Darkness comes naturally. Light takes energy.

And Paul says in our passage that Christians were once darkness. But now, he says, you are light in the Lord! Now let me say that when it speaks of light, we are talking about spiritual light which affects the moral realm. Spiritual light is a knowledge of spiritual truth. It is that which is only found "in the Lord." You cannot find this elsewhere; not in religion or in anything else. This light is only found in the Lord.

Paul, speaking of the creation of light says in 2 Corinthians

4:6:

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.*

That is how it is with us. We were darkness. And God has shone His light in our hearts, and we comprehended, we received the light. And now we are light in the Lord. This is the true light. And He shone it in our hearts so that we might give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We only become light in the Lord when we receive the light.

Well sin is pictured as darkness. It is the natural state. It is the energy-less state. Darkness does not expel light, light expels darkness. You can't turn the dark on, to expel light. You turn the light on to expel darkness.

Turn to John 3. The principles of light and darkness run throughout the Scriptures. Jesus had just been talking to Nicodemus, a Pharisee who came to see Him by night, lest other Pharisees see where he is going. And Jesus told him about the absolute necessity of the new birth, that is becoming a son of the day. So look at verse 19 at what Jesus told this man:

19 *"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. Why did so many of the Jews, especially the leaders hate Him? When He came into their presence, the light removed the darkness. It exposed them. What was this darkness in them? Their evil deeds! Why do very religious people hate the light? Why do criminals hate the light? Why do all unsaved people hate the light? Verse 20:

20 *"For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.*

Light exposes sin! Set a godly standard, and those who practice that which is wrong will hate it. But when a person converts and lives right, we have verse 21:

21 *"But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."*

Truth and love and light go hand in hand. True love, loves the truth; and truth loves the light. So Paul says the Christian is not to be a partaker with those who give the green light through empty words for Christians to live in sins. Why not? Because you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. And what is the upshot? "Walk as children of light!"

Listen to a few verses from John's Gospel. I will give them in the order in which they occur:

John 1:4 In Him (that is, in Christ) was life, and the life was the light of men.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world. So consider at what John says Christ's life did:

John 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Now there is a very basic difference between light in the physical world and light in the spiritual world. In the physical world, when you turn on the light, darkness has to flee. Now darkness resists light. When you have a small light it will not shine very far. It takes a powerful light to shine far.

In the spiritual world, darkness can resist light. The light of Christ shone first in the Jewish world, and

the Jewish world lay in darkness. And the darkness would not lay hold of the light. It hated the light and resisted the light. So Scripture says Jesus came to His own and His own received Him not.

John 1:7 then speaks of John the Baptist. It says:

John 1:7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

How does anyone who is spiritual darkness comprehend, receive, accept, or take in the light? By believing.

John 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Now why do people who live in moral darkness not receive spiritual light? Because their deeds are evil. But why would that stop one from receiving the light, or believing in Christ, the moral light?

John 3:20 "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Exposure! Oh how we hate exposure! We hide in darkness because we hate exposure. We will learn more of this in Ephesians.

John 3:21 "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Truthful people, those who choose exposure above sin, come to the light. Am I truthful? Are you truthful? Then we will come to the light and be exposed. Exposure results in repentance and confession, two of the things darkness hates with a passion.

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the

light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

John 9:5 "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

So Paul says in our passage:

8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

We were once, not only in darkness, but darkness itself! But now we are the children of light! Jesus said in that great Sermon on the Mount, "You are the light of the world."

In this world, we live in a crooked and perverse generation, but the true Christians shine as lights in the world of the lost. How? By being blameless and harmless, children of God without fault. Now note the words 'shine as lights.'

Why does Paul give verse 8 of our text? Because in the context he has said that the believer is not to be a partaker with those who practice the sins listed in the passage. How can a believer, who is light in the Lord, walk in these sins? It is a contradiction to what a believer is!

So let me speak to our children and young people for a moment. Here is what you need to understand. You are not Christians; you are not light, simply because your parents are Christians. You are not a logger because your dad is a logger. You are not a cook because your mom is a cook. You are not a mechanic because your dad is a mechanic. You are not a seamstress because your mom is. You only are one of those things if you decide to become one of those. So you are not a Christian because your parents are. You can only become a Christian by deciding to become one.

Somewhere in life, as you are growing up, you will need to make

a decision yourself about Christianity. And to become a Christian you will need to understand that you are a sinner. And then you will have to decide if you will repent of your sins or not. And if you do that to the best of your understanding, then you need to say something like this to the Lord, "Lord Jesus, I believe you died in my place. I have confessed my sins. I agree that I am a sinner. And now I receive you as my own personal Savior. Thank you God for saving my soul, in Jesus' name, amen."

Then let me tell you how serious this decision is. This decision is for life. When you make it, you must make this decision for life. And if you do make this decision, you will fail. You will fall. But each time from then on you need to confess your sin and receive forgiveness by faith and move on. No one is ever born a Christian. We must be born again to be a Christian and we do that by repenting and believing in Christ.

Jones makes the interesting observation that the lost are not only in darkness, the darkness is in them! He points out Romans 1:21 which says:

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Here are people who once knew God. But they did not glorify Him as God, and they were not thankful, but they became futile in their thoughts. Oh what damage futile thoughts can do. From this, Paul says, their foolish hearts, or minds were darkened. And darkness begins to set in and study Romans 1 and you will find that that darkness will lead one to such sins as LGBTQ and any other letters you add to that.

Go back to Ephesians 4 for a moment. We have studied this already but look at it in light of our

present verse. We begin in verse 17:

- 17 *This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,*
- 18 *having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;*
- 19 *who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

How do the unsaved walk? In the futility of the mind! It is futile! Why? Because their understanding is darkened. Their mind does not comprehend the light. And then they are alienated from God because of the ignorance that is in them. And it is all because of the blindness of their heart. And then they become past feeling. I listened to one of the men wanting to be the nominee to run for the position of president of the USA. He is married to a man, and he is proud of his family life! What is that? Past feeling! And what has he done? Exactly what Paul says next, he has given himself over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness!

Now let me ask, when it says Christ is the light of the world and it says of Christians, "You are the light of the world," what is this light? It is not the light we see with our eyes, it is spiritual light. And what is this light? Go to 2 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.*

People who are not born again are blind spiritually. Unbelief blinds them. It keeps the light of the gospel from shining on them, and that light is the knowledge of the gospel.

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.*

Now here we have a clear reference that indicates that light is knowledge. So we speak of the dark ages. What made them dark? The lack of spiritual light. Then we speak of the age of enlightenment. What is that? A return to reason, to knowledge. Knowledge gives light. This movement began in the 1700s. It was a return to reason. Man used his reasoning abilities. This gave us things like science and medicine.

For example, in medicine, up until the 1900s leeches and blood suckers were used to try to cure medical conditions. The leaches or blood suckers were used to take blood out of people. Another method used was called bloodletting. Bloodletting is bleeding people to cure medical conditions. This was practiced for several thousand years and only came to an end in the age of science, or the age of knowledge, or the age of reason, or the age

of enlightenment.

Recently we were visiting my aunt who is over 80 years old and she remembered some of this. She said these methods were used to draw poison out of one's system. Without doubt more sick people were killed than cured with some of these methods.

Now the age of enlightenment was largely a secular movement, but as I see it, it hugely impacted Christianity. When you read books like "The Seven Laws Of The Learner" you note this thrust of objective reasoning. Many of the older Christian writers display tremendous reasoning powers.

Knowledge is viewed as light by the secular world. This enlightenment led to science. The word science means knowledge. Much of today's so called science, like the teaching of evolution is not science at all. It is a theory but it is passed off as science and gullible people accept that as truth. Knowledge in the physical world is most crucial. Today we have the corona virus. Israel says they are within reach of a cure. This cure cannot be based on theory. It has to be proven to be scientifically true in order for it to be used.

When we talk about Christ being the light of the world, it is spiritual light, spiritual knowledge that is referred to. Listen to Hosea 4:5-7:

5 Therefore you shall stumble in the day; The prophet also shall stumble with you in the night; And I will destroy your mother.

Who stumbles in the day? Those who do not have light. So listen to verse 8:

6 *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also*

will forget your children.

7 *"The more they increased, The more they sinned against Me; I
will change their glory into shame.*

So Paul says:

8 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the
Lord. Walk as children of light*

This brings us to verses 9-10 which says:

9 *(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness,
righteousness, and truth),*

10 *finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.*

Verse 9 brings us to a grammatical problem. In this message we'll just look at this problem. You will notice that it is bracketed. That means the translators have decided that this is an interjection not directly related to the subject. So one must decide whether to read it like this:

8 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the
Lord. Walk as children of light*

10 *finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.*

If one reads it like that, that means one sees verse 9 as an interjection. But one might read it like this and that means there are no brackets:

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.*

One cannot rightly interpret the text unless one can determine if this is an interjection or not. From the way this sentence is worded in English, I

would say it is an interjection. But when I diagram it, it perfectly makes sense if you read it like this:

You, proving what is acceptable to the Lord, walk as children of light, for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Now that switches the order of wording of the sentence around. However, in the original language that is no problem. In the original language sentences were often, if not generally structured in the order of importance. Personally, I would not put brackets around those words.

So let us first identify what is meant by fruit. I would identify the fruit as spiritual fruit. Galatians 5:22-23a says:

22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

23 *gentleness, self-control.*

Now there is not a right minded person on earth who does not want all of those things. But the true, godly fruit of the Spirit is only available to the true Christian. Now I would say that those who have not been born again may experience love, joy, and peace etc... But what they experience is not the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit Paul speaks of is the love, joy, and peace experienced from knowing God. This is the fruit produced through the Holy Spirit when we are in Christ.

Let me give some evidence for that. In verse 8 Paul said the true Christian is 'light in the Lord.' That is spiritual light. It is the light of the knowledge of truth. Now Paul has said we are to walk as children of light. Well, that is spiritual light. So the love and joy and peace we are talking about is that which is experienced in the Lord.

CONCL: So we conclude. Paul has instructed the Ephesian believers to not let anyone deceive them with empty words. These empty words. When we are told that believers who live in sin will go to heaven, these are empty, deceptive words. When we are told, "Once a son always a son," these are empty words. Empty words are deceptive words.

It is because of sin that the wrath of God is coming on mankind. Sin must be dealt with. So, because the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience, Paul says, "Therefore do not be partakers with them." If I understand 2 Thessalonians 2 right, those who are believers before the rapture, and then turn and live in sin, they will not get saved during the tribulation either. In 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 Paul says this:

9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

If those who have heard the Gospel and have not responded before the tribulation, will be sent strong delusion; how much more those who have had the truth and have rejected it will be sent strong delusion? If they reject the truth and believe empty words now, how much more will they reject it and believe the lie during that time?

Now those who are lost now, are darkness. They are not in darkness; they are darkness. But when they repent of their sins and receive Christ, they become light in the Lord! What a transformation! And so Paul says to such people, "Walk as children of light!"

And in the next message we want to see some of what that means.