

## The Light

### *Illuminate the World*

*“For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true) and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light.*

*Therefore, it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

-Ephesians 5:8-14

I asked my 7-year-old what he thinks about when I say the word “darkness,” he said, “scared; I’m scared of the dark.” I asked him the same thing about light and, as a 7-year-old might say, he responded “not being scared.” This got me thinking about my struggles with anxiety which has been a darkness in my life. I know true Light now because of Jesus; I don’t have to be ‘afraid of the dark’ anymore. In these verses, Paul is saying that because we are in Christ, we no longer have to walk in darkness. As light now, we can bear fruit of the light (of Christ) and expose the darkness in the world around us. Our hope and this light is possible because of what He did on the cross.

Google defines darkness as “total absence of light” and “evil or wrongdoing.” In Genesis 1 there was total darkness. But then God said *“Let there be light; and that light was good!”* Then sin entered the world. With this came illness and disease, natural disasters and war, anxiety and depression, and all kinds of darkness.

The dark, old self that Paul is talking about is our sinful nature that we were enslaved to before we knew Christ. Even when we have Jesus in our hearts and have a relationship with Him, darkness can still creep in. Remember that anxiety I mentioned? Yep, it still weasels its way in, I can’t always keep it out. Sometimes I let it control my actions. Unfortunately, darkness and sin go hand in hand.

You might wonder, what hope there is in our darkness - in our sin and in our difficulties? However, God does not leave us in that darkness. Micah 7: 8 says, *“...When I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me.”* That is our hope! God is the ultimate Light which we can derive our light, goodness, righteousness and truth from. We have a new self through the death, blood, and resurrection of Christ! We are to put on the new self like a new, clean shirt. We don’t have to keep the old dirty rags we wore before.

After sin tainted this light, Jesus brought hope back with His light; a light that we have within us. We can demonstrate this light by the fruit we bear. You can’t force or boast about your light, instead it is by Christ’ blood that we can let this light show; let it shine naturally through your actions and your words. The new self we have through Christ should produce actions in love and patience. Even if, and when darkness creeps in, we have the brightest of lights, who we can turn to and ask for help. As we show light in the darkness that we struggle with, others will see that light within us! We need to make different choices than what the world expects. Our life of godliness sheds light on the world’s evil. Paul is speaking about a lifestyle; a life that

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we should live, how we act, how we speak. A life that obeys and glorifies the Lord. We are here to make the truth visible. Your light will shine as you live differently. See Galatians 5:22-23.

When reading verse 13, I think about the middle of the night when I need to walk to the bathroom or to get some water. When I use the light on my phone or a flashlight, it exposes my son's Legos and hot wheels on the floor! The small things I would not have been able to see and may have stumbled over. Jesus' light can expose all the darkness in the cracks and corners of our life. Only by grace are we rescued from the darkness and can see the Legos. We can do this by sharing our own story in darkness. God chose us to show His light for others who are still struggling in darkness. What a privilege that is for us! Jesus is calling us out of those areas that we still struggle with, the parts of our old self that we might still hang on to or that return. Darkness once claimed all of us, but it did not have the final say!

Darkness is completely eradicated in Christ! He, and only He, has the power to break the sin and darkness over us! Revelation 21:5 says; *"And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."* Regardless of what darkness you are suffering from or see around you, your light can shine so that it illuminates the world. We have hope! We have that light at the end of the tunnel; eternity with Christ!

- 1. Do you know of any darkness within your life or a loved one's? How can you help shed light on this darkness? How has Christ taken away your darkness?**
- 2. What fruit do you bear with the light you have? Can others see the glowing fruit, or do you need to ask Jesus to help feed your garden with more of His light?**
- 3. Exposing the darkness is not easy, yet we are called to do so. How can you ask God for help in this area? Are there any cracks of your own that you can ask Jesus to expose in your life?**
- 4. Write a prayer below, asking Jesus how His light can be more active in your life. Pray that God uses you as a light in this dark world. Thank God for His hope and light!**



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