

**Title |** Seek First the Kingdom of Light

**Passage |** Ephesians 4:17-5:14

*giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light. He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:12-14*

<b>Darkness</b>	<b>Light</b>
Ruled by the devil, the father of lies	Ruled by God, the father of lights, who is light and truth
Futile thoughts (4:17) and fruitless deeds (5:11)	Characterized by hope
Darkened in their understanding (4:18) Without discernment or ability to see how things truly are.	Continually enlightened through the Spirit
Self-excluded from life with God due to ignorance and hard-heartedness (4:18)	Included due to God's kindness who gives light to hear and be taught by Jesus. (4:20-24)
Callous/Insensitive (4:19)	Sensitivity to the Spirit (4:30) and to others (4:32)
Unsatisfied in their indulgence (4:19)	Dissatisfied with what is not yet renewed (4:21-24; 5:9)
Compelled by selfishness and scarcity to consume more (5:5)	Compelled by love to be generous, self-controlled, kind, compassionate and forgiving (4:28-32)
Idolatry (5:5)	Thanksgiving (5:4)

We've been brought into this better kingdom, free, and able to see things as they really are. Paul encourages us to live in light of that, to take seriously this citizenship.

Concern #1 That's not what I see in "the church." Paul instructs us to view injustice and sin in "the church" with utmost seriousness.

**A. Don't be deceived (5:6).**

*For know and recognize this: Every sexually immoral or impure or greedy person, who is an idolater, does not have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you by empty arguments, for God's wrath is coming on the disobedient because of these things. 5:5-6*

This is a warning against habitual, serious sin, but it is a warning so no one is deceived.

Concern #2 How do we view injustice and sin in our own hearts?

**B. Go "All In" against your sin.**

*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light— for the fruit of the light consists of **ALL** goodness, righteousness, and truth —" Ephesians 5:8-9*

- The standard for goodness, righteousness, truth is total.

*4:31 Let **ALL** bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with **ALL** malice.*

*5:3 But sexual immorality and **ANY** impurity or greed should not even be heard of among you, as is proper for saints.*

Paul addresses **EVERY** part of our hearts, attitude, actions, words, everything.

- The benchmark for goodness, righteousness, truth is God and Jesus.

4:32 **Just as God** also forgave you in Christ.

5:1 Therefore, **be imitators of God, as dearly loved children, and walk in love, as Christ** also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God.

Case Study: Anger is a complex emotion with a wide spectrum of expressions.

*“You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, Do not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Whoever insults his brother or sister will be subject to the court. Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be subject to hellfire. Matthew 5:21-22*

*“Be angry and do not sin. Don’t let the sun go down on your anger, and don’t give the devil an opportunity.”  
Ephesians 4:26-27*

Walk in the light of day. Be vigilant and engaged in the active work of exposing the former darkness in our hearts. Go “all-in.”

Marie Kondo your heart, your life:

- Does this reflect the kingdom of light?
- Is this suitable for a co-heir?
- What do you need to put off, what needs renewing, what needs putting on?
- When you look at Jesus and desire to imitate God what needs work?

Concern #3 This seems a tad heavy, exhausting. Is it worth it or possible? I don’t see progress.

**C. Don’t be discouraged in this effort.**

All of this work is responsive to grace, demonstrates dependence on God. We are not alone and victory is assured.