



Exposed By The Light

We recently learned how, as true and obedient believers, we reflect God's light into the world, and in doing so are called children of Light ([Eph 5:8](#)). Today we see Paul foster this thought more deeply as he continues to urge the Church to live our lives in a godly manner.

But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." [Eph 5:13-14](#) NASB

In the Greek, light is [phōs](#) and we find it used 68 times in New Testament. While it literally means *light*, as in daylight or the light of a lamp, in nearly every instance it is used to refer to Christ or obedient believers in action.

The other word worth looking at here is *visible*, which in the Greek is [phaneroō](#), and it is defined as "to make visible, make clear" but it is commonly translated "manifested."

In the preceding verses, Paul told believers to ***"not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them,"*** ([Eph 5:11](#)). *Expose* can also be rendered "rebuke." We find a similar instruction in Paul's letter to Timothy where he wrote, ***"those who continue in sin, rebuke [expose] in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning"*** ([1 Tim 5:20](#)).

As we consider the context of our passage, where Paul is instructing believers to shun the evil deeds and works of the world and live obediently to God and Christ (the Light), as well as the use of these Greek words elsewhere in the New Testament, the text become clearer: When we live obediently, we shine Christ's light, which exposes, reveals, and even manifests the sin in people's lives, in both believers and unbelievers. The Light of God living in us makes their sin obvious and, by God's grace, allows the Holy Spirit to beckon them to repentance. And we know that repentance is a key factor in our salvation. Without repentance we cannot be saved (cf: [Luke 13:3](#), [Acts 2:38](#), [Acts 3:19](#)). Therefore, exposing sin through the light of Christ is critical to sharing the full Gospel with the lost.



It's worth noting that the use of darkness (Greek: [skotos](#)) is used 30 times in the New Testament and always in opposition to light. As we know, darkness is the absence of light, and scripture warns us not to abide in darkness.

Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays. [Luke 8:16](#)

The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes. [1 John 2:10-11](#)

Instead, we are told to ***“let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” [Matt 5:16](#)***

Finally, Paul quotes prophecy when he references Isaiah's message to Israel and its blessing when Christ reigns as King of kings during the future millennium. (See [Isaiah 26:19](#), [52:1](#), and [60:1](#)). He uses this as an encouragement for believers to turn from their sins and strive to abide in the light of Christ when he writes, ***“awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*** As we learned earlier in Ephesians, we were once ***“dead in your trespasses and sins,”*** ([Eph 2:1](#)) but ***“even when we were dead in our transgressions, He [God] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)”*** ([Eph 2:5](#)). There is no reason for a believer to continue to live in darkness when we have been made alive in Christ, the true Light (cf: [John 1:9](#)) And now that we're alive, we must live in obedience to God and shine His light as brightly as possible into the dark world around us. In this, we glorify and magnify the Father – the purpose we were created for.

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