

Opening Illustration:

The two-edged sword of night-lights. If you are anything like me, you cannot stand any light in the room while you are sleeping. It never ceases to amaze me how one little beam of light from the internet router can pierce through the darkness of our room at night.

Some people grow up with night lights as a means of comfort.¹

According to clinical psychologist John Mayer, Ph. D., author of *Family Fit: Find Your Balance in Life*, **fear of the dark** is “very common” among adults. “It is estimated that 11 percent of the U.S. population is **afraid of the dark**,” he says, noting that it's even more common than a **fear** of heights.

Nyctophobia is an extreme **fear** of night or **darkness** that can cause intense symptoms of **anxiety** and depression. Sep 29, 2017

It's not necessarily bad to be a little nervous in the dark, since Clark points out that it motivates you to protect yourself. “Walking down a dark alley at night should make us feel uncomfortable so that we sharpen our self-protection skills should they be called upon,” she says. “Likewise, avoiding walking down a dark alley alone is being smart. Being uncomfortable can prompt us to do something about it, and this is a good thing.”

It's completely normal to be a little nervous or more on guard if you're, say, sleeping in a new hotel room or place, Rego says. But a fear of the dark can cross into a disorder when you're so freaked out by the dark that it interferes with your ability to function at home, work, or socially, like you don't want to go out alone at night because it's dark, or you're not getting quality sleep because you need your bedroom lights to be on.

If you find that you struggle with being in the dark, Clark says, “be curious about what is actually frightening you, and use your fear to take action against these threats, making sure that there is nothing is in the dark that is threatening.” For example, if you're scared of someone breaking in to your place, considering fortifying locks on your doors, getting an alarm system, or taking a home safety class to learn what you can do to make your place safer. “Knowing you have done what you can to protect yourself can calm your fears when they kick in,” she says.

You can also just get a night-light. “Using practical coping mechanisms are important, and I teach people to ‘surrender’ to it,” Mayer says. “If you fear the dark, use these practical coping mechanisms to make you comfortable—night-lights, automatic lights, AI devices that can control lights, etc.”

Walking in the Light (Ephesians 4:8-14)

- **Walk in the truth. (chaps. 4-6)**
 - Ephesians 4:1 begins with the word “THEREFORE...”
 - John MacArthur Study Bible: “This word marks the transition from doctrine to duty, principle to practice, position to behavior. (see Rom. 12:1; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 2:1; I Thess. 4:1)

¹ <https://www.glamour.com/story/its-not-just-you-lots-of-adults-are-afraid-of-the-dark#:~:text=According%20to%20clinical%20psychologist%20John,than%20a%20fear%20of%20heights.>

- Chapters 4-6 are intensely practical! The key word to follow is “WALK.”
 - Walking in unity (4:1-16)
 - Walking in purity (4:17-32)
 - Regarding how you think (4:17-24)
 - Regarding how you talk (4:25-32)
 - Walking in love (5:1-7)
 - **Walking in light (5:8-14)**
 - Walking in wisdom (5:15-21)
 - Walking in wisdom in your marriages (5:22-32)
 - Walking in wisdom in your parenting (6:1-4)
 - Walking in wisdom in the workplace (6:5-9)
 - Walking in wisdom in the spiritual realm (6:10-20)
 - Final farewell (6:21-24)

Ephesians 5:7-14

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.”

Know who you are. (8a)

Know what you are called to do. (8b-14)

I. Know who you are. (8a)

A. You were once children of darkness.

Enslaved to the world, the flesh, and the devil. (Eph. 2:1-3)

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body^[a] and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.^[b]

Depraved in your thinking. (Eph. 4:17-19)

¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

B. You are now children of light.

(Bible Expositors Commentary): Jesus had much to say about light and darkness. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). “Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:20–21).

- **Converted.** (Eph. 2:4-10)

⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”^[a]

⁹ (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?^[a] ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

- **Connected.** (I John 1:7a)

⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another...

- **Cleansed.** (I John 1:7b-9)

...and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- **Commissioned.** (Eph. 5:8b)

⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

The believer has no business in the darkness. He is a saint, which means he is a partaker “of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12). He is a king, because he has been delivered “from the power of darkness” and has been translated “into the kingdom of His dear Son” (Col. 1:13). He is “light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8).

I. *Know who you are. (8a)*

II. **Know what you are called to do. (8b-14)**

A. Bear fruit.

⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true)...

1. Goodness (agathōsynē): generosity toward others
2. Righteousness (dikaiosynē): justice, equitableness, fairness, doing what is right
3. Truth (alētheia): truthfulness, dependability, sincerity, integrity

B. Practice discernment.

¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

- Try to discern (dokimazontes - verb, present, active, participle): put to the test, to judge to be genuine, examine, prove.

Luke 14:19 – ¹⁹ And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.'

- Discernment is imperfect when exercised by man:
 - Rom. 2:17-24 – "and know his will and approve what is excellent..."
 - Luke 12:56 – "know how to interpret the appearance of the sky..."
- Discernment exercised perfectly by God:
 - 1 Cor. 3:13 – "and the fire will test what sort of work..."
- What is pleasing (eureston): acceptable
 - Rom. 12:2 – "that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."
 - 2 Cor. 5:9 – "So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him."

C. Expose sin.

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.

- Expose (elenchō): verb – present, active, imperative: to bring to light, rebuke, reproach
 - Don't participate through your silence. (11)
 - Don't participate through your indiscretion. (12)

Some preachers enjoy reveling in the sensational, so much so that their sermons excite appetites and give to the innocent more information than they need. "But yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil" (Rom. 16:19).

- To speak (lego): to talk with apparent focus upon the content of what is said
 - (BAGD): to inform about, speak, report
 - Mark 8:30 – And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.
 - Phil 3:18 – For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Context helps us see that Paul was addressing believers in the church at Ephesus (4:1, 17; 5:1, 7). Therefore, it is logical to assume that verses 7–14 deal with church discipline. Believers are to walk in the light, and in so doing to expose other believers of any works that are unfruitful so that they too may walk in the light and please their Lord.

- A. *Bear fruit.*
- B. *Practice discernment.*
- C. *Expose sin.*
- D. Depend on divine enablement. (13-14)

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

1. **For sanctification (13)** ...*focus the attention on the light not the darkness.*

Ephesians 5:13 (BKC):

When light exposes evil deeds, they become visible, manifest for what they really are. Seeing them as evil, a believer then cleanses himself of them (1 John 1:5–7), realizing they are detrimental not only to him but also to other believers.

- John 3:20-21 – Revealing the source of power is God.

²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

- 1 John 1:7 – Revealing the source of purity is Jesus.

⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

- Psalm 139:23-24 – Revealing the source of perspective is the Word of God (illuminated by the Holy Spirit).

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!^[a]

²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!^[b]

2. **For salvation (14)**

Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper, (Is. 51:17; 52:1; 60:1; Mal. 4:2)
and arise from the dead, (Is. 26:19)
and Christ will shine on you.” (Luke 1:78-79)

Ephesians 5:14 (BKC): 5:14. The introductory formula, *Therefore it says*, seems to indicate a quotation from the Old Testament, but it is difficult to identify unless it is a combination of passages (e.g., Isa. 26:19; 51:17; 52:1; 60:1). **Possibly it is a quotation from an early Christian hymn.** A believer who has committed “deeds of darkness,” is to wake up and rise from the dead since he was involved with the deeds of evildoers. Christ’s shining on him speaks of His approval, an indication that he is discerning and following what is pleasing to the Lord (Eph. 5:10).

Perhaps Paul was giving advice to Pastor Timothy to pass along to the believers in Ephesus with his own conversion experience in mind.

- Acts 9:1-9, 17-19
- Acts 22:6-16
- Acts 26:12-18

All three passages refer to the transforming power of LIGHT!

Apply the Text:

- **Are you bearing the fruit of one who is walking in the light?**
 - **Look for a “shadow.” (Eph. 5:8)**

Ephesians 5:7–14 (BEC): We are light (vv. 7–14). This figure is the main thrust of the passage, for Paul was admonishing his readers to “walk as children of light.” **You will want to read 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1** for a parallel passage that explains the contrasts that exist between the child of God and the unsaved person. Paul did not say that we were “in the darkness,” but that we “were darkness.” Now that we are saved, “what communion hath light with darkness?” It is impossible to be in darkness and light at the same time!

- **Look for fruit. (Eph. 5:9)**

Ephesians 5:7–14 (BEC): After all, light produces fruit, but the works of darkness are unfruitful as far as spiritual things are concerned. “For the fruit of the Spirit [or “the light”] is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.”

- Goodness (agathōsynē): generosity toward others
 - Righteousness (dikaiosynē): justice, equitableness, fairness, doing what is right
 - Truth (alētheia): truthfulness, dependability, sincerity, integrity
- **Are you focused on pleasing God above all else?**
 - Such as practicing discernment? (Eph. 5:10)
 - **Are you willing to stand up and appropriately expose sin around you?**
 - Practice Church Discipline (Matt. 18:15-17; I Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11)

- **Are you willing to appropriately expose the sin within yourself?**
 - Converted? (Eph. 2:4-10)
 - Connected? (I John 1:7a)
 - Cleansed? (I John 1:7b-9)
 - Commissioned? (Eph. 5:8b)