

“Light vs. Darkness,” *Ephesians 5:8-14*, page 1145

Introduction:

1. There is a very real battle between righteousness (light) and unrighteousness (darkness) in our world.
2. We see this battle all around us.
3. If we follow the world news, we will soon be depressed with all the violence and cruelty of people.
4. The contrast between light and darkness is very graphic:

Light

John 8:12: “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’”
Romans 12:9-20: “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’”

Darkness

John 8:44: “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.
Romans 1:26-32: “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”

5. Jesus Christ is the ruler of light (righteousness), and Satan rules over the darkness (unrighteousness).
6. As believers, we are caught in a vicious battle between light and darkness.

I. Understand the battle between light and darkness. *Ephesians 6:12: “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*

- A. It is imperative that we acknowledge and understand that the battle is spiritual.
 1. It is a battle to establish a specific philosophy of life.
 2. It is a battle for the minds of our children.
 3. It is a very subtle battle waged on the pretense of tolerance, freedom of speech, and acceptance.
- B. We must understand that there is a big difference between the teachings of Jesus and the attributes of Satan.
 1. Jesus teaches love and forgiveness; Satan does not.
 2. Jesus teaches that there are absolute truths; Satan would have us accept situational ethics.
 3. Jesus teaches morality; Satan advocated immoral behavior.
- C. We must understand that tolerance can be very dangerous when truth is sacrificed.
- D. Jesus warns us against being molded in the philosophy of Satan and unrighteousness. *Romans 12:1-2: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”*

- II. Choose who you will follow. *Joshua 24:15: “And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”***
- A. The moral climate in America is forcing us to make some very difficult decisions.
 - 1. Decisions that may well affect our immediate families.
 - 2. Decisions that may put us at odds with what the media and Hollywood believe is normal behavior.
 - B. Christians must choose what they believe concerning some difficult situations in our world:
 - 1. Abortion.
 - 2. Homosexuality.
 - 3. Living together before marriage (fornication).
 - 4. Artificial insemination.
 - 5. Euthanasia.
 - 6. Same sex marriages.
 - 7. Addictions.
 - C. We must make a choice:
 - 1. Follow the teaching of the Bible.
 - 2. Follow the philosophy of an unrighteous worldly system.
- III. We are the light. *Matthew 5:14 and 16: “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden...Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”***
- A. Light is more often SEEN than HEARD.
 - B. Old saying: “What you do speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say.”
 - C. As Christians, we must develop the ability to love and accept the person, but reject the sinful lifestyle of that person.
 - 1. This is impossible without the help of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. Our natural tendency is to reject and avoid people who adhere to unbiblical lifestyles.
 - D. Jesus, however, did not avoid or reject people living in sin.
 - 1. Mary Magdalene.
 - 2. Woman at the well.
 - 3. Nicodemus.
 - E. Our lifestyle is the most powerful light people will see.
 - F. We must also know:
 - 1. What we believe—Bible.
 - 2. Why we believe—Bible.
 - G. We must be willing to give a witness to our faith.
 - H. As witnesses, we do not judge and condemn the person.
 - 1. We state what the Bible teaches.
 - 2. Why we believe that teaching is the best guide for our lives.
 - 3. Give example of how God has helped us live a Christian life.
 - I. Interview of Arab ex-terrorists on T.V.:
 - 1. Followed the teaching of Allah—empty.
 - 2. Converted to Christianity—God of Abraham spoke to me. GREAT WITNESS.
 - J. Remember, it is not up to us to change anyone; God does the changing. We only become the light that points them to God.

Conclusion:

- 1. Our world is in a real mess.
 - A. Politics will not solve our problems.
 - B. Government regulations will not solve our problems.
- 2. Our world and America is in a moral crisis, and morality cannot be controlled by man-made laws.
- 3. We need to push back the darkness with the light of Jesus Christ.
- 4. We must, as Christians, be the light to this dark world.
- 5. We must pattern our lives in harmony with God’s Word and be a faithful witness.