

Walk in Light

Blueprint: God's Design for the Church

Ephesians 5:7-14

If you have your bibles, go to Ephesians chapter 5. We are going to be beginning in verse 7 this morning, Ephesians chapter 5. You know I can still remember when I got my first fistfight. I was about ten years old, and I went to a cattle sale. I went with my friend Jay, and his uncle and we are at this cattle sale and we are running around. Jay was my buddy. He was, you could call it, my partner in crime. I mean, everything that Jay did, I did. Everywhere Jay went, I went. I was Jay's buddy, I was Jay's partner, so anything Jay got in I ultimately got into as well. So here we are, running around this cattle sale, and before long, I found myself in a backroom standing eye to eye with two boys that did not like Jay in the least. Jay had gotten in some trouble with these guys and here I am, and I'm Jay's partner. So I don't even know these two boys who look bigger than me, but they immediately don't like me. I'm immediately their enemy because I'm partners with my buddy Jay. So here I am, finding myself with two guys I've never met before having to put both fists up just trying to make it out of the room alive. Well, I did. I made it out of the room alive. I'm here today, but I learned a valuable lesson that day, and that is be careful who you partner with because who you partner with can get you in a lot of trouble. You can actually find yourself in a backroom, looking at a guy that's taller than you, with your fist in the air wondering how in the world I got here. It's because I partnered with the wrong guy.

And that's the truth of what we're going to learn in Scripture this morning in Ephesians chapter 5. Paul is actually going to warn us to be careful who we partner with, because who you partner with can ultimately get you in trouble. So here's what we see in Ephesians chapter 5. We've been walking through this text, we've seen how we are supposed to imitators of God, and then he gives this list of people who aren't imitating God. They're giving themselves to idols and sexual immorality, and they are not

partakers of the Kingdom of Christ. Then in verse 7, he's going to jump in and tell us how we are to interact with those people. So if you would stand out of reverence for the Word of God, we're going to read our text this morning, beginning in verse 7. Here is what we read:

Scripture

"Therefore do not become partners with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

(Prayer)

Father God, we pray that you would take Your Word and use Your Spirit to truly penetrate our hearts; that we would not become partakers, but we would see how to walk in light and ultimately bring the gospel to the people that we surround ourselves with. We pray this in the good name of Jesus, amen.

You guys may be seated. So the very first thing Paul does in this section, he gives us a negative command. There's something that we're not supposed to do, and here's the negative command: "Do not become partners with them." Well, who is the 'them?' Who is he talking about when he speaks of 'them?' If you look at the verses before, it's those people who don't share the inheritance of Christ. It's those people who aren't in the Kingdom of Christ. It's those people who are giving themselves to sexual immorality, who are worshipping idols, who are living a life against the Lord. What he's trying to say is as you live your life as a believer, you're part of the Kingdom of Christ, but you're living amongst a people who live in the kingdom of right now. So there are two different kingdoms. There is the kingdom of right now that's all about you, immediate gratification, and

then there's the kingdom of forevermore. That is the Kingdom of Christ. That's the Kingdom that you belong to if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus. So what he says is do not partner with them. Those people aren't in the Kingdom of Christ; those people who don't share the inheritance, those people who are not in the forevermore kingdom, they are in the only right now kingdom.

So what does he mean when he says don't partner with them? Is Paul telling us not to associate with sinners, not to hang out with people who don't know Jesus? He actually writes that in another letter in 1st Corinthians chapter 5. He says I want you to know to not associate with people who are sexually immoral, but then he says, not at all meaning those who are in the world, so he is talking about those who are in the church. When it comes to those in the church, if a believer claims Christ and then practices the lifestyle of sexual immorality, you are not to associate with them. But he says I am not talking about lost people. I'm not talking about people who don't know the gospel. You need to associate with them. You need to be friends with them because the whole gospel is go and make disciples. If you look at Jesus, what did Jesus do? He was a friend of sinners. So what's Paul saying when he says do not partner with them? I think what he wants us to see is this idea. He wants us to be a pal, not a partner. I think that's the deal when it comes to sinners. He wants us to be a pal of sinners, but not a partner of sinners.

So what does partner mean? Well, partner is to share with someone, to share this whatever they're doing, to share in possession of; to speak of a marriage that a husband and a wife, they share a life. They share possessions. They are casting their lot in with one another; that what one is in, the other is in it as well. What Paul is saying is don't do that with unbelievers. Don't share life with unbelievers; be a pal with unbelievers, but don't be a partner with unbelievers. I think we see Jesus doing this so beautifully. See, Jesus was a pal to sinners, but He wasn't a partner with them. He was a pal to sinners, but He was a partner with the disciples. There was a difference. He shared life with the disciples. He spent His time, extended time, with the disciples. They shared the Kingdom, but then there were sinners that He was pals with. He went and ate with them, He

dined with them, He befriended them, He spent time with them, and it drove the Pharisees and the religious people crazy because here is how we can misrepresent this text, is to say don't hang out with sinners, don't ever be around sinners. That's not what Paul is saying, because that's what the Pharisees did. Their idea is we are holy, we know the law, we know what to do and what not to do, and we are going to hang out with people that are like us and if there is anybody who doesn't obey the Law, if there is anybody who doesn't go to church, we are just going to shun them. We're not going to hang out with them, we are going to not associate with them whatsoever. That is a religious response to hanging out with sinners, just don't be with them, just push them away; stay clean by staying away. Paul is not saying that. He's not saying don't share time with sinners. Don't share time with those who are not in the Kingdom of Christ. No, what he is saying is don't share life with them. Don't partner where you share possession of life with them. Why? Because you are in a different kingdom. So what do you do? You do what Jesus did. You're a pal of sinners, but you are a partner of the saints. You're a partner of those who are in the body of Christ. So you are reaching out without selling out. You're befriending sinners, spending time with them, loving them, but you're spending that life with the saints, those who share your worldview. Why? Because you're in the Kingdom of Christ and they are not. So he says don't be partners with them.

Now why is that the case? Why are we not supposed to be partners with them? He actually tells us. He says this, "...for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord." So the reason we're not supposed to partner with non-believers, share life with, possessions with, the reason that is true is because something has happened to us. He says you were darkness, but now you are light. This is an identity statement. It's a sentence that's full of identity because identity means behavior. Your identity is going to determine, ultimately, how you act out. So here's the deal, you were darkness. Now just think about that little statement for a moment. Paul is telling us who we were before Christ. Notice what he doesn't say. He doesn't say for at one time you were in darkness, of darkness, or like darkness. There's no modifier. He says you were darkness. I mean, that's pretty harsh. Imagine if one of your kids called

your other kid darkness, like, "Hey darkness!" You would probably think no don't say that, it's unkind; you can't say that. That's not a nice word to say to your brother or your sister. It might be, but don't tell them that. I mean, Paul was just laying it out! Here is the deal; you were darkness. You weren't in darkness, you weren't of darkness; you actually were darkness. You weren't practicing a little evil, you weren't practicing a little sin; you were evil, you were sin. He is giving this identity statement: you were darkness. You didn't just do sinful things; you were a sinner. Your identity from Adam is you were a sinner separated from God. You were darkness. You were evil. You are pushing back a little bit going, "Hold on...I wasn't that bad. I mean, I needed Jesus, but I was sort of good. I did a lot of good things, and in fact, I know people all around me who are pretty good, who are doing good things. We can't say that we are darkness. Maybe we do some dark things, but at the end of the day, we're all pretty good people. We are more good, than do bad." That's not what Paul says. Paul says no, you were darkness.

So I've heard this illustration a few times, so I'll kind of play it out with us. As the pushback comes, it's the thought of what about the guy who helps the old lady across the road. I mean, surely that's a good deed coming from a good person. I mean imagine you're out on the street, you're walking, and you see this old lady who's getting ready to cross the road. You notice her. You notice she's got groceries in her hand. So, she's walking very slowly, she's got groceries in her hand, and now it's raining. So, rainstorm, groceries, we'll add some traffic, everybody's honking, she's trying to get across the road, and you see her. And just out of the goodness of your heart, you think, I've got to help this old lady across the road. She's probably not going to make it; I'm going to help her. So you go and you come up to the lady and say, "Hey, can I help you?" So you take her groceries and you hold them in your hands. And you're starting across the road, so you take your jacket off and you put your jacket over her. So you're holding the groceries, and you're holding your jacket over her head and you're walking her very slowly across the road. You're like, we're probably not going to make it, you're trying to hold off traffic, but here you are, slowly walking across the road and you get to the other side. Then you tell the lady, "Hey, I'm going to pay your bus fare, wherever you're

going, I'll pay you for your fare. Here, keep my jacket because it's raining. Here you go; off your way." Now surely that's not darkness, right! I mean, you've seen people do that, you've probably done stuff like that; that can't be darkness. We're good people who do good deeds. I just want to ask, when you get to the moment where the old lady's leaving you, and you've just done that really good thing, what's probably your next thing that you do? You look around. Did anybody see that? Did anybody take a picture of that? Oh, that was awesome! Do you see I just helped a lady across the road, hello! Did anybody get video of that? Can anybody sent that to my mom, because I just want my mom to know I'm the kind of guy that helps an old lady across the road. Did you see my jacket? That move was awesome, right; it was right out of the storybooks! I'm a hero; I'm ready to take out your phone. Hey, what's your name? Do you mind if I get a selfie with you, and I'm going to hashtag it like #helpedoldladytoday. Oh man, I just feel great! I hope somebody saw it!

That's usually how even our very best, even the best things we can do from the purest motives, at the end of the day, what we see is this under layer of we want somebody to see it. We want somebody to know about it because the end of it, at the bottom of all of that, there is this pride in us that that whole action was actually done because, not just we love God and love neighbor, but because we wanted to be the kind of a person who loved God and love neighbor. We wanted to be seen as that. We wanted to feel that. It was our own pride that causes even the best of our deeds apart from Christ. That's why Isaiah would say look, even your goodness, even your best deeds are like filthy rags. They are so tainted with selfish motivation and vain glory, and self-promotion and self-righteousness, that even your very best misses the mark, because the only true good deed is done for the glory of God and the good of our neighbor alone. And apart from Christ, those deeds we don't do. At the end of the day, we do them in some selfish motivation in our own selves. So here's what Paul is saying, before Christ, you didn't just do darkness, you were darkness. That was your identity. That's who you were. That defines you. So that's bad.

But look how this verse plays out. He doesn't say you are darkness, he says you were darkness. That's past tense. That's in the past. That's who

you used to be before Jesus. So if you know Christ, if you're a believer, that is not who you are. If you don't know Christ, you're still darkness. But if you've come to the Lord Jesus, repented and believed in the gospel, something has changed. Look at that beautiful little turn of phrase, it says, "...but now..." One of the most glorious phrases in the Bible is 'but now.' I mean, anytime you see a 'but now,' you know that's gospel language. Here is what Paul's saying, you're part of the 'but now' family. You used to be darkness, but now, something has changed. The gospel has invaded your life. There's been a turn of phrase. You were darkness, but now what does he say? "But now you are light in the Lord." Now notice what he says about light. He doesn't say but now you are in light, you've experienced light; you're sort of in the resemblance of light. No, there's no modifying either. You are light. It's who you are now, that you were darkness, but now through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, when you believe you have an identity change. You were a sinner, but now you are a saint. You were darkness, but now you are light.

Notice what it says about light. It says "in the Lord." That's a huge statement in the Bible, this 'in Christ' language, 'in the Lord.' You see, our identity is not in ourselves and from ourselves; our identity is from Jesus, that in Christ, we're righteous. In Christ, we are holy. In Christ, we are light, that we get our light from Him. It's His light in us that causes us to be light. You see this light that we have, it was a free gift given to us by a good God, and so we can't boast in it! We can't say look at me, I'm light, you're darkness, I'm light because I'm a little bit better than you. No, the reason you're light is because you realize you weren't better and you couldn't get better, and you needed Jesus to make you better. You needed Jesus to redeem you and save you. So the only reason you're light is because you came to the Lord Jesus who is light. And when you came to Him, you had a 'but now' moment. You were darkness, but now you are light.

So what's the conclusion? What's Paul trying to draw here? Because of this, because you're not darkness anymore, now you're light, don't be partners with those who are still in darkness. Don't share in possession with those who are still in darkness, those most valuable things of life, don't share

worldview and life with them; instead, be pals of sinners, but don't be partners with sinners. Because when you're a partner with a sinner, when you share your whole life with them, things don't work out like Christ wants for you. You'll find yourself in a backroom somewhere with your fist up, somewhere you never would have been on your own. But now, because you're partnering with the wrong kingdom, you find yourself doing things that you were not meant to do. Why? Because you're a partner, not a pal. So be friends with sinners, be pals with sinners, reach out to sinners, love them just like Jesus did. Jesus went to Zacchaeus. He loved him. He went and dined with him. He fellowshiped with him. Why? Not so that He could be Zacchaeus' partner, but so Zacchaeus could be His partner, so that Zacchaeus could repent and share in His Kingdom, not so Jesus could share in the kingdom of this world. That's how we are to be, pals not partners, trying to get people to see that the only life is in the kingdom that we're in, not giving ourselves to the kingdom of 'right now.' So be a pal not a partner.

What's the second thing that Paul tells us? It's this, walk in light, not darkness. So if we're going to be a pal and not a partner, then we can't walk in darkness, we have to walk in light. Here's what Paul says beginning in verse 8, "Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord." So first, he gives a negative command; do not partner with them. Why? You were dark, now you're light. But then he gives a positive command. Here's our positive command, he says now walk as children of the light. So he's saying because you're light, because you're in the 'but now' family, because things have changed in your life, you should be walking a new walk. You should be walking as a child of light.

As most of you know I have three boys, and I also have a little girl named Evie Kate. And so I have a princess in my house. So what used to be only Star Wars Rebels and Clone wars, now in the morning is mixed in with Sofia the First. So Sofia the First is happening a lot at my house, and Little Jingle is pretty catchy, and I'll read it for you, not sing it for you. But if you haven't seen Sofia the First, here's what Sofia says, "I was a girl living in a village doing alright. Then I became a princess overnight. Now I've got to

figure out how to do it right, so much to learn and see." Now if you're not familiar with Sofia the First, if you're a parent you are, if you have small kids you are, but maybe you have older kids, grown kids, so you don't know about Sofia the First, maybe you're not in parenting first, so you don't know about Sofia. So let me tell you about her. She was a girl, and she was in the village, and she was doing alright. But then, she learned that she became a princess overnight. So now, she's got to try to figure out how to do it right, so much to learn and see. So that's kind of her story. She's this common peasant, she's in a common village, I mean, she's doing alright, but it could get better. So then all of a sudden, overnight she realizes something; my dad's actually the king. My mom's actually the queen. They weren't very responsible parents because they lost me somehow, but now I know this. So now the storyline of Sofia the First is like literally overnight she goes from peasant to princess! She goes from village house to castle! She goes from regular, drabby clothes, to princess dresses with tiaras! So now, she has this whole different identity, and now she's got to figure out how to do it right. She's got to go to classes about how to be a princess because she was a peasant, now she's a princess, and princesses act differently than peasants. When they go to a table they hold their fork differently, when they curtsy they do it differently, when they walk they walk differently. Because when you're a princess, things have changed. So now, she's got to learn how to walk as a princess, no longer as a peasant.

I mean, that's a little picture of what the gospel's like, that overnight, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, we go from peasant to princess, or peasant to prince; that we go from common to royalty, a kingdom that is fading to a Kingdom that is going to last forever. We go from darkness to light, and so now, what happens? Now we've got to figure out how to do this thing right. Like, there's so much to see and do. We've got to walk into this new identity as saints, no longer sinners. We're no longer common. We're royalty, sons and daughters of the high king. So now, what does Paul tell us to do? Walk as children of light. Why? Because you're not in darkness anymore. Now you are light, so walk as children of the light.

So how do we do that? What does it even look like? I mean, Sofia, she didn't know what a princess was like. She had to learn, and be shown, and do, so Paul's going to give us some language to know how to walk as a child of the light. He said, "...the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true." So if you don't know, how do you walk in as a children of light? Well, the things that you do, the places you go, the words that you say, the words that you hear, the things that you give yourself to, you should have these markers that they're good, they're right, and they're true. But that should be a marker of your life; I want to be a participant of things that are good, right, and true. I want to cast my lot in with things that are good, right, and true. And if something is not good, right, and true, I don't want to be a part of it because that's darkness, and I'm light now. So I'm walking as light in things that are good, right, and true. But this can be a little tricky because if you go back to the Old Testament, there was this time in the Old Testament, a lot of times in the Old Testament, where people are far from God, so that would actually call good evil, and evil good. They got it all jumbled up, all mixed up. They didn't even know what was right or wrong. They would call right wrong and wrong right. So it was very hard to live in the Canaanite culture and know what is good, right, and true, because what culture said was different than what God says. Here we have the Ephesians, they're living in a place that's hailing 'great is Artemis,' and sexual immorality is how we worship her and that's good, right, and true. So you have these Ephesian people who are trying to figure out what is good, right, and true, but they're living in a culture that calls good evil, and evil good. So how are they going to work that out? So you go to the Old Testament, go to the Ephesians, then right now go to our current culture, and we are living in the days now where many people call good evil, and evil good, and they call truth wrong, and wrong truth. So now, we're mixed up. How do we know what's good, right, and true if we live in a culture that says here's what's good, right, and true, but it's actually the opposite of what God says is good, right, and true? If in your path of walking in light, if you just say well I'm going to just give myself to whatever culture is saying today is good, right, and true, you might actually find yourself on the wrong side of Christ. You might actually find yourself not in goodness, not in

righteousness, and not in truth, but in the opposite. So it doesn't just work to say hey, I'm going to look at the New York Times and just whatever they say I'm going to go with, because that must be good, right, and true. There's going to have to be some discernment. So that's one path to goodness, righteousness, and truth. Just do what culture is saying is right and then you'll be good. We can't do that as believers, but there's this other ditch on the other side that says we'll just do what religion says, because religion always knows what's good, right, and true. So I want to bring up the Pharisees again. If there's anybody in the Bible that was practicing good, right, and true it was the Pharisees. They were experts and good, right, and true. If you were a little kid and you wanted to know what was good, you would ask a Pharisee and they would tell you; here is what's good, here's what God says right from the Word. This is what's good. This is what's right. This is what's true. So if you wanted to do good, right, and true, you just followed the Pharisees. You went to church when you were supposed to, you did the sacrifice when you were supposed to, you went to the festivals when you were supposed to, you fasted when you were supposed to; you did what they did. They were good, right, and true. So we have culture's version, now we have the religious version of follow all the rules and you will be good, right, and true. But here we have the Pharisees, who when God came to dwell among them in the person of Jesus Christ, embodiment of good, right, and true, what did they do? They crucified Him. They hated Him so much that they killed Him!

So how in the world are we going to figure out what's good, right, and true if culture or religion can't teach us what's good, right, and true. Well, Paul gives us a little modifier here. He gives us a little bit more information. He says not only walk in what's good, right, and true, but "discern what is pleasing to the Lord." So here, we have this clause that goes over top of what's good, right, and true. How do we know what is good, right, and true? Well, there's a way to discern what's good, right, and true, and that is to answer this question: Does this please the Lord? So, following after culture wholeheartedly, even though it's against Scripture, is that pleasing to the Lord? No. What about becoming a Pharisee, and just obeying all of what the Bible says, with no heart for God or love for neighbor; is that good, right, and true? No. Neither one of those pleases the Lord. So how

do we walk as children of light, how do we live a life that pleases the Lord? It takes discernment. It takes discernment in taking the Scriptures, and not just turning them into a rulebook, but using the Scriptures and using the gospel to love God with all of our heart and love our neighbor like ourselves. It's not taking our own righteousness and being so proud of it that we push people away from us because we think we're better and they're worse. That's what the Pharisees did. That's not pleasing to the Lord. No, it's seeing the righteousness of Christ that was only a gift given to you, and it's a gift He wants you to give away to other people through the gospel. And so that's how you get to go and walk in goodness, righteousness, and truth. It's you live a life that pleases the Lord, you love your neighbor as yourself, and you love God with all your heart as you're pursuing goodness, righteousness, and truth. Then you'll be able to discern, not only is this good, not only is this right, not only is this true, but it also pleases the Lord. And family is good, but if you make family your god, it's no longer good. You have to love your family under the Lord. That's how it pleases God, and you also accept the goodness of your family. Work is good, but if work is an idol, it's no longer good because it doesn't please the Lord. We work as to the Lord. That's how we please the Lord with our work.

So let's think about how we walk this out. We walk in what's good, right, and true, but under that or over that is, that's pleasing to the Lord. So how's your walk? If we just go back, rewind this last week, in the places you went and the things you did, and the things you said, can you honestly say I was walking in those things, good, right, and true, under this umbrella of all that I did was pleasing to the Lord? That the Lord was pleased with the way I spent my time and my talents, and my money, and my energy; was God pleased with that? Did God say well done on a good week, now go and live this next week again for My honor and My glory? Because that's how we walk now. We're not participating in this unfruitful works of darkness, these things that don't matter, these things that are going to be burned up in the end. We're not giving our lives to those, but we're giving our life to things that matter. Why? Because we know the Lord. We're light now and we're pursuing good, right, and true, and those things that please the Lord. So if we blew it last week, how will we confess

and repent, and now seek to live a life this week that is pleasing to the Lord and those things that are good, right, and true.

So, we're not supposed to partner. We're pals of sinners, not partners with sinners, and we're going to walk in light, not darkness. Why? Because we're no longer darkness, we are light now, so we're going to walk that out. Like little Sofia, she's got a princess dress on, so do we. So we're going to walk that out. We're going to live that life as royalty now, walking as light.

The third thing Paul is going to tell us is to shine to save. So we are actually going to shine our light so that people can know the gospel. We're going to shine so that people can see the glory and salvation of our Lord and Savior, Jesus. Here's what it says in verse 11, "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.'" So, if we are light and we're walking in light, and we're pals, not partners; what is our light supposed to be doing to those around us, to those in our circle of influence? What is our light supposed to be doing? It's supposed to be exposing darkness, showing them their darkness, showing them the reality of their sin, the reality that they are separated from their Creator. Now what is the point of exposing their sin? Is the point of exposing their sin to show them how bad they are and shame them? I mean, that's what social media is great about, right. You just hammer somebody's post and shame them, or you put something you know is going to shame somebody else, and we just yell at each other. Is that what our light is supposed to do? I'm being a gospel witness because I'm yelling at everybody. I'm showing them how bad they are and how wrong they are. Is that what Paul's getting at? What is this exposing supposed to do? It's not to shame, it's not to condemn, it's to redeem, that if anything, if the light shines on something, what happens? It becomes visible. It becomes light, that our light shining on our neighbors and shining on our co-workers is to, yes, reveal their sin and lost-ness, but it's for the purpose of bringing them to the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the point

of our shining, is to save not to shame. That's the point of our life and our work, is to bring them to the gospel. And that's why he would say, so Paul brings in this little quote. And this quote we're not really sure exactly where Paul got this from, it says this, "Awake, oh sleeper, and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you." It sounds a lot like Isaiah 60, though it's not exactly the right wording, so we're not exactly sure if Paul pulled it from there and then doctored it up a little bit to make his point. Or, what we really think happened is the early church had make a worship song out of Isaiah 60, and they would sing this in corporate worship. This banner, "Awake, oh sleeper, and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you," they are singing this as they're gathering as the saints. They're singing this as worship, and Paul is saying hey, you know that song that you're singing, that's not just a song to sing, that's a life to live. Here's what you're supposed to do, you're supposed take those words and those lyrics and actually go out into the street and live a lifestyle that is causing the sleepy to wake up and the dead to rise so that Christ can shine on them. It's gospel language. What's the point of you living a life of light? It's not to condemn your neighbors, but to show them they need Jesus, and then so that Jesus can shine on them too and they, who are darkness, can become light just like you, who were darkness, became light. So they can be part of the 'but now' family. So they can have that transition from darkness to light. That's what we get to do. As believers, we get to live and walk in light in a way that causes sleepy people to wake up.

You know, sleep and wake is something we do a lot in my house because I have small kids. And it's really kind of a hard thing for us to learn when you're little. Like my little girl, she thinks hey, two o'clock is a great time to wake up. And we have to go and gently tell her no, this is not a great time to wake up. You need to go back to bed. So we are rocking her and telling her, hey look, Mr. Sun is still asleep. You need to be asleep. Then about five o'clock she wakes up again, ready to go downstairs. No, Mr. Sun is still asleep; you need to be asleep. So we put milk, get her down, and even our boys will sometimes wander down at like three in the morning, and like, is it time to go to school? No, it's not time to go to school. Go to bed! Don't they teach you to tell time? We need to work on that! The sun is down; you're supposed to be sleeping. There is a time it is very good to be

asleep. Sleep is good for my kids, but there's also a time when it's time to wake up. So I got three boys who are in school. There are usually two of them who are up, and one is usually sleeping when it's time for us to get ready for school. So it's about seven o'clock and maybe G is still asleep, and so I tell the older two, "Hey, you need to go wake up G." But then I always tell them, "But be kind; do it nicely." Then about fifteen seconds later, I hear yells, screams, crying; like, that was not gentle! That's not what I said. You woke him up in a way that was not right. But the deal was, it's not right for Garnet to be sleeping because the reality is we have to go to school. You've got to get ready. You've got to eat breakfast. It's time to wake up.

Here is what Paul says, it is time to wake up; the sun has risen from the grave. Christ has conquered sin and death. It's no longer time to sleep; it is time to wake up! So what you get to do by your life and your light; you get to be an alarm clock to those around you that it's time to wake up. How many of you love your alarm clock? Nobody, right. We all secretly hate our alarm clock. So just kind of file that back; I'm an alarm clock that's waking people up from their slumber. They're probably not going to hug me the first time. They are like, I love five a.m.; this is great! No, they're going to be draggy and their eyes are not going to open, but you, very gently, lovingly, are nudging them to wake up to the reality of their lostness, and also the glory of Christ. You are saying just crack those eyes open, because when you understand your sin and when you understand the gospel, and when you peek your little eyes open and you see the beauty of Christ, guess what? He will shine on you. He will take over your life and you will no longer be darkness; you will be light. That's what we get to do. We get to go wake up people who are asleep, and get to wake them up with the gospel.

But then Paul goes a little bit deeper. Not only do we wake up those who are asleep, we actually raise from the dead those who are dead. We actually go to people who are spiritually dead, who are separated from God, who have stone hearts and can't relate to God whatsoever, they can't feel or see His light, but they can see you. They can touch you. They can feel your light, and as you live out the gospel and share the gospel, you're

actually whispering in their ear, "Wake up from the tomb." And as that gospel message of your God died, was buried, and rose again for your sins, and if you will believe, you will have life. When they respond to that message that you get to share with your life and your light, that message that you share when it goes down into their heart and they repent and believe, that heart of stone that it's dead, melts away and turns to flesh. And they become alive and rise from the dead; and when they do, the glory of Christ shines on them, and they go from darkness to light. Then they get to start walking in light. They get to start shining to save others. That's what Paul wants for us. He says don't be partners with the wrong kingdom. Don't give your life to the things they give their lives to, instead, be pals with them but not partners.

Why? Because you're a different kid. You're the little kid that got found and now you're brought into a royal family. You've got a different walk. It's a walk of light. And what should your light be doing? It should be shining, not to shame or condemn, but it's a light that shines to save so that you get to whisper to sleepy friends and co-workers, and neighbors and family members, and strangers on the street, wake up. The sun has risen. The sun is up. It's shining, and if you'll just open your eyes, if you will crack the tomb, if you'll come out of your grave, you will see that Christ has risen from the dead, and so can you. Wake up. Open your eyes so that Christ can shine on you. That's our mission. That's what we're supposed to be doing. So this week, go out and be a pal. Walk in light and shine your light so that people can wake up and see the beauty of Christ.

(Prayer)

Let's pray together...Father God, we love you. Father, we're so thankful for the gospel. We're so thankful that we were darkness, but You made us light. Help us to walk in light, help us to be pals, not partners, and help us to shine to save because the sun is risen and we want our friends and co-workers, and neighbors and acquaintances, and everybody we come in contact with to have the glory of Christ shine on them. We pray this in Jesus good name, amen.