

Walking in the Light | Hebrews 13:1-6, Ephesians 5 | 3/15/2020

- Introduction
 - This lesson focuses on the final exhortations that were given us to by our Hebrews author.
 - These are Christian ethics that we are to portray in our everyday lives.
 - Christians are called to live out our faith, our faith is not solely something that we keep inside. Faith requires action and we are to live it out daily.
 - Before we talk about the specific examples I want to briefly look at why living out our faith is so important in the lives of a Christian.
- We are to walk in the light
 - As Christians we are called to live a life that is different from the world.
 - No longer are we to live by our sinful and selfish desires, instead we are called to live our lives to a much higher standard.
 - We are to walk in the light
 - Ephesians 5:8 <- **Key Verse**
 - “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Walk as children of light**”
 - **This means that we are not only to believe and trust in Christ, but we are also to be obedient to His commandments. We must demonstrate God’s character through us by our actions within the world.**
 - In everything that we do in life we should have Christ radiating from us.
 - **To walk in the light is to imitate Jesus Christ**
 - Ephesians 5:1
 - “Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children.”
 - **When we as Christians walk in the light, we will be imitators of God because the light is Jesus Christ.**
 - God being our heavenly father has given us the perfect example of how to live our lives on Earth.
 - He was the only one whom was able to live a life that was truly holy and pure.
 - This action will show the world whom Jesus truly is.
 - It will show the world that we are His disciples.
 - It will show the world where true hope comes from.
 - **We were once in darkness but now because of Christ we are to walk in the light.**
 - We were not always in a position to be able to imitate God however because we once lived in darkness.
 - Ephesians 5:8
 - “**For you were once darkness**, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light”
 - **Before Christ we lived our lives in darkness and we had no hope because we were separated from God.**
 - A description of darkness
 - Ephesians 2:12
 - “At that time you were **without the Messiah**, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, **without hope and without God** in the world.”
 - This is darkness and in fact it is a description of Hell as there is no hope in Hell and also eternal separation from God.
 - Satan seeks to put a veil between us and God.

- 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
 - “But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case, the **god** of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers so they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”
- **But because of God’s grace and our faith in Jesus Christ we are no longer walking in darkness, but we walk in the light.**
 - To address the “but now” in Ephesians 5:8.
 - John 12:46
 - “I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me would not remain in darkness.”
 - 1 Corinthians 6:11
 - “And some of you used to be like this. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”
 - **This cleansing is why we are no longer in darkness but instead in the light.**
 - This is all possible because of God’s grace through faith.
 - Ephesians 2:8
 - “For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift”
- Christians are renewed and born again, we are no longer to live as we once did, but instead we are to walk in the light.
- When we walk in the light we will produce holy fruit
 - **Do you think that the fruit that we produce as those living in darkness, is different from that of the light?**
 - When we walk in the light when we live out our faith we will produce holy fruit.
 - Ephesians 5:9
 - “For the fruit of the light results in all goodness, righteousness, and truth”
 - God desires that we walk in the light that we imitate Christ because when we do this we will produce holy fruit.
 - **What are some examples of fruit of darkness and fruit of light?**
 - Fruit of darkness is sin, evil, hate, despair, violence, greed and envy.
 - Fruit of light is love, joy and peace, caring and hospitality.
 - When we walk in the light the only fruit that we can produce is good, righteous and it will result in the truth.
 - When we are obedient to God and we allow God to work inside of us then only holy fruit can come out of us, we won’t be able to produce bad fruit of darkness.
 - **Can a Christian still produce bad fruit? If so why?**
- As Christians having the Holy Spirit living within us we can now discern what is pleasing to the Lord and we will desire to understand what His will is for our lives.
 - Ephesians 5:10
 - “discerning what is pleasing to the Lord.”
 - With God’s spirit we know have discernment to know and understand what is and what is not pleasing to God.
 - If we truly acknowledge God’s Spirit and “think” about what we do before we do them, we will know if our actions or choices will be pleasing to God.
 - **Has the light allowed you to see the evil and sin within the world that you used to be oblivious to or condoned?**

- Ephesians 5:15-17
 - “Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise—making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.”
 - **What important truth does this passage tell us?**
 - **Time is short so spend it wisely striving to obey the will of God.**
- We must let our light shine in every aspect of our lives so that others will give glory to God.
 - The ultimate result of Christians being obedient to God and walking in the light is that it can bring others to give glory to God.
 - Matthew 5:14-15
 - “You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. **In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.**”
- **In what ways can our obedience and fruit of righteousness cause others to give glory to God?**
- The actions of living out our faith | Hebrews 13:1-5
 - We will now look at several specific ways in which we are to live out our faith.
 - **Read Hebrews 13:1-5**
 - Show love to our fellow Christians
 - The first of the exhortations given is to show brotherly love, which means to show love to our fellow Christians.
 - Not that we are not also to show love to the world as we’ll talk about here shortly, but we are especially supposed to show love to our fellow Christians.
 - Jesus put a great emphasis on the love that Christians are supposed to show to one another.
 - This was a special “badge” that He applied to them so that they could be distinguished from others.
 - This is because when we do this this gives the world proof that we are Disciples of Christ.
 - John 13:34-35
 - “I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have **love** for one another.”
 - This love is agape which is the love that that is revealed in Christ and one that we are supposed to imitate.
 - This command is new because it applies to the love between Christians and not the love that is commanded by us to love our neighbors.
 - The degree to which we are called to love is the same that Christ shows us.
 - Jesus gives us the example of the extent to what this love looks like; which is to lay our life down for another.
 - John 15:13
 - “No one has greater love than this, that someone would lay down his life for his friends.”
 - 1 John 3:16
 - “This is how we have come to know love: He laid down His life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers.”

- **If laying down our life is the type of love that we are supposed to show other Christians then should our love for others also consist of the lesser things?**
 - If the extent of our love for others is laying down our lives, then this would mean that our love for others would consist of lesser things.
 - To help our church, to help our Christian in their time of need whether it be financially or in service.
- We are to love everyone as we love ourselves.
 - The Bible of course speaks to the love of everyone and not just Christians
 - Matthew 22:37-40
 - “He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.”
 - We may not think so but we all do love ourselves.
 - We care about our well being, we want to be happy we want to have food and clothes etc.,
 - We are to take this same love and caring that we have for ourselves and to treat others the same way.
- Living out our faith through love requires action.
 - **To love others requires action and not just something that we feel in our hearts**
 - 1 John 3:18
 - “Little children, we must not love with word or speech, but with truth and action.”
 - **To truly walk in the light, we must love with action**
 - We can say that we love others or we love our fellow Christians, but if we see them in a time of need and we never raise a finger then we are not truly showing the love, our words are meaningless without action.
 - 1 John 3:17
 - “If anyone has this world’s goods and sees his brother in need but closes his eyes to his need—how can God’s love reside in him?”
 - **To say we love someone is commendable, but action is where true love is proven.**
 - This is similar to why our faith is dead without works, we cannot live out our faith with just our words.
 - James 2:15-17
 - “If a brother or sister is without clothes and lacks daily food and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you don’t give them what the body needs, what good is it? In the same way faith, if it doesn’t have works, is dead by itself.”
 - We must prove our love to others with our actions and not just our words.
 - To live out our faith through love requires action.
 - **What does this love look like to the external observer?**
- We must show hospitality to others
 - What does it mean to show hospitality?
 - By definition

- The friendly reception and treatment of guests and strangers.
- Throughout Scripture hospitality is referenced when caring for a traveler and also those that are in need.
- When a traveler is looking for a place to stay someone who took them in and cared for them would be showing them hospitality.
 - This was usually done without payment as it was done as a service out of caring for the one in need.
 - One did this out of genuine concern and care for others.
- This word equally applies to those in need.
 - This may not be someone is traveling but someone who is hungry, someone who is thirsty or is in need of clothing.
- Why is it important for the Christian to be hospitable?
 - **Our love for God is shown in how we treat others.**
 - We may think well I love God but I don't really care for other people. I will show love for God but not others and that is OK.
 - This attitude however couldn't be farther from the truth, because one of the ways that we show in action our love for Christ is in how we treat others.
 - Matthew 25:31-40
 - **The implication of what Jesus said is so significant.**
 - To show hospitality, to genuinely care for others directly affects our relationship with God.
 - To love and care for others is to love and care for God.
 - If Christian refrain and choose not to be hospitable, to not care for others then this reflects how we treat God.
 - Matthew 25:45
- To show hospitality is an extension of love that requires action.
 - **We cannot live out our faith through hospitality in our words alone, we must actively engage with others.**
 - Just as the verses we read earlier from James we must get our hands dirty, we must get physically involved to show our love in action for others.
- We must not take hospitality for granted. It must be part of our everyday actions.
 - To actually take action and not just speak of being hospitable to others is not as common and it is something that we likely take for granted.
 - **But instead we must consistently live out our faith and walk in the light so that being hospitable is second nature.**
 - As Christians we all should have this desire to reach out to others regardless of who they are and what they can do for us.
 - **Are guests may be angels or even the Lord**
 - A good example of this would be Abraham.
 - He was one who walked in the light who lived out his faith.
 - Because of this he just being in his nature to be hospitable happened to entertain angels and the Lord.
 - This is found in Genesis 18
- **What do you think of what Jesus said in Matthew 25:40 "And the King will answer them, "I assure you: Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me."**
- **How does this affect your outlook on putting your words into actions?**
 - Remember the prisoners and the mistreated

- As we continue to live out our faith it is important that we show our love for those who might be prisoners and also for those who are mistreated **even if we cannot see them.**
- Those that are in prison could be for any number of reasons, in the biblical times this was common for the righteous to be in chains because of their faith.
 - 2 Timothy 1:16-18
- But regardless of the reason for the person being there we are called to genuinely care for those even though they are in chains and may likely deserve the
- We must live out our faith in our marriage
 - Christians must live out their faith in their marriages. This is a MUST and not a general guideline.
 - In fact, in our homes is where Christian love should first be practiced.
 - We must act out our faith at home for our spouse and children so that our homes will follow Christ and will strive to walk in the light.
 - **If we cannot do this at home, then how can we do it within the world?**
 - We must respect the marriage that God has biblically instated.
 - Unfortunately this is an area that often Christians choose NOT to live out their faith in.
 - We have an extremely high rate of divorce in Christian homes where seemingly good Christians do not respect the marriage that they entered into.
 - Lack of love and respect
 - Marriage is looked at much like it is in the world where divorce is just something that everyone does and that you are in the minority of you actually stay married to the same person.
 - Sexual immorality is rampant in marriages even in Christian homes.
 - However this is not what God desires we must respect and treat our marriages just as God had intended.
 - Marriage is the joining of man and women too become one flesh, there has to be respect for this unity.
 - Genesis 2:24
 - “This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.”
 - We must treat our spouse in a godly way.
 - God established marriage for a divine and holy purpose and how dare we disrespect God’s desires and intentions.
 - We must as Christians live our marriages in the light, we must treat our spouse in the way that God has called us to.
 - Men must love their wives just as Christ loves the church
 - Ephesians 5:25
 - “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her”
 - Men do we love our wives this way? Do we do it in action and not just our words?
 - Women must respect their husbands
 - Ephesians 5:22
 - “Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord”
 - **If all Christians fully lived their faith out in their marriages what would the results of that be? Would this be something the world would take notice of?**
- Our life must be free from the love of money

- We cannot walk in the light or live out our faith if we have love for money.
 - To love money is the sin of greed and it is the root of all kinds of evil.
 - 1 timothy 6:10
 - “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.”
 - Living out our faith does not consist of acting out in sin, we must be careful that we do not fall into the snares and traps that the devil desires for us to fall into.
 - We cannot love God and also love money
 - Matthew 6:24
 - “No one can be a slave of two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot be slaves of God and of money.”
- If we live out our faith in our lives then we will always be satisfied and we will never be afraid. | Hebrews 13:5b-6
 - **Read Hebrews 13:5b-6**
 - In a world of uncertainty we can be assured that if we as Christians truly live out our faith in our daily lives we will always be satisfied and we will never be afraid.
 - Because no matter what our circumstances or what the world may throw at us, we have Christ who is always there with us.
- Closing
 - When we walk in the light we will shine like stars in the world.
 - Philippians 2:12-15
 - So then, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now even more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³ For it is God who is working in you, enabling you both to desire and to work out His good purpose. ¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling and arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world¹