

Children of Light

Ephesians 5:1-18

MEMORY VERSE

EPHESIANS 5:8

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A pencil and piece of paper for each child in the class.

A small votive candle for each child in your class (various colors), ribbon, small doilies, glue, markers or colored pencils, scissors and a Bible verse strip from the curriculum template provided with your lesson.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Darkness and Light

For this activity each child will need a pencil and paper. Make sure each child has a pencil and paper. Explain to the children that our lesson today is about walking in this world as children of light. To start our lesson tell the children that they are to write down on paper the things that they believe would demonstrate that they are children of light. An example might be “being nice to others.” Have them write down as many things as they can think of in 1 minute. For younger children you can’t write yet, you may encourage them to draw pictures.

This all sounds pretty easy, until you explain that you are going to turn out the lights. Turn out the lights so that the room is dark (if the class has windows plan to cover so that the room is dark). Now ask the children to continue making their list. It is now a very hard thing to do. Explain to the children that today we will be talking about darkness and light. As believers in Jesus we are to walk in the light. If we are wanting to walk in the light while still walking in darkness, that is not going to work. It will be hard, like writing our list in the dark. The Bible wants us to make a clear choice as Christians. We are to no longer walk in darkness, but rather walk in the light, and in the light alone.

LESSON TIME!

What does it mean to be “children of light”? We are going to find out in our lesson today. As believers in Jesus we are called to be children of light. One big clue is that to be a child of light is the opposite of being a child of darkness. So we definitely should not be of this world. When we come to Jesus and ask Him to come into our lives we are receiving the “Light of the world” into our lives. Jesus called Himself the Light of the world. So as His children we need to allow His light to shine forth out of our lives.

Let’s study today what our lives should look like as children of light. We will be studying out of Ephesians chapter five. The Apostle Paul is continuing to share in this chapter how we are to live our lives in response to all of the wonderful blessings of our salvation in Jesus Christ (chapters 1-3). As we study chapter five today we will learn that **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

EPHESIANS 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

In previous chapters Paul shared with the Ephesians that it is by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ that we are saved. Since both Jew and Gentile are saved in the same way, we are all now all one body in Christ. Paul is now sharing with his brothers and sisters in the city of Ephesus how they are to live now that they have become believers in Jesus (Christians).

When we ask Jesus to come into our lives, we all become part of one body, or one family. We are born (spiritually) into God’s family and become His children. We are not children of God simply by being born into this world. It takes a new, second birth to enter God’s family (see John 3:1-21). But now that we are in God’s family we need to understand and see ourselves and God’s dear children.

What are some things that we know to be true about our families? Because we are born into our family we look like our parents because we share their genes. Also, as we grow we learn from our parents and often begin to act like them. We will imitate them. What Paul is saying is that since we are now born into God’s family, we need to start looking like our father, God. We should imitate Him and be like Him.

In order to imitate someone or something we need to watch them and learn how they do things. One of the best ways to learn how to imitate God is to look at the life of Jesus. He lived out the perfect example of who God is, because He is God who has come in the flesh. We can learn about Jesus' life in the Bible. By reading about Jesus in the Bible and then spending time in prayer we will begin to learn more about what Jesus is like and then be able to imitate Him.

Walking in love demonstrates that we are imitators of God. We are to walk in love. If we study the life of Jesus and want to be an imitator of God, we will soon discover that Jesus was love. His life was all about love. He was everything that 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 describes about love. And as we imitate God, we will be walking in love and that kind will be a sweet-smelling aroma to God. It will be something pleasing to God.

The term "sweet smelling aroma" refers to the sacrifices of the Old Testament. It was pleasing to God when His people obeyed and worshipped Him. It pleases Him today when we obey Him and act like Him in this world. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

EPHESIANS 5:3-4

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

In these verses we really see a description of what walking as a child of darkness is like. These are things that should not be coming from our lives now that we serve and follow Jesus. These are things that the world is doing all of the time and wants us to participate in with them, but Paul is very clear that it should not even be named among us. It is not fitting for the saints of God.

This means that people should not be able to look at Christians in this world and describe their lives in the same way that they would describe someone's life who does not know Jesus. We need to be different. We no longer walk in darkness, but walk in light.

We also see that we need to be careful concerning the things that we say. Sometimes we may think that it is fun to be silly and tell jokes, even jokes that might make fun of others or be inappropriate. We need to be careful about what we say because we represent Jesus in everything we say. The things that come from our lips should be things that lift up Jesus and offer praise and thanksgiving to Him. If we are to live as children of light then we need to be careful about what we talk about. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

One of the things that we need to be careful about is not participating in the things of this world. Things like the movies we watch and music we listen to is very important as well. We might think that we won't be affected by worldly movies and music, but they actually affect us. If these things glorify the bad things in this world then we certainly want to stay away from it. Remember Philippians 4:8; we need to keep our minds on things that are good, right and holy if we are to walk as children of light. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

EPHESIANS 5:5-7

For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Therefore do not be partakers with them.

Wow! God does not mess around. He tells us exactly what will happen if we choose to live apart from Him. When we give our lives to Jesus He changes us. As children of light we should not be involved in these things any more. In fact, if someone says that they are a Christian and are still doing these things, we are not to be around them. It might be that he or she is not a Christian.

We are told here that people might try to deceive us with "empty words". The world will try to make us believe that we should give in to whatever we feel like doing. That we do not have to listen to God's ways, but can do what the world tells us is ok. But God is very clear that he will judge those who give their lives to sin one day, and that we should not have anything to do with those who do give their lives over to the darkness of this world. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

EPHESIANS 5:8-10

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

It is very important that we understand that each and every one of us, before coming to Jesus Christ, were living in darkness. We were guilty of sin and doing the same things that people of this world do. We were sinners who were dead in our trespasses and sins. The only difference between a believer and a non-believer is that we have seen the light of Jesus and we have received forgiveness for our sins. We walk in the light, because of what Jesus has done for us. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

Stop and think about what the Lord has done for us. He has revealed to us His plan of salvation. He has saved us from sin and death. He has given us eternal life, all as a free gift. We haven't had to do anything at all to earn our salvation. When we stop and think about everything that God has done for us and has given us there is nothing else we should want to do except to give our lives completely to Him. We should desire to walk in the light, one because it pleases Him, but also because it is the best kind of life we can live. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

If you have never confessed your sin to Jesus and asked Him to come into your life then the Bible says that you are still living in darkness. God has made it as easy as possible to become His child. Simply place your trust in Him. Then you can come out of darkness and begin a wonderful new life walking in the light of God's love.

Children of Light Candles

For this craft you will need one small votive candle (various colors) for each child in your class, ribbon, small doilies, glue, markers or colored pencils, scissors and a Bible verse strip from the curriculum template provided with your lesson.

Give each child a votive candle and a doily. Have the children color and/or decorate the doily. Next, glue the candle to the doily (center the candle in the center of the doily). Next, cut out the Bible verse strip and color using markers or colored pencils. Punch a hole at the left end of the strip. Using ribbon attach the strip to the candle. Set aside and allow to dry. Have the children take the craft home to remember that they are to be children of light.

EPHESIANS 5:11-13

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

Again Paul is warning us not to have anything to do with darkness. He tells us not to even speak of the things that they do. Instead of being a part of the darkness of sin, we are to expose those sinful ways by the light of the Lord. When we were sinners living in darkness apart from God we were not yet exposed. But by the light of the Holy Spirit, when we heard the gospel of Jesus Christ we were convicted (guilty) of sinning against the Lord.

When we become Christians we are to forsake the darkness and everything about it. We should not talk about those shameful things done in darkness in this world. Again, another reason to be careful of the movies we watch and music we listen. If movies and music glorify the dark works of this world then we should definitely stay away from it. Rather our lives, as we walk in light, should expose the things of darkness and help to lead others to Jesus. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

EPHESIANS 5:14

Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

Paul has told us the warning of walking in the darkness of sin apart from God and he tells us what the end will be for those who don't repent and turn away from sin. He then goes on to quote from the book of Isaiah. This was the same thing that the prophet Isaiah was telling the people of Israel hundreds of years before. When we are in our sin we are dead, but when we seek the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior He brings us to life and light in Him. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

People that have not received Jesus or think that they can save themselves from an eternity in Hell are deceived. They are blind to their need for Jesus. Part of what we need to do as believers in Jesus is to proclaim the good news of Jesus to others. God can use us to help others to "wake up" and come to understand their need for Jesus.

This world needs to “arise from the dead”, in other words come out of the death and decay of this world and receive life through Jesus. He is waiting to give eternal life to any one who will simply invite Him into their life.

EPHESIANS 5:15-18

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

We live in a very dark world that is filled with evil everywhere. The Lord is warning us through Paul that we cannot be unwise to all that is around us. In Matthew 10:16 Jesus told His disciples and He tells us today “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” We are to be wise and not self-seeking. We also must be innocent of evil but not ignorant to the evil that is around us. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

One of the ways that we can walk in the light is to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit. When we are filled with the Spirit then the fruit of the Spirit will come forth out of our lives (see Galatians 5:22-23). Paul gives a warning against drinking alcohol but rather encourages us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. In the same way that alcohol influences people to do wrong things, we should allow the Holy Spirit to influence us to do what is right.

Let’s commit our lives to Lord to be used by Him and to walk as children of light. It is the best life we can have. If we, as young children, will commit our lives to the Lord and build our lives on Him then we will have a blessed life in Him. **God wants us to walk as children of light.**

God's Light/No Light

This game is a variation of the game "Red Light/Green Light". Have the class line up against a wall. Stand at the opposite end from the children. Explain to them that you will give either an example of walking in the light (fruit of the Spirit) or an example of walking in darkness (work of the flesh). For lists you can turn to Galatians 5. When you announce something in God's light (a fruit of the spirit; for example "Gentleness") then the children may take one step. If you announce something that has no light (a work of the flesh, for example – "Anger") then the children should remain still.

If a child proceeds to move forward on a "No Light" command then they need to return to the beginning. The winners will be the children to correctly move forward only on the "God's Light" commands and make it to where the teacher is standing.

As an option you may have a small prize for the winners of the game.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of

If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.



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