**MESSAGE OUTLINE**




# The Invitation Out Of Darkness

**SCRIPTURE - Ephesians 5:1-8a**

*1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 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. 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 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. 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 be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The concept of the walk represents how we live our lives.

Paul mentions how to walk five times. We are at the pinnacle example of how to walk.

**So let's see how to walk worthy of the calling with which we received.**

**vv.1-2**

Paul gives us a command to "be imitators of God." A present imperative meaning, it is a lifestyle.

We are taught that we are to walk in love. Perfect love looks like the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

**John 10:15b, 17-18** 15b *I lay down My life for the sheep. 17 Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.*

Obedience takes two different wills.

Christ was willingly to do what the Father willed, thus he accomplished perfect obedience.

When I was an English teacher and missionary in Osaka, we would have a game day.

I had the kids line up and pull tissue out and count in English. They were everywhere.

The Japanese teacher picked them up. I asked her, "What are you doing?" She said, "*mottainai!*"

But I want you to imagine the value of those used tissues—compared to the value of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was the sweet smelling aroma, as the sacrificial Lamb. That's *mottainai.*

**1 John 4:19,** *We love because he first loved us.* This is the walk we are to lead.

**vv.3-5**

Paul from v.3 leaves no room for any kind of immoral sexual activity.

While it may be a *norm for their day*, it is not acceptable. He warns them not even to speak of such.

Paul is saying not to glorify anything connected to filth such as that and instead put on thanksgiving.

**How pure are your thoughts? How pure are your conversations?**

What we need to be careful of is any content from music to videos that glorify immoral sex.

What needs to be in focus, is the thanksgiving for the grace that you have been given in Jesus.

**Are you thankful for what you have received?**

There is a disconnect between the heart and the mouth when people are thanking each other.

**How are we supposed to feel truly thankful?**

**2 Corinthians 4:15 -** *For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.*

**Do you understand the grace you have been given in Christ?**

**vv.6-7**

Warning: don't be with people who say they are believers and say sexually explicit things are OK.

Paul is warning that the wrath of God is coming for those who practice such things.

Warning 2: watch out for Christian syncretists. People who teach something in addition to the gospel.

Here is a simple truth, *Jesus plus anything equals nothing.*

Another kind of wrong teaching uses the wrath of God to motivate believers to do good things.

Paul separates the believers from the sons of disobedience. Not becoming darkness, but are no longer.

**Ephesians 2:8-9,** *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Jesus, the perfect sacrificial lamb who permanently removed sin, put an end to the sacrificial system.

There is no system, nothing you need to do to be saved and no way you can lose your salvation.

**v.10**, You know, *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.* Should is not must.

**Romans 8:38-39,** *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life*—meaning your death or your life - **you**
*nor angels nor principalities nor powers*—these are evil demons - **spiritual realm**
*nor things present nor things to come*—things happening in the world - **time**
*nor height nor depth*—that is space between us and God - **space**
*nor any other created thing*—that is anything or being or creature - **matter**
*shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**John 3:36**, *He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*

Chastening is not the same as wrath.

**But what should a believer do who is living in sin, experiencing the Lord's discipline?**

**The answer is to repent.**

**Jesus** says: *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.* **Revelation 3:19**

**Is there something in your life that does not please the Lord?**
**Is something you are holding onto that is stopping you from being obedient?**
**Are you too comfortable with what you have and refuse to move forward for Him?**

**Turn to God and repent.**

**Romans 6:10-14** *10 The death He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God. 11 So you too must count yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires. 13 Do not present the parts of your body to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and present the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness. 14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*

**Galatians 5:16**, *Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*

When we walk in His love, in the love that He loved us, and then offering to others the love that we received, then we can and will be imitators of Jesus.

**Imitate Christ in your love for God and for those God has placed in your life.**

**That is walking in love. This is what it looks like to imitate Him.**

**v.8a**

Our state before knowing Jesus was that we were once darkness, we were once darkness itself.

Remember when I asked you if you understood the grace you have been given in Christ?

*But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.* **Isaiah 64:6**

I think back to those tissues that were on the ground, I can only imagine myself as a used tissue.

My deeds were not even righteous ones. That's how bad it was.

**What would you do with them?**

I would do what any rational person would do, incinerate them. (not suggesting annihilationism)

That is the wrath of God. And it was originally for us.

**Isaiah 53:6** *All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

**That's grace.**

But more than that, we will have an abundant life with Him always being there for us.

**That's amazing grace.**

Remember Paul is also headed towards spiritual warfare at the end of the letter.

Don't miss how our homes and marriages are part of the spiritual warfare between light and darkness.

For the singles, this is spiritual warfare for you as well, destroying your fellowship with believers.

Polluting you and your minds, affecting your future relationships (spouse, friends, family, and church)

The Lord wants you to have amazing God-glorifying Christ centered relationships.

Spiritual warfare is not something done only in the unseen spiritual realm, but seen here and now.

**INVITATION**

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**

**Do you want to walk in the light?**

Jesus is inviting you to walk with Him and in the light. In the purity of His love around you and acting through you.

*Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.* **Rom 13:12b**

By trusting Him and through repentance, you will not only walk in the light, but you will also be protected. And will have the power of His Spirit to overcome it.

*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.* **1 John 4:4**

**Let us trust Jesus.**

**Jesse Mark Cesario**
**August 1-2, 2026**
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