

Growth Group Questions
November 8, 2026
"Children of Light"

CONTEXT
Throughout Ephesians, Paul has been describing the kind of community God is creating through Jesus Christ. In chapter 5, he continues to explain why this new community must live differently. Paul reminds the people in the church that their behavior is to be consistent with their identity as God's people. What God has already accomplished in Christ becomes the basis for how they live their lives.

Paul doesn't simply say that the Ephesians were once in darkness and now live in the light. He says they were darkness and now are light in the Lord. Their identity has been transformed because of Jesus. The result of this new identity is a life that is marked by goodness, righteousness, and truth.

In verses 11–14 Paul describes how light exposes the works of darkness. The light that exposes darkness can also transform what it illuminates. This idea is probably behind what Paul is thinking about as he writes, *"Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."* This quote is more than likely from an early Christian hymn or confession, but we are not sure of its origin.

Living as children of light also involves discerning what pleases the Lord – something that is easier said than done. Wisdom is not intellectual knowledge. It is the God given practical ability to live faithfully. Paul says to live wisely and make the most of out every opportunity. This discernment involves understanding what God has revealed in Scripture and applying those truths to the decisions we make in everyday life.

Paul wraps up by talking about being filled with the Spirit who strengthens our lives. "Being filled" is an ongoing dependence on the Spirit that is expected of the entire Christian community. It is good to remember that the Holy Spirit's presence is found not only in extraordinary experiences, but also in believers lives as we express our gratitude to God and live joyfully.

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 5:8-20

8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9 (for
the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10 and find out what pleases
the Lord. 11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 It
is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. 13 But everything exposed by the
light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. 14 This is why it is
said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every
opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the
Lord's will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the
Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make
music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in
the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:14-16

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Neither do people
light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone
in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good
deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Revelation 2:1-5

1"To the angel[a] of the church in Ephesus write:
These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the
seven golden lampstands. **2** I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know
that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but
are not, and have found them false. **3** You have persevered and have endured hardships for my
name, and have not grown weary.

4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. **5** Consider how far you
have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you
and remove your lampstand from its place.

James 3:13-18

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done
in the humility that comes from wisdom. **14** But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in
your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. **15** Such "wisdom" does not come down from
heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. **16** For where you have envy and selfish ambition,
there you find disorder and every evil practice. **17** But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first
of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial
and sincere. **18** Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

John 20:19-23

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors
locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with

you!” **20** After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. **21** Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” **22** And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. **23** If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

QUESTIONS

1. In Ephesians 5:8, the Apostle Paul says: “Now you were once darkness but now you are light in the Lord.” What is the difference between saying you “were darkness” rather than “you were in the darkness” and “you are light” rather than “you are in the light”?

2. What comes to mind when you think about “light”? What is it about “light” that you believe applies to the life of a Christian?

3. The Sunday School song many of us learned as children says: “This little light of mine. I’m going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, NO!” What are some of the “bushels” under which we might allow our light to be hidden from the world?

4. How can we assure that our light is not hidden under a bushel?

5. How does James’ definition of “wisdom” in James 3:13-18 differ from the world’s definition of “wisdom” or “intelligence”?

6. Pastor Paul said: “You cannot have wisdom apart from God.” What is your reaction to this statement?

7. In James 3:17, we are told that wisdom is “first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.” In which of these areas do you currently feel strongest and in which one do you think God is calling you to grow?

8. In Ephesians 5:18, the Apostle Paul says we are to be “filled with the Holy Spirit.” What does a spirit-filled life look like?

9. Pastor Paul said that being filled with the Holy Spirit is an ongoing process. What are some things we can do to stay continually filled with the Holy Spirit?

PASTOR PAUL’S SERMON QUESTIONS

1. Have you lost sight of your first love of Jesus because of the “busyness, distractions and uncertainty” of life? If so, what can you do this week to return to that first love?

2. Prayer Practice – Wisdom. Ask God to open your eyes to see how you can make the most of every opportunity that presents itself.