

WALKING IN LOVE, LIGHT, & WISDOM - REVISITED (EPHESIANS 5:1-21)

We have looked at many of the facets and names of Christ Jesus over the past few weeks, that corresponds to who He is and in His relationship with us and our relationship with Him, that goes beyond Him just being our Savior, as awesome and wonderful as He IS in that respect. He most certainly IS and should be also our Lord and our God. I say HE IS our Lord, whether we acknowledge Him or not, as it is said of Christ Jesus, "who being the brightness of His [God's] glory and the express image of His person, and **upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." (**Hebrews 1:3**) Yet it is up to us to walk in obedience to Him in order to experience and pass onto others His Love, Light and Wisdom. We read for our Christmas message, "For **unto us** a Child is born, **unto us** a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (**Isaiah 9:6**) Q: Who would, with sincerity of heart call Him "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"? Those who know Him and love Him, just as He has shown His love to us first. Right there in that verse, speaks of His awesomeness, the divine nature of Christ Jesus, and also as Him being our Peace and our Wisdom. Remember the Apostle Paul saying in **1 Corinthians 1:30**, that Christ Jesus is for us, from God, our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and our Redemption!

That attribute of Christ, as the Prince of Peace, and what He means for us, we've also read recently, numerous times, Jesus said to His disciples, and He is then saying to us, "**Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**" (**John 14:27**) The word Jesus used for peace (eirene) is basically the same as shalom, that Isaiah used for "Prince of Peace", and means "to join or to tie together into a whole"¹, which is the wholeness/completeness we CAN HAVE in Christ Jesus, which can mean individually, with others, and with God. Jesus spoke a specific blessing to those who will receive His peace and walk in it. "**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God**" (**Matthew 5:9**) But just like our Salvation that is in Christ, so is His peace and the rest of who HE IS, He is not a one-time going to the altar experience. It is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ who continues to work in us, as the Apostle Paul said, as we are "being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (**Philippians 1:11**). As we've gone over time and again the fruit of the Spirit is, as HE IS, "**love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.** Against such there is no law." (**Galatians 5:22-23**) Jesus explains that to us rather plainly, from **John 14:6**, where He says, "**I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**"

¹ <https://biblehub.com/greek/1515.htm>

Similarly, God/Jesus was the Way for the Israelites to the "Promised Land", as He led them by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. As it was for the Israelites, so it is with us, each and every day, every situation, every moment we must decide/choose, His way or our own way. "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." God with us. "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and HE ponders all his paths." (**Proverbs 5:21**) Yet, He is more precious and personal than that. "The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." (**Psalms 34:15**) **2 Chronicles 16:9**, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him." Then Jesus, in what we call His Great Commission that He gave His apostles and has been now passed along to us through the preceding generations, said "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (**Matthew 28:18-20**)

Our passage of Scripture, **Ephesians 5:1-21**, that we are revisiting from a few years ago, that I had pulled from biblegateway.com, separated the text into three sections, 1. walking in love, 2. walking in light, and 3. walking in wisdom. We'll look at how without all three of those, we really can't be operating in the completeness and wholeness in Christ. That is, within ourselves, with others, or with God. Meaning we will not have the peace/wholeness/completeness in Christ if we are not walking in the love, light and wisdom of God in Christ Jesus. It is really Who God IS, Who dwells in His people. If we choose to ignore Him, as He wants to work in us His Love, Light and Wisdom, we will be faced with the problems associated with a lack of wholeness and completeness in Christ that affects us personally, others that we interact with, and in our relationship of course with God Himself. We can read scores of examples in the Old Testament of how things spiraled out of control and downward with God's people who were disobedient and rebellious to the will of God, and it wasn't just because of those who chose to worship a false god image. Moses himself, who was disobedient to God, one time, when He was told by God to speak to the rock to bring forth water and he beat the rock instead, out of **anger towards the people**. How did God punish him? God did not allow Moses to enter the promised land but instead was told to go up on Mt. Nebo and die. That didn't mean that Moses didn't go to heaven as he and Elijah ministered to Jesus in a vision (**Matthew 17**). But it did mean that he didn't receive the wholeness of God's plan of blessings for his life on this earth. It also was a horrible witness and example to the people who were already prone to disobedience and rebellion anyways. Moses though was not practicing disobedience or rebellion towards God, for if he did, he would not

have been with Elijah ministering to Christ Jesus in a vision. Nevertheless, as the saying goes, we will get the most out of our lives on this earth, based on our commitment of obedience to God. We've been looking at previously, in the Scriptures, that Christ Jesus alone IS our peace, as God intended. God Almighty, Creator of all things, designed it that way and made us that way. Perhaps you've heard of how God has intentionally made us to have a void, so to speak, in our hearts, and He reveals to us our need to fill that void with One and only One thing. Not really a thing, but God Himself, Christ Jesus, the Spirit of Christ, of whom makes us whole and complete, and functioning according to the will of God.

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[Ephesians 5:1-7 (Walk in Love)]

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And **walk in love**, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them.

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How it goes in our Christian walk of faith is, first and foremost, that we should be walking in love for, as Paul spells it out for us in **1 Corinthians 13**, without love, our works amount to nothing. If we are truly children of God, with the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, and are obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit and to God's Word, then we will bear the fruit of the Spirit and it could be said that the chief element of that fruit is love. Once again, quoting Paul, he concluded, there is faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of those 3 is love. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for **God is love**." (**1 John 4:7-8**) We are following the example of Christ as well as the leading of the Holy Spirit. The apostle Peter says it like this, "For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example**, that you should **follow His steps**: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might **live for righteousness**—by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." (**1 Peter 2:20-25**) We

have Christ's example and then we also have Jesus saying this, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and **they follow Me**. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand." (John 10:27-28) As Jesus also said, HE IS the Good Shepherd, our Good/Great/Chief Shepherd who leads us in the fruits of righteousness to bear the fruit of the Spirit, for the glory of God! We are also warned to be careful of whom we are associated with. Obviously we associate with sinners (as we ourselves are sinners saved by the grace of God), but we also are aware that the enemy of our souls is out to, as Jesus warns, "**steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**" There were many times when Jesus knew He had to move along and get away from those who were trying to end His life prematurely, ie-not in God's time, and we are given many examples of the apostles, to where sometimes they remained in an evil situation, some to their deaths, and other times to move along. That requires the wisdom of God and the guiding of the Holy Spirit. We'll address wisdom as we get to it, as it comes up in our passage of Scripture in **Ephesians 1**. First was love, next is:

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[Ephesians 1:8-14 (Walk in the Light)]

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and **Christ will give you light.**"

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Walking in the Light. Jesus said "**I AM the Light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.**" (John 8:12) He then also said, "**As long as I AM in the world, I AM the Light of the world.**" (John 9:5) Matthew, in recording Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount", quoted Jesus as saying, "**You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.**" (Matthew 5:13-15) Joseph, the step-father of Jesus was told, by an angel, "you shall call His name Jesus, for He will **save HIS people from their sins.**" God's people now, as we are told by the Apostle John, are those who believe on Christ Jesus, the Anointed One of God, of whom died on a cross for our sins, taking our sins upon Himself to the grave. And then He rose from the dead on the third day, thereby completely, definitively conquering death, sin and evil, as He is far superior to all of that. And then too, WE also

will overcome death, sin and evil and have eternal life in and through Him, that is, of course, to all those who will go to that Great Light, the Light of life, Christ Jesus, believing on Him AND receiving Him, the Light, receiving the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit into our hearts of which we are then children **of God!** **John 1:12-13**, "as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children **of God**, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God.**" Jesus explained that further to Nicodemus, the Jewish leader, "**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.** He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the **light has come into the world**, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth **comes to the light**, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done **in God.**" (**John 3:16-21**)

So then, as Jesus is the Light of the world, and we have Jesus within us, we should be shining forth His light in the world, right? What then does light do for us? The Light (Jesus) illumines the (His) Way (**John 14:6**). "Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep Your righteous judgments. (**Psalms 119:104-106**) The light of Christ also exposes that which is in darkness. That certainly doesn't mean that those in the darkness won't confront the light. Consider how brazen and contemptuous Satan was in trying to tempt Jesus, in His time of fasting in the wilderness. Likewise, the Pharisees, they didn't have any problem flaunting their deeds in the Light and confronting the Light (Jesus). Those in darkness will even try and make a mockery of the light to justify themselves in the darkness, and as we know what happened to Christ, the end result was that the darkness tried to snuff out the Light. That didn't quite work out for them as planned did it? But Jesus tells us, "**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace.** [wholeness/completeness] **In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**" (**John 16:33**) We too will overcome the world in the Light of life in Christ Jesus! It is truly up to each of us, how we will respond to the light. There are two choices as apostle Peter said, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame. Therefore, to you who believe, **He is precious**; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief

cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. [As Jesus said, "**For many are called, but few are chosen.**"-**Matthew 22:14**] But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you **out of darkness into His marvelous light**; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." (1 **Peter 2:6-10**)

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[Ephesians 5:15-21 (Walk in Wisdom)]

See then that you walk circumspectly [carefully. akribos: akrib="gaining exact information with the highest level of accuracy"²], not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.

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We are reminded in Scripture, that the enemy of our souls is not other persons. "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (**Ephesians 6:12**) Jesus reminds us of this, "**You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'** But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." (**Matthew 5:43-48**) That requires the wisdom from God, our closeness to Jesus in trusting Him in leading us in His way, and in not wavering in our sharing and showing of **the love and the gospel** of Christ Jesus, while bearing the wholeness of fruit of the Spirit (akribos).

The apostle Paul says, "**I beseech you** therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (**Romans 12:1-2**) As a living sacrifice to God we are then His representatives of His love, His light, and His wisdom, and we are to be a sweet smelling savor unto God and to others. God promises us that He is going to reward us richly. As God said to Abraham He presents to us, through Christ Jesus "I AM your shield,

your exceedingly great reward." (**Genesis 15:1**) To elaborate of what that means to us who ARE in Christ Jesus, we will be joint-heirs with Jesus. Yet in context this is what Paul says in **Romans 8:17**, "joint heirs with Christ, IF indeed we **suffer with Him**, that we may also be **glorified together**." (**Romans 8:17**) Also we are promised to get to reign with Christ but once again, in context Paul says this, "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us." (**2 Timothy 2:12**) Jesus paid the price for us to be reconciled to God and be forgiven of our sins but now Jesus is simply saying to us, as He did His disciples, "**come, follow me**", in His Love, His Light and His Wisdom!