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Living in Light
5: 8-14

Living in Light DIG: Who were the Essenes? How do believers serve as light in the world? What is the relationship between walking in love and living as children of light? What is the difference between a life that is full of darkness and a life that is full of light?

REFLECT: What preparation do you need in order to be used by God to expose the works of darkness? Has the darkness of this world lulled you into a spiritual slumber from which you need to awaken? How can you become more aware of opportunities to be light?

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it (John 1:5).

This passage continues the emphasis on believer's being **imitators of God, as His dear children (5:1).** The first way we are to imitate **God** is in **His love**, which **Paul** shows both in its true and in its counterfeit forms, with **Messiah Himself** being our divine pattern (**to see link click Bp – Walking in Love**). In **verses 5:8-14** the focus is on our imitating **God** in relation to **light**.[199]



The Rabbi now switches to a common analogy of the first century Jewish community. **For you used to be darkness; but now, united with the Lord,**

you are light. Live like children of light (5:8). The order of creation takes an unusual turn as it states: **so there was evening and there was morning, the first day (Genesis 1:5).** The pagan orientation started with **the light** of day and then proceeded into **the darkness** of night. So the sun itself became a focus of pagan religions. In contrast, the Jewish people were told that the day starts in **the darkness**, but moves into **the light**. **The Jewish tradition is that a new day begins when three stars can be seen in the sky.** This is an apt spiritual analogy as **ADONAI** is moving **the dark** world to **the light** of **His** Kingdom.

The first century sectarian Judaism, the Qumran Community called the Essenes (to see Essenes in Judaean Society **click here**), **perceived themselves as "sons of light" in the midst of a spiritual battle with the "sons of darkness" (War Scroll 1QM).** It would be natural for **Sha'ul** to refer to the Messianic believers of **Ephesus** in a similar fashion. Although they were formerly associated with **darkness**, they were now filled with **light** as they were **in Messiah** (see **An – The Basis of Spiritual Blessing in Messiah**). Consequently, their walk should reflect the light of **ADONAI**.[200]

In **Second Corinthians Paul** explains the contrasts that exist between a **child of God** and an unbeliever, between **the light** and **darkness** (see the commentary on **Second Corinthians Bi – Do Not be Unequally Yoked with Unbelievers**). After all, **light** produces good fruit, but the works of **darkness** are unfruitful as far as spiritual things are concerned. **For the fruit of the light is in every kind of goodness, rightness and truth (5:9).** That **light** produces **goodness,** one manifestation of the fruit of **the Ruach** (see the commentary on **Galatians Cb – The Fruit of the Ruach is Goodness**). **Goodness** is "**love** in action." Righteousness means rightness of characters before **ADONAI** and rightness of actions before men. Both of these qualities are based on truth, which is conformity to **the Word** and will of **God**. **Yeshua** had much to say about **light** and **darkness**: **Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16). This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God (John 3:19-21).** Moreover, **Yeshua** said: **I Am the Light of the World** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Gr – I AM the Light of the World**).[201]

As a result, the life of a believer, just like every other kind of life, is only healthy when it is growing. And as far as the life of a believer is concerned, the primary focus is to **try to determine what will please the Lord (5:10).** As we are obedient to what we know, our knowledge of **the Lord** and of **His** will increases and deepens. As we are **faithful** to **the light**, we are given more of this **light**.[202] But living as **children of the light** also means revealing **God's light** in our daily lives. By our character and conduct, we bring **God's light** into a **dark** world (see **The Life of Christ Df – You are the Salt of the Earth and the Light of the World**). As **God's "lights"** we help others find their way to **Messiah**. The mind of the unsaved person is blinded by Satan **(Second Corinthians 4:3-4)**, and by sin (see **Bl – The Pagan Lifestyle**). Only as a witness and shared **Messiah** can **the light** enter in. Just as a healthy person can assist the sickly, so **a child of God** can lead the lost out of **the darkness** into **the Lord's** wonderful **light**.[203]

But then **the apostle** gives **the Ephesians,** and us, a warning. **The child of God** should **have nothing to do with the deeds produced by darkness, but instead expose them (5:11a).** We cannot witness to the world before coming in contact with all sorts of **wickedness**. But we are never to identify with that wickedness or give **it the opportunity** to take hold in our own life. To compromise the standards of **ADONAI** is to weaken our witness as well as our own character. No act of unrighteousness is acceptable or permissible. Our responsibility goes further than not participating in the sinful ways of the world, **but instead,** we are to **expose them.** To ignore **evil** is to encourage it; to keep quiet about it is to help promote it. The root of the verb here translated **expose** (Greek: *elegcho*) can also carry the idea of reproof, correction, punishment, or discipline.

We are to confront sin with intolerance. But many believers don't **expose** the **evil** because they don't take **it** seriously enough. They laugh and joke about things that are pure wickedness, that are immoral and extremely ungodly. They recognize the sinfulness of those things and would likely never participate in them; but they enjoy them vicariously from a distance. In doing so, they not only fail to be an influence against evil but are instead influenced by **it** – contaminated by it to the full extent that they think and talk about **it** by **exposing it** or rebuking **it**. **The Rabbi** goes on to say that **it is shameful even to speak of the things these people do in secret (5:11b-12).** Some things are so vile that they should be discussed in as little detail as possible, because even describing them is morally and spiritually dangerous.

Our recourse for exposing **evil** is Scripture, which is **the light (Psalm 119:105,**

130; Proverbs 6:23; Hebrews 4:12-13) and is **profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness (Second Timothy 3:16). All things become visible when they are exposed by the light** of **God's Word (5:13).** Our commission as **children of light** is to hold **everything** up to **the light** of Scripture, to **expose** and seek to remedy whatever is **evil**.[204]

The Rabbi then offers an invitation, a call for those who are not **children of light** to come into **the light** and be saved. **This is why it says, "Get up, sleeper! Arise from the dead!" The Rabbi** quotes this principle from a compilation of verses in the TaNaKh to prove **his** point. In **Isaiah 52:1a**, **the prophet** calls on **Tziyon** to **awake and put on holy clothing;** likewise, in **Isaiah 60:1a**, **he** calls on **Jerusalem** to **arise for your light has come.**[205] **Get up, sleeper** describes **the sinner** who is asleep in **the darkness** of **sin** and unaware of **his** lost condition and tragic destiny. Like a spiritual Rip Van Winkle, **he** will sleep through **God's** time of grace unless someone **wakes him up** to his spiritual need. **Arise from the dead** is a summons to repentance, an appeal to turn away from **the darkness** of sin, and into **the light** of **Messiah**. **"And the Messiah will shine on you"** is the Good News that **YHVH** has provided a remedy for every sinful person who will come to **Him** through **His** blessed **Son, the Savior of Mankind (5:14)!**[206]

Here's an interesting exchange on the subject of **light** and **darkness** in a classroom between an atheist college professor and a student.

Professor: You are a Christian, aren't you, son?

Student: Yes, sir.

Professor: So, you believe in **God**?

Student: Absolutely, sir.

Professor: Is **God** good?

Student: Sure.

Professor: Is **God** all powerful?

Student: Yes.

Professor: My brother died of cancer even though he prayed to **God** to heal him.

Most of us would attempt to help others who are ill. But **God** didn't. How is this **God** good then? Hmm?

(Student was silent.)

Professor: You can't answer, can you? Let's start again, young fella. Is **God** good?

Student: Yes.

Professor: Is Satan good?

Student: No.

Professor: Where does Satan come from?

Student: From . . . **God** . . .

Professor: That's right. Tell me son, is there **evil** in this world?

Student: Yes.

Professor: **Evil** is everywhere, isn't it? And **God** did make everything. Correct?

Student: Yes.

Professor: So who created **evil**?

(Student did not answer.)

Professor: Is there sickness? Immorality? Hatred? Ugliness? All these terrible things exist in the world, don't they?

Student: Yes, sir.

Professor: So, who created them?

(Student had no answer.)

Professor: Science says you have 5 Senses you use to identify and observe the world around you. Tell me, son, have you ever seen **God**?

Student: No, sir.

Professor: Tell us if you have ever heard your **God**?

Student: No, sir.

Professor: Have you ever felt your **God**, tasted your **God**, smelt your **God**? Have you ever had any sensory perception of **God** for that matter?

Student: No, sir. I'm afraid I haven't.

Professor: Yet you still believe in Him?

Student: Yes.

Professor: According to empirical, testable, demonstrable protocol, science says your **God** doesn't exist. What do you say to that, son?

Student: Nothing. I only have my **faith**.

Professor: Yes, **faith**. And that is the problem science has.

Student: Professor, is there such a thing as heat?

Professor: Yes.

Student: And is there such a thing as cold?

Professor: Yes.

Student: No, sir. There isn't.

(The lecture theater became very quiet with this turn of events.)

Student: Sir, you can have lots of heat, even more heat, superheat, mega heat, white heat, a little heat or no heat. But we don't have anything called cold. We can hit 458 degrees below zero, which is no heat, but we can't go any further after that. There is no such thing as cold. Cold is only a word we use to describe the absence of heat. We cannot measure cold. Heat is energy. Cold is not the opposite of heat, sir, just the absence of it.

(There was pin-drop silence in the lecture theater.)

Student: What about **darkness**, Professor? Is there such a thing as **darkness**?

Professor: Yes. What is night if there isn't **darkness**?

Student: You're wrong again, sir. **Darkness** is the absence of something. You can have low **light**, normal **light**, bright **light**, flashing l**ight**. But if you have no **light** constantly, you have nothing and it's called **darkness**, isn't it? In reality, **darkness** isn't. If it is, well you would be able to make **darkness darker**, wouldn't you?

Professor: So what is the point you are making, young man?

Student: Sir, my point is your philosophical premise is flawed.

Professor: Flawed? Can you explain how?

Student: Sir, you are working on the premise of duality. You argue there is life and then there is death, a good **God** and a bad **God**. You are viewing the concept of **God** as something finite, something we can measure. Sir, Science can't even explain a thought. It uses electricity and magnetism, but has never seen, much less fully understood either one. To view death as the opposite of life is to be ignorant of the fact that death cannot exist as a substantive thing.

Death is not the opposite of life: just the absence of it. Now tell me, Professor, do you teach your students that they evolved from a monkey?

Professor: If you are referring to the natural evolutionary process, yes, of course, I do.

Student: Have you ever observed evolution with your own eyes, sir?

(The Professor shook his head with a smile, beginning to realize where the argument was going.)

Student: Since no one has ever observed the process of evolution at work and cannot even prove that this process is an on-going endeavor. Are you not teaching your opinion, sir? Are you not a scientist but a preacher?

(The class was in uproar.)

Student: Is there anyone in the class who has ever seen the Professor's brain?

(The class broke out into laughter.)

Student: Is there anyone here who has ever heard the Professor's brain, felt it, touched or smelt it? No one appears to have done so. So, according to the established Rules of Empirical, Stable, Demonstrable Protocol, Science says that you have no brain, sir. With all due respect, sir, how do we then trust your lectures, sir?

(The room was silent. The Professor stared at the student, his face unfathomable.)

Professor: I guess you'll have to take them on **faith**, son.

Student: That is it sir . . . Exactly! The link between mankind and **God** is **faith**. That is all that keeps things alive and moving.

By the way, that student was Albert Einstein.[207]

*Dear Heavenly Father, Praise **You** that **You** are real and that in **Your love**, **You** planned an eternal home in heaven **(John 14:1-3)** for those who **love You (John 14:23, John 1:12).** Thank **You** that **Your grace** offers salvation to all, and it is **faith** that we open our hearts to receive it. **For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not from yourselves—it is the gift of God. It is not based on deeds, so that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).** Life in heaven will be greater than anything we can imagine on earth.*
Things no eye has seen and no ear has heard, that have not entered the heart of mankind – these things God has prepared for those who love Him (First Corinthians 2:9).

*Our earthly trials, though many are long and hard, will soon be over. Our earthly problems are like a blink of an eye compared to the forever length of time we will spend enjoying life with **You** in heaven, **Your** peaceful and perfect home for all eternity. **For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us. (Romans 8:18).** We **love** to serve **You** now and look forward to praising **You** for all eternity. In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*