

Series: Ephesians

Title: Awake, Arise, Christ Shall Give Thee Light

Text: Ephesians 5: 14-16

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**Ephesians: 5: 13: But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14: Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.**

## **A STATEMENT OF FACT**

First, we are given a simple statement of fact—"all things that are reprov'd [discovered, made open for us to behold] are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." (Eph 5: 13)

In order to be reprov'd we must be admonish'd for our sins. Our faults must be made known to us; our sins must be discovered to us; our righteousnesses must be revealed to us to be filthy rags; our flesh must be made known to us as altogether unprofitable. Everything we are by nature, everything we do by nature, everything we think or say by nature—our flesh, yea, we ourselves—contribute nothing to our salvation. We must be admonish'd in order to understand this.

We are reprov'd when we are convicted and convinc'd in our hearts of our sins. It is not pleasant to be reprov'd. At first, we usually do not like reproof. We usually try to shoot the messenger. But if we belong to Christ, it is not the messenger, but God who sends us the reproof. So take heed. But reproof is absolutely necessary for us to see our sin and our errors. It is the first step to being saved from our sins.

"But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest [made open for us to behold] by the light; for whatsoever doth make [us see] is light." We cannot see when our eyes are darkness, nor can we see when the place to which we look is darkness. Darkness hides everything from our sight.

This is our natural born condition into this world. Our eyes are in darkness. Our sins are in the dark so that we cannot see them. Our hearts are darkness so that we cannot be convinc'd by natural means that we are blind and in the dark and that our best deeds are really evil. We are blind to see holy God and to see that God requires perfection and absence of sin. By nature, we are blind to see that God requires his people come to him through faith in Christ his Righteousness.

So the very nature of light is to make us see things which darkness previously prevented us from seeing. "All things that are [discovered] are made [to be seen] by the light: for whatsoever doth make [us see] is light."

## **THE LIGHT WHICH REPROVES**

First, the light which reprov's is Christ is the Light. Christ said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (Jn 9: 4-5) Christ is the Light. He is still in the world, still working the works of God. He is in this world spiritually now, as when he was in this world physically then. He finished those works God gave him to do on this earth: he fulfilled prophecy concerning his earthly work, he established his church in the earth, he sent forth the gospel, he declared God just and Justifier on the cross, justified his people from all our sins on the cross, reconciled all God's elect unto God on the cross. Those works are finished. Now Christ is risen and calling all his lost sheep into the church by the gospel. They must be called out of darkness into the Light of the kingdom of Christ because they are redeemed. Is Christ really in the world still? He told us to go forth preaching his gospel, and said, "and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Mt

28: 20) It is still the gospel day. Christ is still the Light. Christ is still working the works God gave him to do. But the night will be here soon when no man can work. So Christ is the Light.

Secondly, the gospel we preach is the Light. The Light comes from Christ who sent it and who is the subject of it. Christ said, "Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. (Is 51: 4) Be sure to understand, the law that proceeds from Christ is the gospel of Christ Jesus. Through the gospel Christ makes judgment—discernment—rest in the heart of his child "for a light of the people." In the New Testament the same word is given. The gospel is called "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2Co 4: 4-7)

Thirdly, you and I, as well as all who are created anew by Christ are children of light. The apostle Paul said, "Be not ye therefore partakers with them [with children of disobedience, children of darkness.] For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." (Eph 5: 7-8)

### **WHEREFORE HE SAITH**

So having shown us this, Paul gives us the example, declaring this is the work Christ does using only Light, "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Eph 5: 14) For you who are God's elect, redeemed by Christ, one day Christ the Light sent forth the gospel in Light through a child of Light.

Through the gospel of Light, through that child of Light, Christ reprov'd us of our sins and self-righteousness, saying, "Awake thou that sleepest." And Christ gave us Light, regenerating us, making us alive.

Then Christ said, "Arise from the dead." Christ gave us Light to see we were among the dead—in fellowship with workers of darkness and with the unfruitful works of darkness. Christ said, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor 6: 17-18)

And when Christ gave us Light, making us to walk in his Light, Christ gave us more Light. Christ made the first creation by saying let there be light. Likewise, Christ shined in our hearts, giving us the light of discernment and faith, giving us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus." Thus he made us his new creation. Now, we are light in the Lord.

### **WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT**

Now, let us hear the exhortation which Christ gives us through the apostle Paul. He says, "Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light...And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove." (Eph 5: 7-8, 11)

"But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." (Eph 5: 13) When Christ makes us Light in the Lord, he sends us forth to do one thing. He sends us forth to shine as children of light by declaring to the world Christ the Light through the Light of his gospel which is our only Light. But though we be children of light, sometimes we begin to slumber in darkness, we

fall into fellowship with the dead, with the unfruitful works of darkness. “Wherefore he saith, [to you and me who are children of light, who slumber in this privilege he has given us] Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Eph 5: 14)

He awakes his child to remember that we walk as children of Light by having no fellowship with children of darkness—“be ye not partakers with them”; we walk as children of Light by having no fellowship with their works—“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness”; we walk as children of Light by reproving them with the gospel of Christ the Light—“but rather reprove.” And Christ reminds us, “But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.”

Christ says to us who believe, “Wake up! You are sleeping! Wake up! You are having too much fellowship with the workers of darkness. Wake up! You are having too much fellowship with their unfruitful works of darkness. Wake up and remember, it is only by Christ the Light through the gospel of Christ the Light, that Christ shall give Light.” As he gives us his Light to see and obey him, Christ also gives us a word of assurance, saying, “As you wake up, as you arise and come away from the dead and their dead works, Christ shall give thee more light.”

Brethren, the only way we will obey this word is if Christ gives us Light to see that we are slumbering and fellowshiping with children of darkness and their dark works. But as Christ gives us his Light to see and makes us obey him, Christ also promises that as we walk in his Light, Christ shall give us more light.

### **AN EXAMPLE IN ISAIAH’S DAY**

In Isaiah 58 we see a few scriptures where Christ reprov'd his people with Light. He gave them the same word of assurance that he would give more Light as they walked in his Light. In Isaiah 58, we see that the unfruitful works of darkness are primarily vain religious works. Let us examine ourselves as we hear this word.

First, Christ sends his child of light, Isaiah. He sends Isaiah to reprove with Christ’s Light. He tells Isaiah, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” (Is 58: 1) Here is the Light Christ uses Isaiah to shine forth to reprove his people, “Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.” (Is 58: 2) They were a religious people. They approached and asked God. They delighted to do that. But they did not delight to do as Christ commanded.

Next, are the questions these professing believers asked the Lord, “Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?” (Is 58: 3)

Here is the Lord’s answer, by which he commanded Isaiah to reprove the people, “Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.” (Is 58: 3) True separation from this world, from its religion and from its works is a spiritual fast. But they called it a fast to separate themselves and approach God on one day of the week. They kept exact account of all their works on that day. And they kept exact account of the labors which those around them did or did not do on that one day. But the rest of the week they lived their lives never approaching God or obeying God. Brethren, if our reason for fasting from the workers and works of darkness is because we take pleasure in approaching God on one day out of the week then our religion is vain. We do not worship and obey God on one day, but every day.

Then the Lord shined this light of reproof on them, “Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as *ye do this* day, to make your voice to be heard on high.” (Is 58: 4) They believed as they did so they could strive, debate and smite those who did not believe as they did.

Brethren, if we love the doctrine of grace merely to strive, debate and smite poor sinners in free-will works religion then our religion is vain. Some professing believers seem to take more pleasure in exposing will-workers and their works than they take pleasure in the Lord Jesus Christ. Their gospel is more about speaking of the sins, vain works and vain opinions of the children of darkness than it is to speak of Christ the Light. If our religion is merely so we can strive, debate and smite those in vain religion then our fist is the fist of wickedness. Our religion is darkness the same as theirs. Sinners are reprov'd not by making "your voice to be heard on high", that is, not by your words which speak of the shameful things which others do. But sinners are reprov'd by preaching Christ the Light. It is the Light that reveals sin to a sinner. It is the Light of Christ who sanctifies and separates his child from darkness. We must preach his Voice, his Word, his Light. If you want to see how crooked a stick is you do not lay another crooked stick beside it, you lay a straight stick beside it. Likewise, to reprove darkness we must use the Light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

Then Christ shined this light of reproof on them, saying, "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?" (Is 58: 5) True separation from darkness is separation of the whole life. It is not to merely to put on a show of humility and submission to Christ on one day. A sinner can act humble. But the pride of thinking we can expose works of darkness by our voice, proves a person not to be in submission to Christ the Light. Christ alone reprov's effectually and Christ does so through the light of the gospel of Christ delivered through a child of Light.

Here is the work Christ does in the heart of his people through the Light of the gospel. We are said to do this by the fact we merely hold for the gospel of Christ in Light. We may do some of these things for sinners physically but the greater point is that this is what Christ does spiritually in the heart through the gospel. He says, "*Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?*" (Is 58: 6-7) We will look more at each of these things when we get here in a few weeks in our Isaiah series.

So that was the reproof that Christ sent Isaiah to deliver to Christ's people. If they obey, it will be because Christ giving them light to obey.

Next, is the promise that if they walk in this Light then Christ shall give them more light. Christ said, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward." (Is 58: 8) If we preach Christ the Light then those to whom we speak will see Christ our Light breaking forth like the sun rising in the morning. And likewise, Christ shall give you more light. Before those to whom we speak, instead of seeing us, they shall see Christ is our health (life) and they will see him springing forth speedily. Likewise, Christ shall give us more light so that Christ is our own personal health. Before those to whom we speak, they shall see that Christ is our Righteousness going before us and Christ is the glory coming behind us—our rear-ward—likewise, Christ shall give us more light and be this to us more and more. He goes on promising more Light, saying, "Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I *am*. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And *if* thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noonday: And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And *they that shall be* of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." (Is 58: 9-12)

Do you see how it is the same as what Paul says in our text? “Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” Works of darkness are exposed by the Light of the Gospel—“awake to this.” “Arise from the dead”—come out from among them and cease using the same dark works they use. “And Christ shall give thee light”—by giving those to whom you speak light and by giving you more light.

Another similar exhortation is in Isaiah 60: 1-3, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”

Christ called us out of darkness for the purpose of us giving Christ all the glory and praise as we use the means of the gospel to declare that Christ is the Light. The apostle Peter said the same as Paul, in 1 Peter 2:9, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:...that they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” That is what Paul has been reminding us of in Ephesians 5.

### **SEE THEN THAT YE WALK CIRCUMSPECTLY**

So seeing these things, the Holy Spirit teaches us in Ephesians 5: 15, “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.” See that you walk accurately, exactly as Christ teaches us to walk in the gospel, not as children of darkness, not using their unfruitful means, but as those who have Christ for our Wisdom and our Light.

Brethren, the world is full of traps. The way is narrow. So for our own safety, we must walk cautiously, always looking to Christ for Wisdom. Also, that we may give no offence to others but that our lives might give them light, that we might make them see that it is better to believe and follow Christ, than to walk as fools.

Two men are travelling along a path full of robbers, with sharp curves, beside steep cliffs. One sleeps. He has his mind on his business, on his farm, on his spouse and children, on everything in the world, he speaks of the world’s darkness, but he pays no attention to the Way, no attention to the warnings, no attention to the map that teaches him the way. The other keeps his eye on the way, he studies the map, he heeds the warnings, he walks in the light he has been given. And those other things come behind these first things. Which of these two is wise and which is the fool? The Wise Man has his eye on Christ the Way, studying and heeding his word, walking in the light Christ gives him. Our Master said, “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock...And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.” (Mt 7: 24, 26)

### **REDEEMING THE TIME**

Here is how we walk circumspectly, “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” (Eph 5: 16) The time of our life is filled with daily, even hourly, opportunities which God gives us to teach the things he has taught us in his word. Every test, every blessing, every sorrow and every gladness is an opportunity Christ has put before us. The wise man looks for and recognizes the opportunity. The wise man pays whatever price necessary—letting go of whatever needs to be let go and bearing whatever needs to be borne—in order to take advantage of the opportunity to teach the light of Christ.

Yesterday I found out that the kids would be out of school today and that Melinda would be in meetings all day. So I awoke this morning, with much work ahead of me. Immediately, Will came with all these requests and plans to make the most of his day off. At first, I began to lose patience. Then it the Lord reminded me in my heart bringing these scriptures to mind. It was as if the Lord said to me, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.” I began to think, this is what I have been studying in Ephesians. This is a time—an opportunity that Christ my God has given me. I need to redeem this opportunity. I need to do as Christ would have me do: be patient and set a good example to my children, teach my children why the gospel is most important, why I must finish preparing for tonight, teach them why the things of this world must come behind Christ and the Word.

Brethren, all the seemingly unrelated occasions that God providentially puts us in, are the reason we must walk circumspectly. We must be always watching, always seeking to recognize the opportunities that God brings to us daily in providence. Then redeem the time. Take advantage of the opportunity to teach the gospel of Christ, to show forth light by speaking of Christ and walking as Christ would have us to walk.

Why? “Because the days are evil.” The devil is taking advantage of every opportunity to teach darkness. Worldly men are redeeming the time to teach our young people to walk in darkness. And because we have an old man of sin in us who will win the day if we are not diligent to walk in the Spirit, to keep our eye and focus on Christ and his word.

And this morning as Christ promised—Christ gave me more Light. I was faced with something I thought would hinder me from getting the message for tonight but Christ used it to give me the message for tonight.

**Ephesians 5: 14: Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15a; See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16: Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**

**Amen!**