

You Were Darkness
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Happy new year. We're going to continue today in the book of Ephesians. I think we'll probably finish the book of Ephesians this year. Julie shared last week, and the two weeks prior to that I talked about the church. Today we're going to get back into Ephesians chapter 5, starting in verse 8 where Paul has much to say about light and darkness.

Lets start by reading this section in Ephesians five, and then we'll take it from there. We won't cover this entire section today, but I want to read the entire six or seven verses because they go together.

Eph 5:8 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light* **9** *(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),* **10** *finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.* **11** *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.* **12** *For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.* **13** *But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.* **14** *Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."*

If you think back to the creation narrative in the book of Genesis, you'll remember God creating natural light. We've talked about the natural creation many times, specifically how everything that God made visible through creation was an picture or shadow of something invisible. All created things in the first creation, first man, first covenant, were created with a new creation, a new covenant, and a new man in mind. And so every facet of natural creation paints a physical, material, picture of an eternal and spiritual reality in Christ.

Well, if you'll recall, the very first thing that God created after making the heavens and the earth was natural light. Remember the famous words "let there be light, and there was light". And then God divided the light from the darkness. And the light He called day, and the darkness He called night. Here's a questions for you – where did the darkness come from? I mean, I can't remember him saying "let there be darkness". He only said "let there be light"....and then he divided it from the darkness. Well, as you know, the answer to that question is the fact that darkness doesn't need to be created because it is merely the absence of light. Darkness is nothingness. It exists where light does not. It exists wherever there is not light.

So God made a division. He made a division that all humanity could see and experience every day of their life. And that division was between light and darkness. Why did he divide them? Because one exists where the other does not. Darkness exists where light does not. Light exists where darkness does not. And all of this is a picture of something. It was a natural picture of something that humanity would

one day need to realize and experience in a much greater way. **It's a picture of the fact that darkness is the nothingness that is there where Light has not shined.** Only in light can you see anything that is real. Only in light do you come into contact with reality. Only in light do you have any awareness of what is there. In darkness there is absolutely zero sight. Darkness is the home of everything untrue and unreal. It is the place where minds create and imagine reality.

God wanted to make this distinction clear, so after creating light, he established a boundary between light and darkness. He named them both, and gave them to us to comprehend. It is like the campfire analogy that we have used before. If you were camping in the woods in the middle of a pitch black night with a campfire, you would have a ring of light by which you could see. Everything within the boundaries of the light was obvious and knowable. But everything outside of the small circle of light was left to anyone's imagination. What's out there? I think I heard something. It could be a chicken, a bear, a fork lift, a fallen tree, a fallen star, a man, a sasquatch, an earthquake. Who knows! It could be anything until light destroys imagination by defining reality. Until light parts the darkness and reveals the truth of the matter.

Why am I saying all of this? Because natural darkness was created this way in order to testify of a much more serious darkness. The condition of natural darkness is only the type and shadow of a much more serious condition – a condition where humanity imagines and assumes and lives in and IS the absence of light. A condition that is, in fact, a kingdom that sits in utter blackness, where Satan can make you believe anything that he wants because there is no light for you to tell the difference. I'm talking about the darkness of the adamic heart and mind. I'm talking about the darkness that naturally resides in you until light shines.

The darkness of humanity is a far blacker reality than natural darkness. This is the darkness to which Jesus came and shined the light of life. The prophets spoke about this.

Isa 9:2 The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. The ones who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, light has shone on them.

It is of this very thing that Jesus spoke when he said:

Joh 3:19 And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Christ came into a world of darkness as the only existing light. He wasn't just the brightest light. He was the only light in a world of pitch black humanity. And that is why He said *"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."* He offered mankind a light. Not a natural light. The light that he offered was the **Light of Life**. And so, man could not keep his own life and have this light. Man's life was the darkness. Man's life was the problem. In order to receive the light that Christ offered, man had to receive the *Light of Life*, and be crucified to all that they had formerly called light and life.

Do you understand what I mean? Christ didn't offer the old man light. Christ is not trying to shine light on your day or on your plans. He's not trying to help you plan

your future with his light. He's not trying to help you make good financial decisions with his light. That's not the kind of light that He is. He offers a light that shines in your soul to redefine all things. He shines a light in you that is the lamp of God, the light that is God's view. And that light has a life associated with it, just as darkness has a life associated with it. **The fallen adamic man is the universe of darkness in which Satan dictates what is real. But the resurrected life of the Son of God is the universe of Christ in which the Spirit of Truth reveals what is real.**

And, in every way, to know the one will cost you the other. Remember, God has divided the two. He divided them even in the shadow. They do not overlap. They do not blend. To every degree that the Light of Life has been formed in your soul, to that degree you have been liberated from darkness. To whatever degree that you and I love the darkness, to that degree the Light is not free to shine. The only way that His light works in us is to the measure that we will part with all things that we have formerly known and formerly been.

I'm mentioning all of this because of what Paul says here in Ephesians 5:8. He says "formerly **you were** darkness". He doesn't say "formerly you were influenced by darkness", or "formerly you had some dark ideas", or some "darkness issues". He says something much stronger than that. And until we are willing to face the darkness of the natural condition, the darkness that we are, not only will we not understand what Paul is talking about here in Ephesians, we also will not allow the Light of Life to teach us the truth.

We are the darkness into which Christ's Light of Life must come and shine. He doesn't shine ON us. He shines in us to our displacement. He doesn't give us a better perspective. He gives us Himself, His Life, as our perspective. And the very one who started everything by shining light in the midst of darkness is now the one seeking to fulfill that type and shadow in your soul. This is precisely what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:6.

***2Co 4:6** For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

There is a light of which natural light is only the type and shadow. There is a light that makes the sun ashamed and the moon draw back. Natural light shows us what is naturally real. In that light we can see what is in the earth. But the Light of which Paul speaks in this verse is a far greater light. So many Christians are waiting for natural light to see natural things. But there is a greater light than all of that. It's a light that shows us what is eternally real. It's a light that shows us the heavenly reality of being in Christ. It awakens us to the fullness of His Day. So we can walk in the Light as he is in the Light, and know fellowship with the Father and with the Son. And so Paul says in **1Th 5:5** "You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness."

But we were. We were not only *of* the darkness, we were the darkness. And that is how Paul starts this section in Ephesians chapter 5. "You were formerly darkness, but now light in the Lord, walk therefore as children of light". I know I'm spending a while on this first sentence, **but experiencing the gospel hinges on this reality.** Unless we truly see the reality that we **are** the darkness into which He must shine, then we cannot learn. If we suppose that we need to be corrected by His Light, and

not destroyed then there is no way for us to grow. If we approach Him asking him to fill in the blanks, the places where things aren't lining up, then there is nothing that he can do.

God is never going to fill in your blanks. God is going to show you to be the blank. This isn't words with me. Most of you already know that. I'm not trying to insult anyone. And I get no pleasure from rehearsing the blindness of Adam, or degrading humanity. Contrary to what you may think, I don't ever sit down and plan another way to describe the fallenness of the natural man.

I just talk to people every day...and I know for certain that THIS is the key issue. **This is the reason why so many cannot see Christ. This is the central, foundational thing that man rejects. And because of not facing the magnitude of our darkness, because of not being willing to accept the enormity of the problem, we never begin to see the greatness of God's solution. When we suppose the wrong problem, we look for the wrong solution. And that is how religion was born. And that is how religion is maintained.**

I talk to people all the time and I see the same thing in all of us. What do I see? I see that men love darkness. **We love darkness because that's where we can pretend and imagine and make believe that things are real. We love darkness because that's the only place where Adam still has a life. That's the only place where our ideas have relevance and our religion is applicable and our life is significant. We will accept the idea that we need more light. Sure, that's not too hard to accept. Nobody's perfect, we say. We will accept the concept that we need more light, but we will not accept the reality that we are the darkness. And that is where truth begins. Truth begins when we start to accept that we are the lie.**

It's not just that we are darkness, but that we love the darkness that we are. That realization is where we can begin. A heart that will face that reality is a heart that will allow Him to shine. Only when we accept that we are darkness do we begin to look to something absolutely OTHER than ourselves to shine light. And if we will turn from ourselves to see Him, then seeing Him will redefine all things. We will be redefined. If we will see Him in His light, then we will see who we are, where we are, what is real. When Christ, our life, is revealed, then we are revealed together with Him in glory. But, on the other hand, if the eyes of our heart will not see Him, if they will not allow His light to illuminate our soul, then we will walk in our own darkness. And that darkness is very great. Jesus says this very thing.

Jesus says, "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"

I talk to folks just about every day about the Lord. And I see in us all the very same thing. We come to God with our questions, but the questions themselves are darkness. We come to God with something we think we need to know, but underneath the question is 17 layers of false assumption. So often the question only exists in our hearts because of our refusal to see the truth. So often the question has to do with trying to make Christ's words fit in with our imaginations.

People often come up to me and say things like, "Jason, I'm a Christian and I have strong faith. I really like John chapter 15 and I was hoping that you could tell me how I can bear fruit that glorifies the Father. What does He want me to do differently?" This kind of thing happens all the time. And even with my puny measure of light, even with the smallness of what I can see, I'm immediately in a difficult situation. I have a problem. Why? Why am I in a difficult situation? Because there is no truth in the question. Can you see what I mean? **The question itself only exists because of darkness.** The question exists because we have stacked up layers of imaginations.

For starters, what is strong faith? Do we even know what faith is? Strong faith would have actually eliminated this question. Second, what is fruit? Is that something you do, or something that Christ is? Do you make fruit or bear fruit? Or what about the concept of glorifying the Father? What do we suppose that means? What is glory, and how does it work in us? All of these are extremely relevant questions that we don't understand until light appears. And when light appears, when the day dawns and reality can be seen....well then, this question dissolves into nothingness and darkness because that's where it came from.

It's like the man that said to Jesus, "what must I do to work the works of God?". You see, there's so much assumption in that question. So much darkness. Jesus really has no option except to point to the one thing out from which all good works come – faith. Believe in Him who God has sent. I'm sure the man went away disappointed or confused. But that's the closest thing to an answer to that question.

And I'm no different than this man. I do the exact same thing all the time. But here's my point. When I get questions like these....questions that even a little bit of light can show to be darkness, questions that even I can see are creations of darkness...when I get questions like this and see all of our assumptions I begin to wonder how God is able to show us anything at all. I mean, if we bring so many imaginations to Him and ask Him to fill in our blanks, if we ask him to put the theological cherry on top our fictitious banana spit....its amazing to me that He can find any heart that is willing to bear the truth. Have you ever tried to teach something to a know-it-all kid? Isn't it somewhat annoying to have a 3-year old tell you how life works?

You see, that drives me to my knees. Recognizing this really humbles me, and I realize in that the absolute necessity of coming to him as a little child, coming to Him as one who knows nothing, one who IS nothing, nothing but darkness by nature. **I'm not a good man who struggles with darkness...I'm the darkness pretending to be a good man.** I'm not a good Christian that needs a little more light. I am the darkened heart in which He must shine to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He must divide the light from the darkness in ME even as He has divided it in the natural realm. And that will never even begin if I remain one who loves the darkness.

Light can begin to shine when darkness is acknowledged and renounced. Light can come when there is a place for the Light of Life to bring His division. I spent a lot of time on this first sentence, but you see, for Paul this was a given. Formerly, you were darkness. It's a fact. Humanity will not believe this. Christianity (the religion) will not accept this. We will believe just about anything in the universe, except that we have no business believing anything without light. We will assume anything in

the world we want, except for the fact that all of our assumptions are creations of darkness. Can you hear what I'm trying to communicate?

Religion...and I mean ALL OF IT....exists in the world today only because man needed to create a fictitious place where light and darkness could coexist. You think about that. Religion is where man sits in darkness and pretends he has come to light. I'm not talking about Buddhism here. I'm talking about Christian religion that is void of the light of life. I'm talking about the enormous creation of man that exists in the earth because we would not allow God to divide the light from the darkness.

Men love darkness because their deeds are evil. So what we do is we sit in darkness and imagine that there is light. We teach about light...but from a safe distance. We sing about light, but we dare not approach it. Because the moment that we are actually willing to see light...I mean the very second that we are willing to behold the light of His life...we are made to face into something that necessarily changes our entire world and starts us over from nothingness. We face the reality that we are the darkness. It's not something that we believe, it's something that we are. It's not something we did, it's all things we do. And the only answer to that is a cross that destroys puts away the night, and causes a new day to arise in my heart. The only answer is to allow the cross of Christ to transfer us out of the kingdom of darkness and reveal in us the kingdom of the Son.

And so Paul says, "formerly you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk, therefore, as children of Light". Formerly, our constitution, our make-up, our nature was the darkness of the adamic man. But now we have a new nature. Now we have become partakers of a new constitution. Now, if we have born of His Spirit, then we have been translated out of darkness and made to dwell in the Son of His love. We have been given the light of life.

This is what we are, Paul says. And yet, this is not necessarily how we walk, or what we see. This is what God has done, but this is not instinctively or automatically the Light by which we see. Can you hear what I'm saying here? Paul says, you are now light in the Lord, therefore walk as children of Light. This is very similar to what Paul says in Galatians 5:25. He says "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." There is the finished work of God through Christ, and then there is always the experience and possessing of that finished work through faith.

So, to be clear, Paul is saying that those who have come to new birth have literally passed from darkness to light. They have become altogether new as a matter of nature and kind and state of being. Therefore, Paul says, walk according to what you are. Therefore, live in the light, walk in the Light, if you have been born of the Light.

Well how does one who has been born of the Light walk in the Light? That is the imperative question. The answer is that the light has to shine. The light has to shine out from the darkness to show you what is real. The light has to enlighten the eyes of your understanding. It has to give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the true knowledge of Him. It has to divide between night and day, show you the things that God has freely given, guide you into all truth. The Life is in you immediately upon new birth. The light then must shine to define all things of spiritual relevance, and conform you to itself.

We'll pick up with this next week.