

## Ephesians – Week 13 – Children of Light – Bible Study Helps

### Title: Children of Light

#### Sermon Summary:

This sermon from Ephesians 5:1-14 calls Christians to live visibly different lives that reflect God's sacrificial love while rejecting the darkness of worldly immorality. The sermon emphasizes that believers are "dear children" of God who must walk in the same kind of love Christ demonstrated—sacrificial, unconditional, and honoring to God. The message contrasts biblical love with the world's distorted version, which is actually lust and selfishness. Christians are warned to avoid all forms of sexual immorality, impurity, foolish talk, and covetousness, as these things characterize the lost world destined for God's wrath. Instead, believers must live as "children of light," exposing darkness through righteous living and speech rather than participating in it. The sermon challenges Christians to examine whether their lives truly represent Jesus Christ in their workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and homes, emphasizing that our testimony matters because we represent God's family to a watching world.

#### Key Points:

- Christians must follow God's example and walk in sacrificial love as Christ loved us
- Biblical love is sacrificial, unconditional, and pleasing to God—not selfish emotion or lust
- Believers are "dear children" whom God loves as much as He loves Jesus Christ
- Fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthy talk, and foolish jesting must not be named among Christians
- These sins characterize the lost world and bring God's wrath upon unbelievers
- Christians were once darkness but are now light in the Lord and must walk accordingly
- Believers must refuse to participate in the unfruitful works of darkness and instead reprove them
- Our testimony matters because people should see a family resemblance to Jesus Christ in our lives
- Christians must test everything by asking "Does this please God?" rather than "Can I get away with this?"
- The call to "awake thou that sleepest" challenges spiritually distracted or careless believers to live intentionally for Christ
- Living as children of light means being visibly different from the world in speech, actions, entertainment choices, and relationships

#### Scripture Reference:

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- Ephesians 5:1-14 (primary passage)
- John 17:20-23 (God's love for believers)
- John 13 and 15 (Christ's command to love one another)
- 1 Corinthians 6:1-20 (Christians suing each other; the body as temple of the Holy Spirit)
- Colossians 3:6 (God's wrath on disobedience)
- Psalm 119:9 (cleansing one's way through God's Word)
- Romans 7 (Paul's understanding of lust through the law)
- Isaiah 51:17, 52:1, 60:1 (calls to awake)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:6 (not sleeping but being alert)

### Stories:

- An experience at Tuscora Park playing pickleball with a grandson, where they were surrounded by lost people using foul language, reminding us that everyone is watching how Christians live
- Street preaching experience in Canton at Belden Village mall, where someone threw Scripture signs into the road, but other people stopped to pick them up and return them—demonstrating that people are watching both evil and good
- A recent conversation about evangelism where someone used the excuse that they knew a professing Christian living in sin, which hindered their interest in Christianity
- The illustration of lifting a rock during landscaping and watching creatures scatter from the light, comparing it to how Christians should expose darkness by their presence
- Reference to the Good Samaritan who stopped to help when others wouldn't, gave time and money sacrificially
- The church's recent blessing of bread donations that allowed them to offer practical help to someone asking for money

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### Discipleship Questions

How does understanding that God loves us as much as He loves Jesus Christ (John 17:23) change the way we view ourselves as 'dear children' of God?

In what ways does our culture's definition of love differ from biblical love, and how can we recognize when we're being influenced by worldly definitions rather than God's Word?

What does it mean practically to 'give yourself' for others in sacrificial love, and who in your life is most difficult to love this way?

How do our entertainment choices, social media habits, and daily conversations either honor or dishonor our identity as children of light?

Why does God command us not to let sexual immorality be 'once named among' believers, and what does this standard reveal about the seriousness of our testimony?

In what ways might Christians today be 'sleeping' spiritually, and what would it look like to truly 'awake' and live intentionally for Christ?

How can we reprove the works of darkness in our workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods without being self-righteous, while still maintaining a clear witness for Christ?

What influences or activities in your life might need to go 'in the dumpster' for you to walk purely as a child of light, regardless of their cost or popularity?

How does the reality that lost people 'go to hell' for the sins we once practiced affect our urgency to live differently and share the gospel?

When people experience you in daily life, do they see a family resemblance to Jesus Christ, or do they see someone who looks just like the world?

# Small Group Guide: Children of Light

Ephesians 5:1-14

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## Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by asking God to open hearts and minds to His Word and to give wisdom for applying these truths to daily life.

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## Icebreaker Question

Share about a time when someone's Christian testimony (positive or negative) made a lasting impression on you. What made it memorable?

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## Sermon Overview

This message from Ephesians 5 challenges believers to live differently from the world by:

1. Following Christ's example of sacrificial love
  2. Separating from the darkness of worldly sin
  3. Walking as children of light who expose darkness
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## Key Scripture Passages

- Ephesians 5:1-2 - "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love..."
  - Ephesians 5:8 - "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord..."
  - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 - "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost..."
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## Discussion Questions

**Part 1: Our Example (Ephesians 5:1-2)**

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1. **What does it mean to be a "dear child" of God?** How should understanding God's love for us (as much as He loves Jesus) change how we live?
2. **How does the world define "love" versus how God defines it?** What are some specific examples you've seen of this contrast?
3. **The sermon emphasized that biblical love is sacrificial, not selfish.** What does sacrificial love look like in your:
  - o Marriage or family relationships?
  - o Workplace?
  - o Church community?
  - o Neighborhood?
4. **"When people experience you, what is it like to experience you?"** Take a moment for honest self-reflection. Would people know you're a follower of Christ by how you treat them?

### Part 2: Our Separation (Ephesians 5:3-7)

5. **Why do you think God uses such strong language about sexual immorality and impurity?** What does "let it not be once named among you" mean practically?
6. **The sermon mentioned ways our culture deceives us** ("it's normal," "everybody does it," "God understands," "it's just a game/movie/song"). Which of these deceptions do you find most challenging to resist?
7. **Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20.** How does understanding that "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost" change your view of entertainment choices, relationships, and personal purity?
8. **"Let no man deceive you with vain words."** Where do you see Christians being deceived today about what is acceptable? How can we guard against this?

### Part 3: Our Testimony (Ephesians 5:8-14)

9. **What's the difference between being "in the light" versus being "the light"?** How does this change our responsibility?
10. **"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."** How can we reprove (expose/rebuke) sin while still showing Christ's love? What's the balance?
11. **The sermon asked, "Are you sleeping?"** In what areas of your spiritual life might you be:
  - o Spiritually distracted?
  - o Entertained to sleep?
  - o Desensitized to spiritual things?
  - o Passive rather than active?
12. **"Does this please God?"** How would asking this question before every decision change you:
  - o Entertainment choices?
  - o Social media habits?
  - o Relationships?
  - o Use of time and money?

## Key Takeaways

- ✓ **We are dearly loved children of God** and should live in a way that reflects our family resemblance to Christ.
  - ✓ **Biblical love is sacrificial**, not selfish—it's about giving ourselves for others as Christ gave Himself for us.
  - ✓ **We must avoid and reject the darkness** of sexual immorality, covetousness, and filthy speech that characterizes the lost world.
  - ✓ **Our testimony matters**—we are light in the Lord, and people should see a dramatic difference between us and the world.
  - ✓ **We must "awake" from spiritual sleep** and actively live for Christ, exposing darkness rather than participating in it.
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## Practical Applications

### This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE area where you know you need to walk more faithfully as a child of light:

#### Personal Purity:

- Evaluate your entertainment (TV, movies, music, social media) and remove anything that dishonors God
- Set boundaries on devices/screens that lead to temptation
- Memorize Scripture to combat lustful thoughts (Psalm 119:9-11)

#### Sacrificial Love:

- Identify one "difficult person" and intentionally serve them this week
- Forgive someone who has wronged you
- Give time/resources to someone without expecting recognition

#### Bold Testimony:

- Refuse to participate in gossip, crude jokes, or inappropriate conversations at work/school

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- Speak truth lovingly when someone minimizes sin
- Share the gospel with someone who needs Christ

### **Spiritual Awakening:**

- Start each day asking, "Does this please God?"
- Spend consistent time in God's Word and prayer
- Confess specific sins and ask God to cleanse you

### **Accountability**

**Share with the group which area you're committing to work on, and ask someone to check in with you about it this week.**

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## **Closing Reflection**

Read Ephesians 5:14 together: *"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."*

### **Personal Reflection Questions:**

- Is there any area where I'm "sleeping" spiritually?
  - What specific sin or compromise do I need to confess and turn from?
  - How can I be a brighter light for Christ this week?
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## **Prayer Focus**

Pray together for:

- **Purity** - that God would help each person walk in holiness
  - **Love** - that we would sacrificially love others as Christ loved us
  - **Boldness** - to stand for truth even when it's unpopular
  - **Awakening** - that God would stir us from spiritual complacency
  - **Testimony** - that our lives would point others to Jesus
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## **For Next Week**

Encourage group members to:

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1. Complete their chosen practical application
2. Journal about what God is teaching them through Ephesians 5
3. Come prepared to share how they saw God work through their obedience

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*"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." - Matthew 5:16*

# 5-Day Devotional: Walking as Children of Light

## Day 1: Beloved Children of God

**Reading:** Ephesians 5:1-2; John 17:20-23

**Devotional:** You are deeply loved by God—not with a casual affection, but with the same love the Father has for Jesus Christ. Let that truth settle into your heart today. As His dear child, you bear His family name wherever you go. The love God calls you to walk in is not the world's counterfeit—built on emotion, lust, or tolerance of sin—but sacrificial love modeled by Christ. This love cost Jesus everything. It will cost you something too: your pride, your comfort, your selfish desires. When you encounter difficult people today, remember how undeserving you were when Christ loved you. Ask God for grace to give yourself sacrificially for others, reflecting the family resemblance of your Heavenly Father.

**Reflection:** When people experience you today, will they see the love of Christ? What relationships require you to love sacrificially rather than selfishly?

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## Day 2: Separated from Darkness

**Reading:** Ephesians 5:3-7; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20

**Devotional:** God's standard is clear: sexual immorality, impurity, greed, filthy speech, and foolish talk should not even be named among believers. These aren't suggestions—they're commands from the One who purchased you with His blood. The world minimizes sin, calling evil "normal" and darkness "just entertainment." But you know better. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. What you watch, listen to, and participate in matters eternally. Lost people go to hell for these very sins. How tragic when Christians dabble in the same darkness they've been rescued from. Today, examine your entertainment, conversations, and relationships. What influences are corrupting your testimony? Whatever leads you into sin—no matter the cost—must be removed. You are not your own; glorify God in your body.

**Reflection:** What "games," shows, music, or relationships are compromising your purity? What needs to be eliminated from your life today?

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## Day 3: Light in the Darkness

**Reading:** Ephesians 5:8-10; Matthew 5:14-16

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**Devotional:** You were once darkness itself—not just in darkness, but the embodiment of it. Now you are light in the Lord. This is your new identity. Light doesn't blend with darkness; it exposes it. When you walk into a room, people should sense something different about you—not because you're self-righteous, but because Christ radiates through your life. Your speech, attitudes, and actions should cause darkness to scatter like insects fleeing from an overturned rock. This means testing everything: Does this please God? Does this honor Christ? Does this help others see Jesus? The darker the world becomes, the brighter believers should shine. Don't dim your light to fit in. Let it shine boldly, proving what is acceptable to the Lord through goodness, righteousness, and truth.

**Reflection:** In what areas of your life—work, school, neighborhood—are you hiding your light? How can you shine more boldly for Christ today?

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### Day 4: Reproving the Works of Darkness

**Reading:** Ephesians 5:11-13; Isaiah 60:1-3

**Devotional:** God doesn't call you to merely avoid evil—He commands you to reprove it. This means speaking up, exposing sin, and refusing to participate in unfruitful works of darkness. This will make you unpopular with both unbelievers and carnal Christians who don't want their sin confronted. But remember: you represent the King. When coworkers tell dirty jokes, when friends pressure you to compromise, when culture celebrates what God condemns—you must stand. Not with self-righteousness, but with humble conviction rooted in Scripture. It's shameful even to speak of what the disobedient do in secret, yet you must shine light on darkness. Your silence is agreement. Your participation is betrayal. Stand firm. Speak truth. Let your life be such a contrast to the world that people are drawn to the light of Christ in you.

**Reflection:** Where have you remained silent when you should have spoken? Who in your life needs to hear biblical truth spoken in love?

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### Day 5: Awake and Arise

**Reading:** Ephesians 5:14; Romans 13:11-14

**Devotional:** "Awake, thou that sleepest!" This is God's alarm clock to believers who have become spiritually drowsy. Are you distracted? Entertained to sleep? Desensitized to spiritual realities? Many Christians are passive, living sloppy lives that barely resemble Christ. But today is the day to wake up. Arise from spiritual death and lethargy. Christ will give you light—fresh vision, renewed passion, holy conviction. It's high time to awake, to live what you profess, to stop just saying you're a Christian and start being one. Examine your life honestly: your speech, entertainment, relationships, priorities. Ask God to reveal where you've been sleeping. Then rise.

## Ephesians – Week 13 – Children of Light – Bible Study Helps

Put on Christ. Walk as a child of light with urgency and purpose. The world is dying in darkness, and they desperately need to see Jesus in you.

**Reflection:** In what areas of your spiritual life have you fallen asleep? What specific steps will you take today to awaken and live fully for Christ?