

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE CONTINUE OUR LOOK AT EPH. 5:8-14.

▶▶ As we noted last time, ~ in **verse 8a** Paul presents his main point. ~ "for at one time you ~ [believers] ~ were darkness, ~ but now you are light in the Lord."

▶▶ Essentially, ~ Paul is saying the same thing he says in **2 Cor. 5:17**. ~ "Therefore, ~ if anyone is in Christ, ~ he is a new creation. ~ The old has passed away; ~ behold, ~ the new has come."

▶▶ To clarify, ~ Paul's primary point in **5:8-14** is that believers are new creations in Christ.

▷▷ "The old ~ [i.e., ~ the person we were before salvation] ~ has passed away, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ behold, ~ the new ~ [i.e., ~ the new person Jesus has made us into] ~ has come."

▶▶ Then in **verses 8b-14**, ~ Paul builds on his main point.

AS WE SAID LAST WEEK, ~ THE PHRASE "BUT NOW YOU ARE LIGHT" INDICATES THAT a radical transformation has taken place.

▶▶ There has been a radical transformation that Jesus has brought about in believers' lives. ~ Believers are new creations.

▷▷ At the moment a person receives Jesus as their Savior and Lord, ~ God, ~ by His immeasurably great power, ~ removes our sin-hardened hearts, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ gives us "a new heart," ~ and puts "a new spirit within" us.

▷▷ I.e., ~ a brand new nature which by instinct wishes to please, ~ to live for, ~ and to serve Jesus.

▶▶ And, ~ as we said, ~ this radical transformation from darkness to light, ~ the stark contrast to our old self, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and the fact that light can have no fellowship with darkness ~ calls for a radical transformation in our lifestyle.

▷▷ It calls for a new lifestyle that is as drastically different from our old lifestyle as the brightest day is from the darkest night. ¶¶ 1/8

▷▷ And in [verses 8b-11](#), ~ which we'll look at today, ~ Paul gives us four commands that spell out a little of what this radical new lifestyle looks like.

FIRST, ~ IN VERSE 8b, ~ PAUL SAYS, ~ "WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT."

"WALK" IS USED FIGURATIVELY TO MEAN "BEHAVE, ~ LIVE, ~ CONDUCT ONE'S LIFE."

▶▶ So Paul is saying "Conduct your lives as children of light."

▶▶ Or, ~ "Live as children of light."

THE PHRASE, ~ "CHILDREN OF," ~ REFERS TO A CLASS OF PERSONS WITH A SPECIFIC characteristic.

▶▶ Paul has referred to our new nature as "light." ~ All believers have this specific characteristic.

▶▶ So what he's saying here is that believers are to live as those who have this new nature, ~ which by instinct wishes to please, ~ to live for, ~ and to serve Jesus.

BASICALLY, ~ PAUL IS CALLING US IN VERSE 8b TO BE GUIDED BY OUR NEW NATURE.

▶▶ Using different words, ~ Paul is basically saying the same thing he did back in [4:24a](#), ~ that believers are taught "to put on the new self."

▶▶ Again, ~ we, ~ believers, ~ are brand new persons with brand new natures.

▶▶ And both here in [5:8b](#) and in [4:24a](#), ~ Paul is saying that believers are to live as that new person.

▷▷ I.e., ~ we are to be guided by that new nature, ~ which by instinct desires to please, ~ to live for, ~ and to serve Jesus.

↪↪ We are new creations in Christ, ~ and we are to act like it, ~ Paul says.

THE TENSE OF THE VERB PAUL USES INDICATES THAT BEING GUIDED BY OUR NEW nature should be the regular pattern of our lives.

▶▶ This is not to be just hit and miss type of thing. ~ Not just around other believers. ~ Not just at church.

▶▶ But at all times, ~ in every circumstance, ~ around all people, ~ we are to be guided by our new nature. ↯↯ 2/8

AND HOW DO WE KNOW WHEN WE ARE BEING GUIDED BY OUR NEW NATURE?

▶▶ Well, I would suggest that there are at least three easy ways to tell.

▷▷1st, ~ when we make pleasing, ~ living for, ~ and serving Jesus the aim and practice of our daily living, ~ *we can pretty much be guaranteed that we are being guided by our new nature.*

▷▷2nd, ~ when we make it a daily habit to make every effort to abstain from sinful behaviors, ~ *we can pretty much be guaranteed that we are being guided by our new nature.*

▷▷And 3rd, ~ when we quickly repent of any sins that we do commit, ~ we can pretty much be guaranteed that we are being guided by our new nature.

IN VERSE 9, ~ PAUL ADDS A PARENTHETICAL COMMENT DETAILING THREE outcomes of being guided by our new nature. ~~ Not exhaustive.

"(FOR THE FRUIT OF LIGHT IS FOUND IN ALL THAT IS GOOD AND RIGHT AND TRUE)."

▶▶ "fruit" refers to the result or outcome of some effort or action.

▷▷ Basically, ~ Paul is saying here, ~ "as a result of being guided by our new nature we will do what is good and right and true."

"GOOD" HERE MEANS ACTIVE GOODNESS. ~~ THE FOCUS IS ON OTHERS.

▶▶ An outcome of being guided by our new nature will be to actively do good to others, ~ to actively do what is beneficial for them.

▶▶ This is very similar to what Paul told us in 4:32. ~~ I.e., ~ to be "tenderhearted" or compassionate toward one another.

▷▷ As noted, ~ Compassion is an active force. ~~ It does not merely "feel someone's pain." ~~ It is not merely being deeply touched and moved by people's needs.

↪↪ It gets involved whenever and wherever possible to meet their needs.

▶▶ Same with word "good." ~~ It's an active force.

▷▷ Being guided by our new nature will result in us being actively good to others, ~ will result in us actively doing what is beneficial for them. ↵↵ 3/8

THE WORD "RIGHT" IN VERSE 9 REFERS TO THE QUALITY OR CHARACTERISTIC OF upright behavior in general.

▶▶ Another outcome of being guided by our new nature will be that we will lead an upright lifestyle. ~ And of course, ~ we mean an upright lifestyle as defined by Scripture.

▶▶ So, ~ being guided by our new nature will result in us living a lifestyle that is pleasing and glorifying to God.

"TRUE" HERE CAN BE UNDERSTOOD IN THE SENSE OF GENUINE AND SINCERE.

▶▶ So a third outcome of being guided by our new nature will be genuineness in our lives.

▶▶ No phoniness, ~ no wearing masks. ~ No deceiving others. ~ We will be straightforward in dealing with others

▶▶ We will become a person who is open and has nothing to hide. ~ I read that an author asked Charles Spurgeon for permission to write his life story, ~ and Spurgeon replied, ~ "You may write my life in the skies, ~ I have nothing to hide!"

IN VERSE 10, ~ WE HAVE THE SECOND COMMAND THAT SHOWS A LITTLE OF what the radical new lifestyle looks like.

"AND TRY TO DISCERN WHAT IS PLEASING TO THE LORD."

▶▶ Here Paul is calling believers to examine and evaluate issues and situations in order to determine the course of action that is pleasing to the Lord. ~ Imp.: ~ then take it.

▶▶ Earlier Paul warned us to abstain from thoughtless, ~ rash talk. ~ Here Paul calls us to refrain from thoughtless, ~ rash living.

▶▶ Paul used the same verb in 1 Tim. 3:10, ~ where he says to examine candidates for the positions of deacons in the church to see whether they are qualified for service.

▶▶ Paul is calling for critical thinking on our part. ~ To not just blindly forge ahead in our lives.

▷▷ We are to carefully scrutinize and assess issues and situations in order to determine the course of action that is pleasing to the Lord.

▷▷ And we do that by prayerfully studying God's word. ~ Ps. 119:105, ~ "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

↪↪ Acts like a light in the night. ~ Lights our way ~ and shows ↯↯ 4/8

▶▶ Notice, ~ our starting point in examining and evaluating issues and situations in order to determine a course of action is not what is pleasing to us.

▷▷ Our starting point is what is pleasing to Jesus.

▷▷ Now, ~ Jesus is not some cosmic killjoy ~ or only wants His own way.

▷▷ Jesus loves us beyond measure ~ and wants and knows what's best for us.

▷▷ And what's best for us is to make Him the very center of our lives, ~ the controlling factor in our minds, ~ our attitudes, ~ and our conduct.

▷▷ And when we examine and evaluate issues and situations in order to determine the course of action that is pleasing to Him, ~ **and then take it, ~ we will quickly find that that is what's best for us.**

IN VERSE 11a, ~ WE HAVE THE THIRD COMMAND THAT SHOWS A LITTLE OF what the radical new lifestyle looks like.

"TAKE NO PART IN THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS."

▶▶ In this verse, ~ Paul basically repeats what he said in [verse 7](#). ~ Recall, ~ there he said we are not to participate with unbelievers in their sinful behavior.

▶▶ Essentially, ~ Paul reiterates this here in [verse 11a](#).

▷▷ Most likely the repetition is for effect. ~ He is stressing that believers are not to be involved in sinful behavior.

▷▷ As we said at [verse 7](#), ~ Paul clearly does not mean that believers should have no contact with unbelievers.

▷▷ His principal concern is that we do not participate with unbelievers in their sinful behavior.

LET'S TAKE NOTE THAT IN VERSE 11a, ~ PAUL COULD HAVE SAID "WORKS OF SIN."

▶▶ But he specifically used the term **"darkness."**

▶▶ This is no accident. ~ More than likely, ~ Paul used **"darkness"** to remind us that we are no longer darkness, ~ but are now light.

▷▷ And therefore **"the works of darkness"** have no place in our lives. **↴↴ 5/8**

▶▶As we noted, ~ and it's important to review in order to cement it into our hearts and minds.

▷▷As we noted, ~ this radical transformation from darkness to light that Jesus has brought about in our lives, ~ the stark contrast to our old self, ~ and the fact that light can have no fellowship with darkness ~ 77

↪↪calls for a radical transformation in our lifestyle.

→→And that automatically excludes "the works of darkness."

AND NOTICE THAT PAUL CALLS SINFUL BEHAVIOR "UNFRUITFUL."

▶▶Remember, ~ earlier we had said that as a result of being guided by our new nature we will do what is good and right and true. ~~ These are all good outcomes.

▷▷IOW, ~ being guided by our new nature is fruitful. ~~ I.e., ~ it produces something beneficial.

▶▶In contrast, ~ the deeds of darkness are "unfruitful." ~~ I.e., ~ they don't produce anything that is beneficial.

▶▶Oh, ~ sin promises to be fruitful. ~~ I.e., ~ it promises beneficial results. ~~ Recall our discussion in 4:22, ~ where Paul said that sinful desires are "deceitful."

▷▷Sinful desires are "deceitful" because they promise us whatever our sinful hearts desire ~ but fail to ultimately provide it.

▷▷Our sinful desires deceive us, ~ because the result of sin is never quite what we expect. ~~ Adam and Eve ~ Achan

▷▷And ultimately the result of sin is not beneficial.

↪↪Think about it. ~~ Who benefitted from Adam and Eve eating the fruit

↪↪And who benefitted from Achan's greed

▶▶Furthermore, ~ let's call to mind Prov. 20:17, ~ "Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth will be full of gravel."

▷▷Recall, ~ this proverb contrasts the short-term pleasure of sin, ~ seemingly beneficial, ~ with its long-term consequences, ~ definitely not beneficial. ↵ 6/8

IN VERSE 11b, ~ WE HAVE THE FOURTH COMMAND THAT SHOWS A LITTLE OF what the radical new lifestyle looks like.

INSTEAD OF PARTICIPATING IN THE WORKS OF DARKNESS, ~ WE ARE TO "EXPOSE them."

▶▶ "them" refers to the "works of darkness." ~ Paul is not referring to people.

▶▶ "expose" means to reveal the truth about the "works of darkness," ~ to show how wrong they are, ~ to expose them for what they are.

▷▷ They are sin. ~ And we are to show that to people.

NOW, ~ OF COURSE BELIEVERS SHOULD NOT REMAIN SILENT OR FAIL TO SPEAK OUT against evil.

▶▶ However, ~ the immediate context of verses 8b-14, ~ which focus on our radical new lifestyle, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ implies that we are to expose "the unfruitful works of darkness" for what they really are by our radical new lifestyle.

↳↳ I.e., ~ by living a godly lifestyle, ~ we will expose their true nature, ~ and that true nature is sin.

▶▶ My . . . ~ when we are guided by our new nature, ~ i.e., ~ when we live as children of light, ~ our conduct will shine as a beacon to others, ~ revealing evil deeds for what they are.

ON A BROADER LEVEL, ~ I.E., ~ IN THE WIDER CONTEXT OF VERSES 3-7, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ Paul also may have been thinking of a counter-response to the "empty words" he warned about in verse 6.

▷▷ I.e., ~ his warning to watch out for any arguments that justify sinful behavior, ~ that say believers can take sin lightly, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ or that say there will be no negative consequences from engaging in sinful behavior.

▶▶ We are to expose these arguments for what they are, ~ "empty words."

▷▷ We are to teach people from God's word that these arguments have no truth or reality to them, ~ that there are no underlying facts to them, ~ that they state what is not so and therefore mislead people. ¶¶ 7/8

FURTHERMORE, ~ I BELIEVE PAUL IS TEACHING US HERE TO RIP OFF THE ATTRACTIVE veneer placed over sinful behaviors and reveal their true colors when we are tempted to sin.

▶▶ In short we are to call sin ~ sin! ~ The world comes up with

▶▶ But we are not to do that. ~ We are to call sin ~ sin.

▷▷ And thereby rip off the attractive veneer placed over the temptation ~ and reveal sin in all of its ugliness and deceitfulness.

▶▶ Joseph is a shining example of this when Potiphar's wife tempted him.

▷▷ Gen. 39:7-9, ~ "And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, 'Lie with me.' But he refused and said to his master's wife, 'Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. ~ How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?'" ▷▷ Joseph ripped the attractive veneer right off of the temptation.

CONCLUSION.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, ~ A RADICAL TRANSFORMATION HAS taken place.

▶▶ The old ~ [i.e., ~ the person we were before salvation] ~ has passed away; ~ behold, ~ the new ~ [i.e., ~ the new person Jesus has made us into] ~ has come.

▶▶ Furthermore, ~ this radical transformation calls for a radical new lifestyle.

▶▶ And today Paul has helped us see a little of what that radical new lifestyle looks like.

▷▷ It includes: ~ being guided by our new nature daily, ~ examining and evaluating issues and situations in order to determine course of action that is pleasing to the Lord, ~ ↴↴

↳↳ not participating in the works of darkness, ~ and living a godly lifestyle and thereby exposing the works of darkness for what they really are.

▶▶ And indeed, ~ this new radical new lifestyle is as drastically different from our old lifestyle as the brightest day is from the darkest night.

LET'S PRAY 8/8