



Living in the Light (EPHESIANS 5:1-15)
2019 Advent sermon series
By Pastor David Hillis, 12.15.19

BIG IDEA: May we choose, no matter where God takes each of us in our lives, to live *in the light*.

I. What it means to live in the light:

A. Don't hide your darkness by pretending or making excuses.

(Ephesians 5:6-10, [1 John 1:5-9](#))

1. No one comes out of life unscathed.
2. We all mistakes, and sooner or later find alternative paths that *look* good but take us into the shadows.
3. Are you in the habit of hiding any behavior from anyone? Your spouse, your parents, your boss, your friends at church? Then you're moving into the shadows and not living in the light.
4. When we minimize the darkness inside us — when we ignore it, downplay it, excuse it, it just festers and grows, and *eventually* it will hurt or even destroy us.
5. When we foster relationships with other people of faith and ask them to help hold us accountable, we keep a shadow side of ourselves from forming.

B. Likewise, don't hide or turn a blind eye to the darkness around you.

(Ephesians 5:10-13)

1. As God's children, Paul says we are to not only stop hiding our *own* darkness, but we cannot turn a blind eye to *others* in darkness, either.
2. When we see someone getting off the path, in love we are to pursue them.
3. He's not saying be the *morality police* for everyone around you in the world.
4. But he says among those we *love* who *know* Christ, we are to *reprove* these things, *expose* them.

5. May each of you be *relentless*, as you build relationships here, to notice when someone goes missing, when someone starts to step into the shadows.
6. Don't wait for them to figure out how to find their way back; pursue them!

C. Take notice and don't delay, for time is short.

(Ephesians 5:14-15, [Isaiah 60:1-2](#), [John 1:5](#))

1. For us to be Christ's light, to reflect him, we have to address the subtle darkness inside each of us as God exposes it.
2. We cannot stay in the shadows, deny what's there or make excuses for it.
3. We have to be willing to enter into the messiness, enter into the shadows, to help our brothers and sisters find the light too.

NEXT STEP: What places in your life are hidden in the shadows? What do you need to do to live in the light — how can God help you expose whatever darkness is *inside* you, or *around* you?

FOR MY PERSONAL TIME WITH GOD THIS WEEK:

1. This week in our series *Light of the World*, we talked about the darkness that sometimes creeps into each of our lives that we are prone to hide, and the choices we make in life that are outside of God's plan. Reread [Ephesians 5:1-15](#), perhaps in a few different translations such as the [CEV](#), [ERV](#) or [MSG](#).
2. Take some time this week to apply Ephesians 5:1-15 to your own life. Start by praying and asking God to show you as you think back over the past year, those things that you have been prone to hide, or are outside of God's plan for your life. Write each one down, and then next to each one, prayerfully ask God to give you specific way(s) you can dispel that darkness they bring and write those ideas down. Commit to following God's path to bring those parts of your life back fully into the light.
3. Consider those people who you love who, in some ways, are living in darkness. Consider their struggle, ask God to give you a burden for them, and commit to praying for them. Ask God how you can help bring light to the situation(s).
4. Read [2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1](#), which is a parallel passage that explains the contrasts that exist between the child of God and the unsaved person. Do you feel any points of tension between this passage and Ephesians 5:1-15?
5. Next week in our series *Light of the World*, we will look at what it means to let our lights shine for Christ. To prepare for that message, read [Matthew 5:13-16](#). Look for where light is mentioned, and what its significance is.

RESOURCES:

- What does Smeagol, or Gollum, in *The Lord of the Rings* teach us about living in the light? See ThinkChristian article, "[Sin, The Hobbit and clearing the Gollum from your Throat](#)".
- *Light of the World* video: <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/illustration/151217>