

The Light

Ephesians 5:11-14

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A. No Secrets (vs. 11-12):

1. Do not participate in unfruitful deeds – Because our commitment is now to habitually walk in the light because we ‘are children of the light,’ persistently learning to please the Lord each day, we must not allow ourselves to continuously associate or share in exercising any energy or time to various efforts that are not in line with the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - a) But rather rebuke. If a Christian is in fellowship with his Lord, his very life will be a reproof to the world.¹
 - b) Fellowship” is *sunkeinōneō* (συνκοινωνέω), “to become a partaker together with others.” The word refers to a joint-participation between two or more individuals in a common interest and a common activity. “Reprove” is *elegchō* (ἐλεγχω), “to reprove or rebuke so as to bring out conviction or confession of guilt.” Trench says that the word “implies not merely the charge, but the truth of the charge, and further the manifestation of the truth of the charge; nay, more than all this, very often also the acknowledgment, if not outward, yet inward, of its truth on the part of the accused; it being the glorious prerogative of the truth in its highest operation not merely to assert itself, and to silence the adversary, but to silence him by convincing him of his error.”²
2. Do not participate in unfruitful deeds of darkness – When we engage in different efforts or old friends (1 Cor. 15:33) that are presentative of our past, this can corrupt us (Eph. 4:17-20; 26-32) causing us to go back to our old way of living (Eph. 3-6; Paul is talking to believers) rather than being wise which shapes us to become drunk with the Spirit (Eph. 5:15-20).
 - a) The reason (gar, for) believers should not be partners with the unregenerate is that Christians are no longer part of the darkness in which they used to live (cf. 4:18; John 1:5; 3:19–20) but ... are light in the Lord (Matt. 5:14–16; John 3:21; 8:12; Rom.

¹ Pfeiffer, C. F., & Harrison, E. F., eds. (1962). [*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: New Testament*](#) (Eph 5:8–11). Moody Press.

² Wuest, K. S. (1997). [*Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader*](#) (Vol. 4, p. 124). Eerdmans.

- 13:12; 1 Thes. 5:4–5). They have been rescued out of darkness (Col. 1:13). Now, being “in the Lord,” who is the Light (John 8:12), they too are lights. Hoehner, H. W. (1985). *Ephesians*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 638). Victor Books.
- b) Sinners, those in darkness, are characterized by the opposite of this fruit: evil, wickedness, and falsehood. The thought in verse 10 expands on verse 8b in that to live as children of light one must discern what pleases the Lord (cf. 2 Cor. 5:9; Col. 1:10). The words find out translate *dokimazontes*, which is literally, “putting to the test,” “approving,” or “discerning” (cf. Rom. 12:2).³
3. But instead expose them – Because we are committed to walking in the light, we must be willing to continuously be open to examining our lives and submit to the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
- a) Paul admonished the believers to walk in the light, a metaphor for a life of holiness. While spiritual darkness is the realm of unbelievers, light is the realm of Christians (Col. 1:12–13; John 8:12; 12:35). Believers “expose” the things of darkness (5:11) by living differently (4:17–24), walking with God (1 John 1:7), being a light (Matt. 5:14–16), and rebuking sin (2 Tim. 3:16). Paul’s quotes in Ephesians 5:14 were probably taken from Isaiah 26:19 and 60:1. This verse contains a sample of how one might reprove a sinner.⁴
4. Disgraceful even to speak of the things – The main point here is that it’s not unacceptable to continuously verbally communicate any reference to actions that are a part of the sinful life we once lived.
5. Done by them in secret – It is especially important not to continuously engage in activities that are purposefully structured to be concealed or covered up, so no one knows what took place.
- a) The secrecy of the works in question is the reason why they require to be openly reproved; and the point is this—the heathen practice in secret, vices too abominable even to mention; all the more is the need open rebuke instead of silent overlooking or connivance (Meyer, Ellicott, etc.).⁵
6. Judas secretly operated and brought darkness into his life.

B. Shine (vs. 13):

³ Hoehner, H. W. (1985). [Ephesians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 638). Victor Books.

⁴ Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (p. 595). Tyndale House Publishers.

⁵ Wuest, K. S. (1997). [Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader](#) (Vol. 4, p. 125). Eerdmans.

1. All things become visible – What was done in darkness will be continuously exposed in God's divine light in His time. This is the main reason why there is no point in participating in secret acts that we believe we can cover up (Luke 8:17).
 - a) All things" is ta panta (τὰ πάντα), "the all things," that is, the secret sins just mentioned, the Greek article pointing back to these. "That are reprov'd" is a present participle in the Greek text, "being reprov'd," or "when they are reprov'd." "Made manifest" is phaneroō (φανερωω), "to make visible or known what has been hidden or unknown." "Doth make manifest" is passive voice in Greek text, "is made manifest." Thus, "everything that is made manifest is light." Vincent comments: "A general proposition, going to show that manifestation can come only through light. Whatever is revealed in its true essence by light is of the nature of light. It no longer belongs to the category of darkness. Manifestation is a law of good and evil alike. That which is of the truth seeks the light and cometh to the light. That which is evil avoids the light - Wuest, K. S. (1997). Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader (Vol. 4, p. 125). Eerdmans.
2. Exposed by the light – When the Spirit of God reveals whether in heaven or on earth, what was designed to be concealed, it would be irrefutably established, outwardly and inwardly, and acknowledgeable to all involved what the truth is. Everyone would have a clear understanding of what took place.
 - a) As, for instance, when our Lord reprov'd the hypocrisy of the Pharisees—their practices had not seemed to the disciples very evil before, but when Christ threw on them the pure light of truth, they were made manifest in their true character—they appeared and they still appear, odious. A just reproof places evil in a light that shows its true character. For everything which is made manifest is light. Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. (1909). Ephesians (p. 209). Funk & Wagnalls Company.
3. Everything that becomes visible is light – Everything that is exposed by divine revelation has absolutely no way of being concealed ever again. This is because the light is unquenchable and based on the righteousness of God (done by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God), who is omnipresent and omniscient.
4. For this reason speak – Because the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth (John 14:16-17), exposes all things we can continuously boldly communicate a message from the Lord God.
5. Awake sleeper – The message is for all who may have come to the light but are now in a lame, lukewarm walk with the Lord, an insensibility to the Lord's Word while conforming to the ways of the world. These believers must continuously stop living in a carnal indifferent manner described in Eph. 4:17-5:6. We must speak this with authority.

- a) The essence of this passage is to admonish believers to be morally vigilant and deal with the problem of sin, receiving the grace of Christ to help them in their struggle.⁶
 - b) It takes the form of an appeal to wake out of the pagan condition of sin, described by the two-fold figure of *sleep* and *death*, and of a promise that then Christ will shine upon the sinner with the saving light of His truth.⁷
6. Rise from the dead – We are commanded to make up our minds and craft the initiative to stop living based on our feelings and our way of thinking, practicing the nature of our old selves, and go back to walking under the influence of the Holy Spirit who poured into us at the point of salvation (Eph. 1:3-4).
- a) But the fundamental idea in the prophecy is, that when the Church gets the light of heaven, she is not to lie still, as if she were asleep or dead, but is to be active, is to make use of the light, is to use it for illuminating the world. The apostle maintains that the Ephesian Church had got the light of heaven; she, therefore, was not to sleep or loiter, but spring forth as if from the grave, and pour light on the world. The changes which the apostle makes on the form of the prophecy are remarkable, and show that it was to its spirit and substance rather than to its precise form and letter that he attached the authority of inspiration.⁸
7. And Christ will shine on you - When we willfully, habitually make the decision to stop succumbing to the influences of the flesh, Christ, our anointed High priest, will immediately convict us, illuminate the Word of God so that it penetrates our hearts (Eph. 4:16-19), continue the workmanship He began (Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 1:6) and keep stimulating us to spiritual maturity (Eph. 4:12-13, 16; 5:15-18).
8. And Christ will shine on you – Christ’s spiritual influence once again empowers us to “be imitators of God, as beloved children and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us....” (Eph. 5:1-2; 4:1).

⁶ Arnold, C. E. (2002). [*Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Romans to Philemon*](#). (Vol. 3, pp. 330–331). Zondervan.

⁷ Wuest, K. S. (1997). [*Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader*](#) (Vol. 4, pp. 125–126). Eerdmans.

⁸ Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. (1909). [*Ephesians*](#) (p. 210). Funk & Wagnalls Company.