

Conclusion: Embodying the Light (15-20)

“Sometimes marriage or other friendship feel euphoric and energizing; other times, they are tedious, empty, wearying routines, or just plain work. The point is that being committed to any love relationship takes daily nurturing, daily effort, and daily practices that build it up.”
(Rebecca DeYoung, *Resistance to the Demands of Love*.)



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LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Jesus the Christ “gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age...” (Gal. 1:4). How might Jesus’ self-giving on the cross rescue us from the present evil age?
- Why do you think Paul is concerned that the sins he lists (vs 3) not “be named among you”? By whom?
- What is the significance of Paul calling the church *saints* or holy ones?
- Is there really a difference between greed and covetousness?
- Why do you think Paul is concerned about dirty talk and sexual jokes? Is this relevant today?
- Paul warns: “Do not be their partners” (7). What tempts us to partner with the sons or daughters of disobedience? Why must we not?
- In what ways are God’s children characterized by light?
- How do you think God intends for light to expose the “unfruitful deeds of darkness”?
- Discuss each of the applications (“therefore”) from vv15-20.

Imagining the Kingdom: Living as Children of Light

Jerry Cisar — September 10, 2023

Text: Ephesians 5:3-20

Introduction

I. Sons and Daughters of Disobedience (3-6)

A. The Church’s Call to be a Witness

- i. We bear His name.
- ii. Paul calls us saints... God’s holy people.
 - a) 1 Pet. 2:9
 - b) “Be holy as I am holy.”

B. Paul is not addressing the world here but God’s holy people.

Origen (early 3rd cent.): “*Fornication* in the strict sense is consorting with prostitutes. Impurity is the generic name... not only for adultery and pederasty but also all the other inventions of sexual licentiousness in all their many and diverse practices.”

Ambrosiaster (late 4th cent.): “What a grave sin is greed, though we gloss over it when compared with fornication and uncleanness. We treat greed as a minor fault when in fact it is a grave matter.”

C. These “must not to be named among you.”

- i. As the NIV puts it, “there must not even be a hint of it.”
- ii. CEB “shouldn’t even be mentioned among you.”

iii. *what the onlooking world might name among us*

D. Hearts whose desires still need to be transformed.

i. Sin: humanity's rejection of God's good rule and is harmful to both ourselves, others, and all creation.

ii. Paul call not for silence and inactivity, but thanksgiving.

E. The sons of disobedience or the adopted children of God who inherit His kingdom.

i. Adoption in the Roman world

ii. Anyone who still lives as the sons of disobedience hasn't truly taken on and inherited what the Father has for them. They are by no means capable of filling their role as sons and daughters to care for the rest of God's household.

II. Children of Light (7-14)

A. Adoption has made both a legal status change in who we are and a transformative purpose change in what we live for.

i. "Do not be their partners."

ii. Their inheritance and ours are two very different things.

a) Heirs of the promise with Israel in Christ (Eph. 3:6)

b) We cannot be like Esau who wanted both the promise, the blessing and the immediate satisfaction of the stew.

B. Once darkness. Now light. Walk as children of light.

i. Belonging to the light or to the darkness (1 Thess. 5:5-9)

ii. "sons of disobedience" v. "children of light" (comp. to 2:1-3)

iii. But what does it mean to be characterized by light?

a) A change in how we perceive the world

b) A change of sphere

➤ Col. 1:12-14

C. The fruit of light vs. the fruitless deeds of darkness.

i. It is likely the fruit produced by light in our lives.

ii. Fruitfulness comes from Genesis 1:26-28.

D. How are the fruitless deeds of darkness "exposed by the light"?

i. "But all things that *are being exposed* by the light are made manifest." (Timothy Gombis, *The Drama of Ephesians*)

ii. As we live in light, the light will do its exposing work.

E. "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will **shine** on you." (14)