

<sup>13</sup>“But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>14</sup>for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, ‘Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.’ <sup>15</sup>**Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,** <sup>16</sup>**making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”**

How are we to live as Christians? Is it enough that we come to church on Sunday, follow the commandments, and help our neighbor in need.?

In the chapter just before today’s Epistle, Paul writes in **Ephesians 4:22-24** “To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup>and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup>and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”

The Lord wants us to be true disciples and live being faithful to His Word, but the old sinful nature gets in the way and throws us off course.

It seems like it's too easy to revert to our old habits of living in the darkness. Because we live in the end times there is evil all around us. Paul tells us to walk in the light and expose the deeds of darkness.

In the verse just after today’s epistle Paul turns our attention toward living the Christian life. Verse 15 <sup>15</sup>**Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise.**

St Paul builds off the foundation that he laid earlier in **Ephesians, 2:8-9**: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Living in faith through the Holy Spirit, we can freely do the works that we are created in Christ Jesus to do.

Paul’s appeal is not compulsion by the law. It's a gospel appeal: Verse 8: “**For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.**”

Paul tells us before our conversion, that we are darkness itself. One’s very essence and being is sin. The gospel enlightens the darkness.

It turns darkness into light. In the office of Evening Prayer, the opening liturgy starts: “Jesus Christ is the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome.”

**John 1:4** “In him was life, and that life was the light of men.”

To be light “in the Lord” is the language of a relationship—a connection to Christ and his forgiveness. It's his light that produces light in the lives of God's children. Therefore, even the works we do are not done by us, but by him.

**John 15:1, 4-5** “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. <sup>4</sup>Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup>I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

For Christians, the temptation is always to revert to darkness, to our sinful ways. We live in the midst of those who cut themselves off from the light, who continually live in darkness. Darkness cannot produce good fruit.

Those who cut themselves off from Christ cannot produce good works.

**Romans 7:5** “For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.”

How often do we take part in the unfruitful deeds of darkness? How often do we find ourselves doing shameful things when we cut ourselves off from the light, Jesus Christ, and from our fellow believers?

Paul writes: **Ephesians 5:11-13** “**Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup>For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>13</sup>But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.**”

God's Law puts our sins in the light—It exposes our sins, and evil desires. God's Law reminds us “For dust you are and to dust you will return.”

Through daily repentance, we drown the old Adam and all the sinful desires, and we bring forth the new man to walk in the light.

Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. Jesus' blood covers all your sins and by his death and resurrection you have eternal life and the promise of the resurrection on the last day.

In his first epistle, John says in **1 John 1:7** "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

Our fellowship with the Lord Jesus, and our fellowship with one another, is clearly important in our walk as children of the light.

Walking together as children of light is a critical witness to the true light Jesus Christ, in this world of darkness.

In Ephesians 4 Paul rejoiced in the unity we have as believers in the body of Christ. Together we are strong, not easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, not easily pulled back into the darkness.

In Christian love, our duty is to expose the deeds of darkness done by our own brothers and sisters in the faith.

We should confront one another in our sin, always with the goal of winning our brother or sister over and proclaiming Christ's forgiveness.

Walking as children of light, we are to expose the deeds of darkness in the world. As the light of Christ shines upon the ungodly, we see the true nature of their deeds—death.

We pray that as the light of Christ shines on them; their eyes may be opened to their sinful way of life.

Every day we awake anew with the light of Christ shining on us. Each day we awake in the grace of our baptism.

Each day is a resurrection from death, a rescue from the deeds of darkness, a deliverance from the clutches of the evil one.

Just as the light that produces fruit in our lives, so it is the light of Christ, the gospel, that enlightens the unbeliever and calls him to faith and a life of good works.

To walk as children of light is to walk in the power of the word made flesh, the lamp for our feet and the light for our path, who shines upon us with his grace.

**Matthew 5:16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Let your light shine by helping your neighbor, or someone at church. let your light shine by volunteering your time in the community and especially at church (there are always things that need to be done).

Rather than the darkness of sin, our Lord calls us to the darkness of Good Friday, through which we receive the light of his forgiveness, life, and salvation by his suffering, death, and resurrection from the tomb.

Through baptism we are children of the light, bearing the fruit of goodness, righteousness, and truth, exposing the deeds of darkness in our own lives, in the lives of fellow believers, and in the lives of the lost.

Live each day in the fruits of the Spirit, and most importantly of all, let love reign in your way of life.

**Galatians 5:22-23** <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Amen