

Ephesians 5:8-21

Ephesians 5:8 – “For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light”

1. Just as described in:
 - a. Ephesians 2:1-3 –
 - b. Ephesians 3:17-24 –
2. “darkness” – at one time these believers not only lived in darkness and did darkness, but they “were darkness”. This was their natural state.
3. “light in the Lord” is their new condition
 - a. They are “light in the Lord”
 - b. They now need to manifest that light with understanding, thoughts, actions and life style.
 - c. It is possible to be light in this dark age, but it is a process that involves learning and maturing after having been brought into the kingdom of God by faith in Jesus.

Ephesians 5: 9 – “(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),”

3588 [e]	1063 [e]	2590 [e]	3588 [e]	5457 [e]	1722 [e]	3956 [e]	19 [e]	2532 [e]
ho	gar	karpos	tou	phōtos	en	pasē	agathōsynē	kai
9 ὁ	γὰρ	καρπὸς	τοῦ	φωτὸς	ἐν	πάσῃ	ἀγαθωσύνη	καὶ
-	for	the fruit	of the	light [is]	in	all	goodness	and
Art-NMS	Conj	N-NMS	Art-GNS	N-GNS	Prep	Adj-DFS	N-DFS	Conj

1343 [e]	2532 [e]	225 [e]	
dikaiosynē	kai	alētheia	
δικαιοσύνη	καὶ	ἀληθεία	—
righteousness	and	truth	
N-DFS	Conj	N-DFS	

1. Paul adds a descriptive phrase to help identify what he meant by “you are light...walk as children of light”
2. A child of the light will produce “the fruit of the light”.
 - a. Just as a child of darkness naturally produces “the things” (5:6) of darkness or “the fruitless deeds of darkness” (5:11)
 - b. So, the born again believer (child of the light) should naturally produce “the fruit of light” as they continue to mature with ever increasing glory
3. This “light” is identified broadly with these terms which each have a large category used to identify and manifest them each. These are both specific terms used to identify a character trait, but also title headings for a much larger list of manifestations of each character trait:
 - a. All Goodness
 - i. Benevolence
 - ii. “Goodness” – *agathosyne* – is moral excellence combined with a generous spirit

- iii. “intrinsic goodness, especially as a personal quality, with stress on the kindly (rather than the righteous) side of goodness
- iv. Opposite of malice in Eph. 4:31
- b. All Righteousness
 - i. Fairness
 - ii. “Righteousness” – *dikaiosyne* – “understood by Greeks as giving all their due”
 - iii. Justice, justness, righteousness as practically (not positionally in Christ, but manifested as a fruit in life style).
 - iv. Opposite of injustice in Eph. 4:25
- c. All Truth
 - i. Integrity
 - ii. “Truth” – *aletheia* – speaks of genuineness and honesty referring to both speaking the truth but also doing the truth
 - iii. Not merely truth that is spoken, but
 - 1. the truth of idea,
 - 2. reality,
 - 3. sincerity
 - 4. truth in the moral sphere
 - 5. divine truth revealed to man (natural revelation – Creation; special revelation – Scripture)
 - 6. straightforwardness
 - iv. Opposite of falsehood in Eph. 4:25

Ephesians 5: 10 – “and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.”

	1381 [e]	5101 [e]	1510 [e]	2101 [e]	3588 [e]	2962 [e]
	dokimazontes	ti	estin	euareston	tō	Kyriō
10	δοκιμάζοντες	τί	ἔστιν	εὐάρεστον	τῷ	Κυρίῳ .
	discerning	what	is	well-pleasing	to the	Lord
	V-PPA-NMP	IPro-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Adj-NNS	Art-DMS	N-DMS

1. This picks up from 5:8
2. “discerning” – dokimazontes – literally means “finding out”. The verb dokimazo is used with the testing of metals and is used to mean “discover by examination, verify or approve. So, this verse says, “finding out what is well-pleasing to the Lord)
 - a. From dokimazo – meaning, “I put to the test”, “I prove”, “I examine”
 - b. It means “to test” and, so by implication “to approve” what God’s will is in every situation.
 - c. It does not mean test to reject, but to test so as to distinguish the true from the false.
 - d. This is going beyond merely using a legalistic list of “do’s and don’ts” for living a Christian life and beyond a religious experience. This will require the mature believer being able to manage themselves in real-time while analyzing and making decisions that are in line with the purpose and intention of the Spirit of God and the Mind of Christ.
 - e. Again, the meaning as it is used:

- i. I put to the test
 - ii. I prove
 - iii. I examine
 - iv. I distinguish by testing
 - v. I approve after testing
 - vi. I am fit
- f. Used in:
- i. Luke 12:56 – you know how to analyze the appearance of the sky, but not times
 - ii. Romans 1:28 – they did not approve God
 - iii. **Romans 12:2** – so that you may prove
 - iv. **Romans 14:22** – in what he approves
 - v. 1 Corinthians 3:13 – the fire will test the quality of every man’s work
 - vi. **1 Corinthians 11:28** – each man must examine himself
 - vii. **Galatians 6:4** – each one must examine his own work
 - viii. **Philippians 1:10** – that you may approve the things that are excellent
 - ix. **1 Thessalonians 2:4** (2x) – we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 – examine everything, hold on to the good
 - x. 1 Timothy 3:10 referring to appointing deacons – “And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless.
 - xi. 1 Peter 1:7 – even though tested by fire
 - xii. 1 John 4:1 – test the spirits
3. This is repeated again in 5:17, which makes this one of Paul’s main challenges in these verses: “Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”
- a. “foolish” now is referring to “darkness” and the “deeds of darkness” the “thoughts of darkness”
 - b. “wise” is “understanding what the will of the Lord is” and “discerning what is well-pleasing to the Lord.”

Ephesians 5: 11 – “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.”

2532 [e]	3361 [e]	4790 [e]	3588 [e]	2041 [e]	3588 [e]	175 [e]	3588 [e]
Kai	mē	synkoinōneite	tois	ergois	tois	akarpois	tou
11 Καὶ	μὴ	συνκοινωνεῖτε	τοῖς	ἔργοις	τοῖς	ἀκάρποις	τοῦ
And	not	have fellowship with	the	works	-	unfruitful	-
Conj	Adv	V-PMA-2P	Art-DNP	N-DNP	Art-DNP	Adj-DNP	Art-GNS

4655 [e]	3123 [e]	1161 [e]	2532 [e]	1651 [e]
skotous	mallon	de	kai	elenchete
σκότους ;	μᾶλλον	δὲ	καὶ	ἐλέγχετε ;
of darkness	rather	however	even	expose [them]
N-GNS	Adv	Conj	Conj	V-PMA-2P

1. “unfruitful works of darkness” or “the barren deeds of darkness”
2. These are “works” or “deeds” of darkness we are not to engage in. This does not mean we live a separate life or avoid other people. Paul here is not talking about locations or people, but “deeds”. We are to avoid the standards, philosophies and the fruit of darkness, which is described as being “barren”, “unfruitful”, empty or vain.
3. “expose them” is from *elenchete* and refers to the practices (the impersonal objects) not the people.
 - a. Two uses of this word and the meaning is determined by the object and the text:
 - i. When addressing a person the Greek word *elegcho* means to convince or reprove. This is what would be done if a person was the object. This would involve confronting the person with evidence, debate, opinion.
 - ii. When addressing an object that is impersonal (a thing, an act, a deed, etc.) the Greek word *elegcho* means to expose or bring to the light. This is what would be done if a deed, a lifestyle or a philosophy was the object. This would involve confronting the deed of darkness with the deeds of light or Word of light. This would be a silent process of the believer’s lifestyle or an explanation of the Truth (natural or revealed).
 1. John 3:20 – “For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.”
 2. 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 – “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

Ephesians 5: 12 – “For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.”

3588 [e]	1063 [e]	2931 [e]	1096 [e]	5259 [e]	846 [e]	150 [e]	1510 [e]	2532 [e]	3004 [e]
ta	gar	kryphē	ginomena	hyp’	autōn	aischron	estin	kai	legein
12 τὰ	γὰρ	κρυφῆ	γινόμενα	ὑπ’	αὐτῶν	, αἰσχρόν	ἐστιν	καὶ	λέγειν .
the things	for	in secret	being done	by	them	shameful	it is	even	to mention
Art-ANP	Conj	Adv	V-PPM/P-ANP	Prep	PPro-GM3P	Adj-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Conj	V-PNA

1. The pagan deeds of darkness are not to be spoken of.
2. “to speak” or “to mention” from *legein* refers to speech in progress and is defined as:
 - a. “I say, I speak, I mean, I mention”
 - b. “I call, I name”
 - c. “I tell, I command”
3. This verse helps explain “expose” in verse 5:11, where it cannot mean name it from the pulpit, identify the sinful deeds of the pagans to the believers, etc.
4. “shameful” also means “base” and “disgraceful”

Ephesians 5: 13 – “But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,”

1. Darkness and deeds of darkness can hide in the darkness of ignorant philosophies, but once the Truth (light) is revealed those in darkness have lost their excuse. They are now committing deeds of darkness in the broad daylight.
2. Three steps:

- a. Exposure to the light
 - b. Manifestation of darkness in life and deed which leads to self-evaluation and self-judgment:
 - i. Rejection of the light (Truth) places that person in open rebellion. These people hate the light. (John 3:20 – “everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed”)
 - ii. Reception of the light (Truth) allows the light to expose their wickedness. These people love the light and despise their own darkness. (John 3:21 – “whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”)
 - c. Transformed into light
3. John 3:19-21 – “And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

**Ephesians 5: 14 – “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: 15 – “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,”

Ephesians 5: 16 – “Making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”

Ephesians 5: 17 – “Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

Ephesians 5: 18 – “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,”

Ephesians 5: 19 – “Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,”

Ephesians 5: 20 – “Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,”

Ephesians 5: 21 – “Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”