

# ARE YOU A LIGHT OR DARKNESS IN THE WORLD?

*1 John 1:5-7, Ephesians 5:8-13, 1 Thess. 5:1-11*

*Bro. Ezekiel Oghenekaro*

*<sup>5</sup> This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. – 1 John 1:5-7*

At the centre of our minds is a conscious or unconscious decision regarding our personal approach to living. God has endowed us with the gift of choice. Thus, our fundamental choices determine the direction and nature of our living.

All the approaches to living can be narrowed down to two: we are either living in the light or living in the darkness. The Holy Spirit says that a commitment to living in the light must be made or the good life from God cannot be experienced.

Have you acknowledged the truth that practical, God-like living begins with a decision to live in the light? First **John 1:5-7** will help you make that decision if you have not made it. This passage gives a convincing, convicting rationale which should persuade anyone to walk in the light. Commit or recommit yourself to the life of light as John describes the characteristics and beauty of that life.

**Light** as a noun is the natural agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible while **darkness** on the other hand is the polar opposite to brightness, is understood as a lack of illumination or an absence of visible light (Wikipedia).

From childhood, we often sing this children song, “This little light of mine, I’m going to let it shine.” It is much more than just children’s song, however; it gives an accurate view of life. Life is a moral struggle between darkness and light. As Christians, we are in the middle of the struggle.

The Word of God calls on us to make a difference—to be light in a dark world. The Bible Identifies Christians as “children of light” in **Ephesians 5:8-13**:

*For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all good- ness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is dis- graceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.*

Notice again what verse 8 says: “For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light.” Paul saw a benefit in mentioning what our past lives were like. He did not want Christians to forget the condition we were in without Jesus. This passage sums up our former lives with one word— “darkness.” We not only lived in darkness; we *were* darkness. God’s Word describes this darkness.

## LIVING IN DARKNESS

Darkness takes delight in doing wrong and rejoices in the perversity produced by evil (**Proverbs 2:14**). Darkness is the way of the wicked (**Proverbs 4:19**). It reverses God’s decrees, calling evil “good” and good “evil” (**Isaiah 5:20**). Dark- ness imprisons people (**Isaiah 42:7**).

We are told that darkness has the power to pervade the whole body (**Matthew 6:23**). The Bible declares that sinners will be cast into outer darkness in judgment (**Matthew 8:12**). It also says that people reject Jesus because they love darkness rather than light (**John 3:19**). In darkness, people come under the power of Satan (**Acts 26:18**). In fact, darkness is a power itself— a power from which we cannot escape by ourselves (**Colossians 1:12, 13**). Darkness blinds people (**1 John 2:11**).

<sup>11</sup> *But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

Later in the Ephesian letter, we read that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (6:12).

In close to one hundred passages in the Bible, we discover the evil and the damage of moral darkness. In my thinking, Christians do not understand how dark the darkness of the world really is. We do not think about it. We may prefer thinking about being children of light, but we must not forget the danger of the darkness.

Darkness is behind every crime statistic we read in the news. Darkness has been the power at work in every act of sin ever committed. Darkness destroys marriages; it produces drug addicts; it gives birth to hatred. It provides the breeding ground for lust, and it fuels abuse and violence. Darkness encourages envy, stirs up strife, and causes selfishness to thrive. It drives human beings to unthinkable actions. The Bible makes this clear:

*For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. . . . And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteous- ness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without*

*understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful (Romans 1:21, 28-31).* Before Christ, we were not just *in* darkness. We *were* darkness.

## WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Although we once were darkness, we are now light in the Lord (5:8). Paul called on Christians to “*walk as children of light.*” Notice what God’s Word says about light.

1. **Light produces good fruit.** “(For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth)” (**Ephesians 5:9**). “Goodness” (Gk.: *agathosune*) has to do with moral excellence. We go beyond knowing truth; we live it. Light produces fruit. *My wife told me something recently what someone said in their women class, and it’s very disturbing. That some brethren who stand on the pulpit to teach the word, at home are different from what they teach. This is truly happening and it’s a concern because we are darkness deceiving ourselves – James 3:1.* Light finds its fullest expression in serving willingly and sacrificially for the benefit of others. “Righteousness” (Gk.: *dikaiosune*) is “*giving to men and to God that which is their due.*” It means behaving toward God and people the way we ought to behave toward them. “Truth” (Gk.: *aletheia*) is not so much something that we know, but something that we do. Light makes us strong enough not only to know the truth, but to live it.
2. **Light finds out what pleases the Lord (Ephesians 5:10):** The word translated “*trying to learn*” (Gk.: *dokimazo*) could also be translated “*discovers.*” The word came out of the market places of the Ancient East. The little shops in those crowded bazaars seldom had windows. They were dark. The merchandise (*the goods for sale*) was hard to see. Careful inspection was almost impossible. People would take a clay pot, a piece of cloth, or whatever they wanted to purchase, and go outside to hold it up to the light. Then they could find any flaws, cracks, or stains that they could not see in the dark shop. Living close to Jesus does this for us. His light helps us to see what our motives, actions, and words are really like. His light helps us to see what is in us that pleases Jesus, as well as what moral flaws and sins exist in us and need to be removed from our lives.
3. **Light exposes evil.** “*Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light*” (**Ephesians 5:11-13**). The way to expose evil is to shine the spotlight of truth on it. Generally, everyone of us usually experience darkness in various form, either as power failure or otherwise. Growing in Okumagba was fun, because the noise around will remind you of the importance of light... Just as it is true with NEPA light, it is also true in our spiritual lives. The light of Jesus prevails over darkness. Every person who belongs to Christ and is a child of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ is a living testimony that light prevails over darkness. We were once darkness, but now we are light in the Lord. Jesus cares enough for us to shine His light into our lives—to penetrate the darkness and bring us to light.

Let’s consider our last text **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11:**

*But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. <sup>4</sup> But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. <sup>5</sup> You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. <sup>6</sup> Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. <sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. <sup>9</sup> For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.*

The children of light look to the day of Christ. Paul says, *"But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that aught be written unto you"* (v. 1). The terms, "times" and "seasons," are terms which have to do with the last things, such as the coming of our Lord and the final judgment.

He says, *"I don't need to write unto you about this."* In 4:9 he used about the same expression regarding brotherly love as he said, *"I don't have to write to you about love of the brethren because you are taught of God to love one another."* Paul says he does not need to write to them about the last things because they knew perfectly well that we don't know when the day will be. He says the Saviour will come as a thief in the night. How does a thief come? Do you get an invitation in the mail? No, he strikes unheralded and unannounced. Second Peter 3:9, 10 says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief: . . ." People at a town in Arkansas not long ago were saying, *"He's coming right away. His coming is imminent."* Time-setters in practically every age have tried to pinpoint the exact time. But **Matthew 24:36** makes it clear that no man knows the day or the hour. The Son of Man said He didn't know. The angels of heaven don't know. No man knows. Thus, Paul says, *"Because you know perfectly well that you don't know the time, you need to live in continued preparedness."*

The fact that He is coming back needs to have an effect on the way we live. Unless the truth of His second coming affects how you live today, then you really haven't taken to heart the lesson of this section.

## CONCLUSION

Let us live as children of light. Go to school this week and remember that you are a light in that place. Go to work this week and be light for people around you. Be a light to those in your home. Let them see Jesus when they see you.

If you are not a Christian, turn to Christ, repenting of your life of darkness. Be baptized for the remission of your sins. Pass from darkness into light. <sup>i</sup>

### <sup>i</sup> References

Children of Light (Unknown Author) – Truth for Today – [www.biblecourses.com](http://www.biblecourses.com), 1995, 1998  
Living as Sons of Light (Avon Malone), 1983, 2004 - Truth for Today – [www.biblecourses.com](http://www.biblecourses.com)  
Living in the Light (Eddie Cloer), 1985, 2005 - Truth for Today – [www.biblecourses.com](http://www.biblecourses.com)