
The Summation of All Things in Christ

Studies in Ephesians with a Local Church Emphasis
LESSON CX : FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT (5:3-14)

From Darkness to Light (5:3-14) — Six Commands

As mentioned in the first lesson on this passage, we will be looking at this by focusing upon the six continued-action commands (present tense imperatives) within this passage:

- v. 3 *'be named' — 'let it not even be named among you'*
- v. 6 *'be deceived' — 'let no one deceive you with vain words'*
- v. 7 *'become' — 'do not become partakers with them'*
- v. 8 *'walk' — 'walk as children of light'*
- v. 11 *'have fellowship, participate' — 'have no fellowship with darkness'*
- v. 11 *'reprove' — 'but rather reprove them'*

Verse 7 appears to be a transitional verse, serving both what comes before and gliding into what follows. Here is a look at this passage, highlighting Paul's continued-action commands (using Young's Literal Translation as a basis):

³ ***LET IT NOT EVEN BE NAMED AMONG YOU,*** *as becometh saints;*

whoredom, and all uncleanness, or covetousness,

⁴ *also filthiness, and foolish talking, or jesting, — the things not fit —*

but rather thanksgiving;

[Why?] ⁵ *for this ye know, that every whoremonger, or unclean, or covetous person, who is an idolater, hath no inheritance in the reign of the Christ and God.*

⁶ ***LET NO ONE DECEIVE YOU WITH VAIN WORDS,***

[Why?] *for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of the disobedience,*

⁷ ***BECOME NOT, THEN, PARTAKERS WITH THEM,***

⁸ ***WALK YE AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT,***

for ye were once darkness, and now light in the Lord;

[Parenthetical comment on the light] ⁹ *for the fruit of the light [Spirit] is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth,*

¹⁰ *proving what is well-pleasing to the Lord,*

¹¹ ***HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF THE DARKNESS BUT RATHER EVEN REPROVE THEM, EXPOSE THEM,***

[Why?] ¹² *for the things in secret done by them it is a shame even to speak of,*

¹³ and all the things reprov'd by the light are manifested, for everything that is manifested is light; ¹⁴ wherefore he saith,

*'Arouse thyself, thou who art sleeping,
and arise out of the dead,
and the Christ shall shine upon thee.'*

GIVING REASONS FOR THE SIXTH COMMAND

After giving his final command in this portion of scripture (*'have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even expose them'*), Paul expands on the two contrasting parts of v. 11:

v. 12 Paul gives the reason why his readers should not participate in the deeds of darkness

v. 13 Paul gives the reason why these deeds should be exposed

v. 12 — For the things which are done in secret — τὰ γὰρ κρυφῇ γινόμενα [ta gar kruphē ginomena] — **PAUL DESCRIBING THE 'UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS' —**

"'The things done in secret' is another way of referring to 'the unfruitful works of the darkness' (5:11a). They are the opposite of deeds carried out in the light (or day) as Paul notes to the Romans: 'Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy' (Rom 13:13). [Arnold, 332]

"Since v. 8 a contrast has been drawn between light and darkness; now a new but not unrelated contrast is introduced, that between secret and revealed. This contrast appears elsewhere in the NT (Mk 4.22; Lk 12.2; Jn 18.20; Rom 2.16; 1 Cor 4.5; 14.25). There will be a revelation (v. 13) of what has been done secretly (κρυφῇ [kruphē] only here in NT but in LXX at Exod 11.2; Deut 28.57; Judg 4.21b; 9.31b; etc.). Vice fears revelation by light (cf Rom 13.13)." [Best, 495]

by them — ὑπ' αὐτῶν [hup autōn] — Some consider those to whom Paul refers must be believers because 'unbelievers would not feel the need to be secret about their activities.' These are therefore immature believers, struggling with their sins of the past, secretly engaging in immoral behavior (cp. Arnold, 332; Best, 495; Hoehner, 681). Others would understand Paul as referring back to those mentioned in vv. 6, 7, the 'sons of disobedience' and 'do not become fellow participants with them' (cp. Lincoln, 330; O'Brien, 372).

IF 'THEM' REFERS TO VILE AND WICKED GENTILES, WHY WERE THESE DEEDS DONE IN SECRET? —

"Paul is not, however, describing the conduct of every Gentile unbeliever in 4:17-19, 22, and 'the things done by them in secret' were probably done in secret either because those who did them were themselves ashamed or because the acts were viewed with such disgust in the wider society that public knowledge of them could damage one's reputation or position. Paul knew that, although many unbelieving Gentiles behaved shamelessly and with no qualms (4:17-19; Rom. 1:32), others had sensitive consciences that accused them of wrongdoing (Rom. 2:15-16) and held to sexual boundaries that they considered disgraceful to cross (1 Cor. 5:1). The writings of Greco-Roman moralists and philosophers confirm this. Quintilian could criticize Roman elites for holding banquets at which children were exposed to behavior 'of which we should blush to speak.' Epictetus considered 'disgraceful words, disgraceful thoughts, and unseemly deeds' to be a burden one should avoid. The context hints that he is talking about sexual matters. This moral sensibility of unbelieving Gentiles seems to be the context of Paul's

description of conversion in 1 Cor. 14:24-25. There the prophetic exposure of ‘the hidden things of the heart’ in the worshipping community leads to conversion. That these things are hidden because those who do them consider them to be shameful is clear from the judicial language Paul uses of their exposure: the unbeliever or inquirer who has hidden them ‘is exposed [GK, elenchetai] by all, called to account [GK, anakrinetai] by all.’ The person convicted and called to account because he or she is aware of violating a particular standard of conduct.” [Thielman, 345f]

it is a shame, it is shameful, it is disgraceful / even to speak of, even to talk about, even to mention — αἰσχρόν ἐστιν καὶ λέγειν [aischron estin kai legein] — *“Paul goes on to say that it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. Some things are so vile that they should be discussed in as little detail as possible, because even describing them is morally and spiritually dangerous. Some diseases, chemicals, and nuclear by-products are so extremely deadly that even the most highly trained and best-protected technicians and scientists who work with them are in constant danger. No sensible person would work around such things carelessly or haphazardly. In the same way, some things are so spiritually disgraceful and dangerous that they should be sealed off not only from direct contact but even from conversation. They should be exposed only to the extent necessary to be rid of them. Some books and articles written by Christians on various moral issues are so explicit that they almost do as much to spread as to cure the problem. We can give God’s diagnosis and solution for sins without portraying every sordid detail.”* [MacArthur, 212f] *“But Ephesians 5:12 gives us a caution. Be careful how you deal with the ‘unfruitful works of darkness.’ The motto today seems to be ‘Tell it like it is!’ And yet that can be a dangerous policy when it comes to exposing the filthy things of darkness, lest we unconsciously advertise and promote sin. Paul said, ‘It is a shame even to speak of those things’ (Eph. 6:12). 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). I recall a friend in youth work who felt it necessary to read all that the teenagers were reading ‘in order to understand them better,’ and it so polluted his mind that he himself fell into sin. It is not necessary for the believer to perform an autopsy on a rotting corpse to expose its rottenness. All he has to do is turn on the light! ‘For whatsoever doth make manifest is light’ (Eph. 5:13).”* [Wiersbe, 46] *“The deeds of darkness are so abhorrent that it is shameful even to speak of them.”* [Lincoln, 330] *“He utterly repudiates these sexual sins, but desires to convey their seriousness without mentioning the details of the depravity. Paul and his readers knew what they were, and he will not dignify them by naming them. Instead, he wants the light of the gospel to shine through the readers’ lives and expose these deeds for what they are.”* [O’Brien, 372]

v. 13 — But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. — τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐλεγχόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ φωτὸς φανεροῦνται πάν γὰρ τὸ φανερούμενον φῶς ἐστίν [ta de panta elegchomena hupo tou phōtos phaneroutai pan gar to phaneroumenon phōs estin] — While these verses are easy to translate, most consider it difficult to see how they fit in the context. Many believe the sense of these verses to be as follows: *“Have no participation with the works of darkness, nay, rather expose them, for the things they do secretly it is a shame even to mention; but all these things when exposed by the light are made manifest in their true character.”* [Abbott, 155] *“Paul now explains further his admonition to his readers to ‘expose’ the unfruitful works of darkness, and – although this is not explicit – he seems to be providing a reason for that admonition. The reason lies in this principle: everything the light exposed becomes visible.”* [Thielman, 346] *“That all things are ‘exposed when they are*

revealed by the light' takes up a proverbial saying, along the lines of Luke 8:17, 'For nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light.' The words of John 3:20-21 are also apposite: 'For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed; but he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God.'" [Bruce, 376] **Other passages relating to light / darkness and salvation:** 'giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.' (Col 1:12-14 NKJV) **"Our resource for exposing evil is Scripture, which is the light (Ps 119:105, 130; Prov. 6:23; Heb 4:13-13) and is 'profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness' (2 Tim. 3:16). All things become visible when they are exposed by the light of God's Word. Our commission as children of light is to hold everything up to the light of Scripture, to expose and seek to remedy whatever is evil. Because they have no windows and are built side-by-side on narrow streets, most shops in Middle Eastern cities are quite dark inside. To get a good look at what he is buying a customer must take the merchandise out into the sunshine. In that bright light the article can be seen for what it really is, and any flaws and imperfections will be obvious.... Light is that which makes things manifest, that which shows them to be as they actually are. When sin is revealed, it loses its 'hiddenness' and is seen for the ugliness it is."** [MacArthur, 213]

TRANSLATIONS DIFFER AS TO WHERE TO DIVIDE vv. 13, 14 — It is a minor issue but worth noting that the versions differ as to where to divide between vv. 13 and 14. Here are where the versions differ:

¹³ But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. ¹⁴ Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." (NKJV)

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." (ESV)

The differences in the versions are based upon the Greek texts used and not an arbitrary decision of the translators themselves. "The break is not critical but it seems to make better sense to include this clause with verse 13 because it completes Paul's thought. It is curious that though the Greek texts place this clause in verse 14, there is a period not before this clause (hence at the end of their v. 13) but after it indicating that the thought is not complete until then. By including this clause with verse 13, it allows the quotation in verse 14 to serve as a concluding remark." [Hoehner, 684]

v. 14 — therefore He says, therefore it says — διὸ λέγει [dio legei] — This exhortation section on light and darkness is concluded by a quotation, confirmed by the change from the second person plural verbs found in vv. 3ff to the singular verbs found in this verse, then Paul returns to using the plural in v. 15. [Best, 497] The quote is introduced by the same formula Paul used in 4:8, 'he / it says'. We discussed Paul's introductory formula when we commented on those verses. From lesson 19c:

INTRODUCTORY FORMULAS — How does Paul introduce his quotations? Here is a summary of what Paul does:

- most common of Paul's introductory formulas is 'it is written' (γέγραπται, gegraptai), 29x [Ellis, 22]
- second in frequency is 'the Scripture says' (ἡ γραφή λέγει, hē graphē legei), 6x [Ellis, 22]
- other formulas using '____ says'; e.g., 'David says' – Rom 4:6; 11:9; 'Isaiah says' – Rom 10:16, 20; 15:12; 'Moses says' – Rom 10:19; 'the law says' – Rom 7:7; 1 Cor 14:34 [Ellis, 22f]
- important to our present verse: 6x 'says' (λέγει, legei) is used without a subject (an antecedent) and could therefore mean 'he says', 'she says' or 'it says': Rom 9:25; 10:21; 15:10; Gal 3:16; Eph 4:8; 5:14 [Ellis, 23-25] ***Some say this does not imply a scriptural citation but it has that significance in Hebrews, Philo and the Mishnah.*** [Ellis, 34] Note that while this exact phrase is used but 3x in the NT (Eph 4:8; 5:14; James 4:6), the passages in Ephesians have no antecedent but in the James passage the obvious antecedent is God.
- sometimes Paul quotes without giving any indication he is doing so:

"Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor"" (Eph 4:25, quoting from Zech 8:16)

"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath' (Eph 4:26, quoting from Psalm 4:4)

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (Eph 5:31, quoting from Genesis 2:24)

"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (Eph 6:2,3, quoting from Deut 5:16)

THEORIES ABOUT WHERE PAUL GETS THIS QUOTE — The source of Paul's quote is not known and has given rise to much discussion. What follows are some of the prevailing thoughts / theories as to the source of the quote and I believe it worthwhile to look at these, but we must also remember that it is of secondary importance from whence Paul is quoting. ***"The prehistory of the use of this hymn in the early church is a matter of sheer speculation and is not relevant to our concerns here. How Paul is using it to support his appeal to believers to 'walk as children of light' (5:8c) should be our principal focus."*** [Arnold, 334]

- Since the content does not match any known OT text; it could possibly be a paraphrase of one or a combination of the following:

Isaiah 26:19: *'Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.'* (NKJV) *'Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.'* (ESV)

Isaiah 60:1: *'Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.'* (NKJV) *'Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen*

upon you.’ (ESV)

A few also mention Jonah 1:6 although most disagree this has anything to do with our Ephesian passage: ‘*So the captain came to him, and said to him, What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish.*’ (NKJV) ‘*So the captain came and said to him, What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish.*’ (ESV)

While there are similarities, most of the commentators I read do not believe these to be compilations of statements from the OT. ***“The words quoted do indeed echo one or two OT passages ... but the echo, especially in Greek, is a distant one.”*** [Bruce, 376; see also Hoehner, 686] However Peter O’Brien quotes at length Thorsten Moritz (*‘A Profound Mystery: The Use of the Old Testament in Ephesians,’* 115) that the issues between Isaiah’s statements and Paul’s quote ‘seem to be more nuanced than the scholarly consensus allows’. Moritz claims the links with and dependence on the OT context of Isaiah are ‘considerably stronger than most recent writers concede.’ An interesting counter-argument. (see Moritz or O’Brien, 374ff for a more detailed defense of Moritz’ claims)

- “Clement of Alexandria (Protrepticus 9.84.2) is exceptional in suggesting that the passage is a word of the Lord and in providing a further three lines —

*‘The sun of resurrection,
Begotten before the day-star,
Who has given life with his own beams.’*

The additional lines presumably owe their origin to him, but they do raise the question whether the three lines in Ephesians are in fact part of an original larger whole.” [Lincoln, 319] ‘Protrepo’ is Greek for ‘*exhort, exhortation;*’ ‘Protrepticus’ is the first of three surviving works of Clement, 2nd century. “A lost saying of Jesus; again this cannot be disproved; however style and content together with the use of the term ‘Christ’ make this improbable.” [Best, 497]

- It could have been spoken by a Spirit-inspired NT prophet. [Arnold, 334; Best, 497f]
- It could be a quote from a lost apocryphal writing. “A Jewish apocryphal source; it does not however appear in any known to us, yet since much of the relevant material is no longer extant, this possibility cannot be eliminated.” [Best, 497; see also Lincoln, 318]
- ***The most accepted source is that Paul is quoting from an early Christian hymn (possibly even a primitive baptismal hymn) where the congregation greets the new convert as he / she emerges (in type fashion) from the sleep of spiritual death into the light of life. Several have commented this becomes more probable once we observe the quotation ‘has a certain rhythmic swing or cadence’ about it, and a parallelism comparable to that of Hebrew poetry.*** [Best, 497; Arnold, 334; Hoehner, 686; O’Brien, 374; Bruce, 376] If in fact from an early baptismal hymn, this ethical admonition is reinforced by a call for the readers to remember their baptism and their significance in what immediately follows:

‘See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.’ (5:15,16 NKJV)

Paul writes in similar fashion to the believers in Rome:

‘What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’ (Rom 6:1-4)

“They are formed not as praise of God or Christ but as a challenge and promise to the believer. Their language of exhortation and combination of the metaphors of sleep, death, and light applied to the life of the believer would have formed an appropriate chant with which the congregation could greet the newly baptized convert.” [Lincoln, 319] “Paul concludes this section with a strong and urgent admonition to all believers continuing to participate in a lifestyle of sinful behaviors. Citing three lines from an early Christian hymn (or some other form of liturgy), Paul implores them to leave the quagmire of dark and disobedient conduct. He reassures them that Christ will be present with them to help with his strength and direction.” [Arnold, 334] “Since the main emphasis in the present context is on the restoration of Christians who were copartners with the unfruitful works of darkness, it may well be a hymn of repentance and encouragement sung regularly by earlier believers.” [Hoehner, 687] “The readers would be reminded of the summons to awake and of the promise they received at their baptism. As a result, they are now urged to live in the light of that life-changing experience.” [O’Brien, 374]

PAUL’S QUOTE — Here is the quote in it’s entirety, then we will look at it one line at a time:

<i>Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light. (NKJV)</i>	<i>Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. (ESV)</i>
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“In form the first two lines are imperatival clauses with their verbs at the beginning in Semitic fashion; the third line is a promise. Those who obey the imperatives will receive the promise. The verse suitably rounds off the discussion which began at v. 8. Though believers are light, some of them seem still to be darkness and Christ needs to shine on them through the words of those believers who have not fallen back into darkness. The concept of light then both begins and ends vv. 8-14.” [Best, 498]

“awake, you who sleep; awake, O sleeper, — Ἐγείραι, ὁ καθεύδων [egeirai, ho katheudōn]

— AWAKE, GET UP, ARISE — The word ‘awake thou’ is a command (imperative mood), a common word used in connection with waking someone from their sleep (Prov 6:22; Matt 8:25; Mark 4:27, 38; 5:41 || Luke 8:54; Acts 12:7). “It is entirely possible that this clause echoes the teaching of Jesus to his three trusted disciples when he called on them to watch and pray in the Garden of Gethsemane while he went to pray (Matt 26:36-46). After instructing them to ‘keep watch’ (gregoreite; Matt 26:38), Jesus returns on three different occasions to find them fast asleep. After returning the first time to find them asleep, Jesus said, ‘Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak’ (Matt 26:41). ***On the surface this passage refers to the temptation the disciples would face in falling asleep when their eyes were heavy during a time that they should be supporting Jesus in his moment of trial. But there is a deeper meaning here about the path of discipleship. M. Wilkins notes, ‘Spiritual disciplines of watching and praying enable the spiritual heart to direct all aspects of a person’s human nature so that the entire person is obedient to God’s will.’” [Arnold, 334f]***

THE SLEEPER — The verb *‘that sleep’* is used twenty-two times in the NT, five times by Paul (Eph 5:14; 1 Thes 5:6,7 bis,10) [Arnold, 334; Hoehner, 687]. The word could be understood in a different ways:

- *The normal manner of usage is of physical sleep.*

- *Sleep was a widely used metaphor, often a euphemism for death.* Since the second line refers to death, it would be sensible to consider the first line as a reference to death as well, but could believers who arose with Christ be envisaged as still dead (2:6)?

‘For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.’ (1 Cor 11:29,30)

‘After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.... Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.... But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.... Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...’ (1 Cor 15:6, 18, 20, 51)

- *Sleep is also used metaphorically to indicate a lack of alertness, an ignorance of the true nature of a situation, a failure to understand what is going on.* ‘Awake’ is therefore used of rousing a fellow believer to vigilance and sobriety; words that speak of a life on the patch of discipleship in contrast to a life orientated to worldly pursuits and the deeds of the flesh. [Best, 498; Arnold, 335] This would be appropriate here since v. 11 believers are warned to avoid the unfruitful works of darkness. “In that passage [1 Thes 5:6-10] Paul calls on believers to differentiate themselves from unbelievers in their conduct. Similar to this passage, Paul roots the basis for this change in their new identity in Christ; that is, they are *‘sons of the light and sons of the day’* (5:5). He therefore admonishes them, *‘So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober’* (5:6 NASB).” [Arnold, 334f]

‘Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.’ (1 Thess 5:6-10)

‘And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.’ (Rom 13:11-14)

and arise from the dead, — καὶ ἀνάστα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν [ho katheudōn kai anasta ek tōn nekrōn]

— *If taken evangelistically, this is an appeal for the lost to turn to Christ.* Some (e.g. John Gill) consider this an impossible interpretation since no unbeliever can turn himself to Christ, but it is not uncommon for the Lord to demand something outside of the power of the sinner to comply. “The command is similar to that given by our Lord to the man with the withered hand —

‘Stretch it forth.’ The man might have objected and said, *‘Could I obey thee in this, I would not have troubled thee. Why mock me with my infirmity, and bid me do the very thing I cannot?’* But the man did not so perplex himself; and Christ, in exciting the desire to obey, imparted the power to obey.” [Eadie, 390] ***If speaking to believers, this is an appeal to no longer live according to their former lusts.*** “The second line of the hymn contains a parallel exhortation to the first. *‘Rise from the dead’* recalls the readers’ former status as *‘dead in your transgressions and sins’* (2:1). Because of their participation in Christ’s death and resurrection, however, believers have already been made alive (2:5-6; see also Col 2:13). Nevertheless, the powers that formerly enslaved them — the age of this world, the ruler of the realm of the air, and the lusts of the flesh (Eph 2:2-3) — continue to operate and attempt to pull believers into a functional state of being dead. As in Romans, Paul is here calling believers to consider themselves as dead to the power of sin (the world, the flesh, and the devil), but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:11). Paul’s appeal here to the Ephesians is therefore equivalent to what he urges the Roman Christians to do: *‘Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness’* (Rom 6:13). Believers have died to the compelling influence of the law (Rom 7:6; Gal 2:19), to sin (Rom 6:2), and to evil spirits (Col 2:20) because they have participated in Christ’s death (Rom 6:4). Because they have also participated in Christ’s resurrection, they can now live in newness of life (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12). Paul’s heart in making this two-line appeal on the basis of a hymn that the readers were probably already familiar with is that those who persist in patterns of sinful behavior will change — that they will gain a greater realization of their new identity in Christ, that they will recognize how their current lifestyle choices are at total variance with this new identity, and that they will take the appropriate steps to leave these dark, sinful, and disobedient behaviors behind.” [Arnold, 335] “In 4.24 [Paul] told Christians to put on the new person, something they had already done when they first believed but which they needed to continue to do. May he not then be applying here as in 4.24 the language of conversion to believers? If they have failed and have produced the unfruitful works of darkness, they should recover the position from which they began.” [Best, 499]

and Christ will give you light; and Christ will shine on you — καὶ ἐπιφάσει σοι ὁ Χριστός [kai epiphausei soi ho christos] — “If they do so, Paul promises that the resurrected and ascended Christ *‘will shine upon’* them. The verb Paul uses here is rare, appearing only here in the NT (and only in few other ancient texts), which may point to the fact that it comes from traditional material. Two of its three appearances in the LXX, all in Job, are used of the shining of the sun or the moon (Job 25:5; 31:26). Conceptually, the promise probably reflects the messianic prophecy of Isaiah 9:2: *‘The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned (LXX: ‘light will shine’).*’ During his earthly ministry, Jesus announced, *‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life’* (John 8:12). Jesus thus bestows on his disciples not only new life, but light for the journey as his disciples (see John 11:10). The psalmist uses the metaphor of light in this sense when he says, *‘Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell’* (Ps 43:3). There may even be an echo of the exodus in this passage. After God redeemed his people from their bondage in Egypt, he led them by shining his light on them at night in a pillar of fire: *‘By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night’* (Exod 13:21). ***The light of the Messiah that shines on believers is perhaps best understood to be the empowering presence of the Lord that directs,***

encourages, sustains, and helps them in their journey of discipleship. It may well be another way of referring to the presence of the Holy Spirit, who is grieved when believers sin (4:30) but powerfully enables them when they are willing to turn from sin and pursue a life of holiness.”

[Arnold, 335f] “In brief, then, this quotation is directed to the believer who is a copartner of the unfruitful works of darkness. He is commanded to awake from his spiritual sleep and rise from his spiritual deadness, so that Christ will shine on him, probably indicating approval. It is analogous to verse 10 where the believer is told to approve what is pleasing to the Lord. Again, this is not a reference to the unbeliever but to the spiritual laxity of the believer. True believers will respond because the Holy Spirit will lead them to live a life consisting in the fruit of light — goodness, righteousness, and truth (v. 9). In conclusion, it is easy to see why it is necessary for believers who once were darkness to expose other believers’ unfruitful works of darkness. Their deviant path does not please the Lord and the light is necessary to expose these works of darkness, which are contrary to the Lord’s will. They are commanded to awake from their spiritual sleep and rise from the path of death. Their repentant response will please God and Christ will shine on them with approval.” [Hoehner, 686ff] “Dr Edersheim (Temple and its Services, p. 162), suggests that the Apostle may have had present to his mind language used in synagogue worship at the Feast of Trumpets. Rabbinic writers explain the trumpet blasts as, [among other things], a call to repentance; and one of them words the call, ‘Rouse ye from your slumber, awake from your sleep, &c.’ Some such formula may have been in public use.” [Moule, 133]