

No More Darkness Ephesians 5:11-14

Introduction

NJFK—sleep eye mask; switch

⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

⁷ Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³ But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴ for anything that becomes visible is light.

Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

1. Refuse (11-12)
2. Refute (11b,13-14a)
3. Rise and Shine (14b)

1. Refuse (11-12)

11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. **12** For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.

“Take no part”—do not fellowship together with
Fellowship—a Christian word we love; literally “to have in common” (the *Koine* Greek was the commonly spoken Greek of the empire)—share, participate

No fellowship with the works of darkness
They are not fruitful, but corrupt and deadly.
Fruit comes from life. Corruption comes from death.
Plants need light to be fruitful. Darkness kills them.
Good works are beneficial—like good fruit. Sin is harmful.

Besides being unfruitful, works of darkness are also shameful or disgraceful. So much so that you contaminate yourself and others if you even talk about them.

We talk about what we think about and what we love. It's one way we enjoy what is good. It's a way we reinforce what we believe and enjoy. Don't do the same thing with what is bad.

That's why Paul forbids filthiness or foolish talk or crude joking in verse 4. You can corrupt yourself and others with the words you use and the topics you discuss. Don't think that as long as you don't actually do something that's impure or immoral that it's okay to talk about it. You may not be dirtying your hands, but your contaminating your mind and heart. That kind of damage is far reaching, for out of the heart come the issues of life.

When we talk about such things, we have to think about such things, and we break down our resistance to them. There's plenty to talk about that builds up people and pleases God. Fill your mouth and mind with what is good not with what is rotten.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

2. Refute (11b, 13-14a)

11b But instead expose them.

13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, **14a** for anything that becomes visible is light.

Exposing the unfruitful works of darkness may sound like a contradiction to not even speaking about them. So what's Paul saying here?

"Expose"—to bring to light, set forth, demonstrate, prove; 2) to convict or convince someone of something, to point something out to someone; 3) to reprove, correct, refute MLJ, 419: "To convince by means of evidence"

By its very nature, light exposes what is actually there, rather than camouflaging its true nature. That's how we are to respond to the works of darkness. Treat them in line with their true nature. Convince and prove and correct so that neither you or anyone else you love takes part in them. Don't pretend like the works of darkness are okay. Absolutely do not affirm them.

One of the biggest popular lies of our times is that we show love to people by affirming their deeds of darkness as okay. Only in a universe other than what God created and rules can that be helpful to people.

That does not mean it's right to treat sinning people with contempt. Far from it. Love them. But love them faithfully and courageously. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. *To affirm their sin is to encourage what is killing them.*

That is not love. That's cowardice at best. It has the practical effect of hating them and hating God. Because you are encouraging them to continue what is destroying them and you are treating God as a lying bully. You're just making yourself an ally of the enemy of their soul.

Sin loves darkness. Part of getting rid of it is turning the light on it.

3. Rise and Shine (14b)

Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

It says. What says?

Possibly a combination of several OT passages like

Isaiah 60:1

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

Isaiah 26:19

Our dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.

It is possible that these words are from an early Christian hymn that summed up biblical concepts like these in Isaiah and elsewhere.

We turn out the lights when we want to sleep. And the ultimate sleep is the sleep of death. There's no need of light for a dead body.

But someone who is awake and alive and active needs light to do their God-given work.

Proverbs 4:18-19

18 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day. **19** The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.

Don't sleep through life unaware of reality. Open your eyes and turn the light on. Don't live in the corruption of death. Once you were dead in your sins. Once you were darkness right down to the depths of your soul. *Now you're alive. You're awake. You see what's going on. You have a mission to fulfill. Don't waste your life.*

Let Christ the Savior-King shine on you with heavenly blessings like the sunshine flooding your life. Let Him shine through you to everyone around you. Rise and shine.