

## Learning To Live In The Light

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I would like to start in II Corinthians 4, verses 6 and 7. And I am going to be reading this out of the Living New Testament.

**II Corinthians 4:6-7** (LNT) For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made us understand that it is the brightness of his glory that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. But this precious treasure—this light and power that now shines within us [the emphasis is on us]—is held in a perishable container that is, it is our weak bodies. Everyone can see that the glorious power within us must be from God and is not our own.

God is telling us in this verse that He has given us, first, the understanding of His Word, the Bible or the gospel, which is life through Christ so that we can understand His way of life and what He expects from us. Most of mankind has not been given what we have been given. They do not understand.

In Genesis the first chapter, verse 3, God tells us that He created light. He *is* light; and you and I have a really big responsibility since we know and understand what light is. Our responsibility is really tremendous, brethren. When we were baptized with the Holy Spirit, we were given the help we need to understand light opposed the darkness. The Holy Spirit enables us to give the light of the knowledge of God through Christ to others.

So how do we do this? How do we give the light of the knowledge of God through Christ to others? We do it by our conduct, how we act, how we speak, how we keep God's laws, how we observe the Sabbath and the holy days, how our children behave, how hospitable we are, how kind we are. We do it by everything we do and say every minute of every day, brethren. And we really have a really big job before us.

There are three ways of life that man can live in, only three ways. Sadly, man only lives by two ways. 1) Most of mankind lives in almost total darkness. He does not know God's laws. He does not understand the Sabbath or the holy days. And he does not even live by the Ten Commandments. He picks and chooses which one of those he likes and he will live by. Most of mankind lives in war, murder, lying, stealing, adultery, divorce, child abuse, and total darkness.

God's called-out baptized people live in 2) a mixture of light and darkness. We have got a mixture, brethren, and we got things kind of mixed up all together, and we do this because darkness is alluring. We think it is exciting. Our human nature helps us to live in partial darkness because we have wants and desires, and our wants and our desires live in darkness. That is the problem. Darkness is around us everywhere we go. It is there all the time. Satan loves darkness and he wants all of mankind to live like he lives—in total darkness.

There is a third way of life to live but only one man has ever lived that way, the Man Jesus Christ, who lived in 3) total light all the time. Because God is light and His laws are light and the Ten Commandments are light and Christ lived perfectly in the light. And we have to teach ourselves to live in the light. That is our job. It does not come naturally to us. We have to teach ourselves and that is really hard to do because we have three enemies: 1) ourselves with our own human nature, 2) the evil world we live in. It is around us all the time. It is black, it is dark, and it is there every minute of every day. And 3) Satan, his influence, and his deception.

Satan deceives us, me and you, God's people, into justifying why we live in darkness part of the time so we can feel good about it when we do it. We justify living there part of the time, brethren.

**John 3:19-20** "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men love 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."

Again, God is saying here that mankind hates light. That is why He gives us the Holy Spirit at baptism. So we can see and understand what the light really is. Then He tells us in His Word, the Bible, what light is and how we should act.

**Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is [now here is what light is] love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

You know why he said there is no law against light? There is no law in the whole world against light because there is no country or people in the whole world that have laws and penalties against love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. But we all know there are a lot of laws against darkness. Are there not tons of laws? Every country in the world has laws against darkness.

**Galatians 5:24** And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

God is telling us again in verse 24, that if we our Christ's and we want to live in the light, we need to crucify our own human nature with all its passion and its desires. We must train ourselves to live in the light—that is our job. You and I really realize and understand what God has done for us.

**Ephesians 2:1** (AMP) And you [He made alive], when you were dead (slain) by [your] trespasses and sins.

When we live in darkness, we are already dead. We just have not died yet, brethren. That is where the world is today.

**Ephesians 2:2** (AMP) In which at one time you walked [habitually {or all the time}]. You were following the course and fashion of this world [were under the sway of the tendency of this present age], following the prince of power of the air. [You were obedient to him and were under the control of] the spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience [the careless, the rebellious, and the unbelieving, who go against the purposes of God].

You know, God called us out of total darkness into His light. But we fall short because we love darkness. We think darkness is fun, we think it is exciting, it is mysterious. It is what the whole world is doing so it must be fun. It must be good.

**Galatians 5:19-20** [God tells us exactly what darkness is here]  
Now the works of the flesh [or darkness] are evident, which are:  
adultery, fornication, uncleanness, immorality, idolatry, sorcery,  
hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish  
ambitions, dissensions, and heresies. . .

Brethren, heresies; they were mixing with darkness and with light. Heresies are alive and well within the greater church of God right now—today. One that is running its course through the church right now is that Christ is a created being. Can you imagine that; as long as most of us have been in the church? All I can say is, read your Bible. John 11 really sums it up. But if that is not enough, you can read John 17:5. Just these two verses should be enough for us to know that Christ is not a created being. He is a member of the God Family.

**Galatians 5:21** . . . envy, murders, drunkenness [you see, getting drunk is also alive and well within God's church today, getting drunk is also living in darkness, brethren], revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in the past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

God is warning us that if we live in darkness, we will not inherit the Kingdom of God. The problem for us is not that we live in total darkness because we do not. We in the church do not live in total darkness. But we must train ourselves to live in the light all the time, as much as possible. Not part of the time.

**Ephesians 4:1-3** I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of your calling with which you were called [do this], with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

That is what God expects of us, to walk worthy of our calling in the light, brethren. To love each other and to have unity within the church.

**Ephesians 4:4** There is one body [only one church] and one Spirit [which we all have some of], just as you were called in hope of your calling.

We were all called to learn to live in the light and to be light to this world by our conduct and to be the first of the first to live in total light like Christ lives, not in a mixture of darkness and light. And I know that will not totally happen until Christ returns, but we should truly be trying to work that way.

**Ephesians 5:3** But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be named among you, as it is fitting for saints.

Again, God is telling us not to even mention these things, let alone be mixed up with them. You and I are saints, He says, even though we do not always act like we should. We are His saints and it is critical that we train ourselves to live in the light, brethren.

**Ephesians 5:4** Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

I ask the question: Thanks for what? What should we be thankful for? We have so much to be thankful for. We should be thankful for Christ and His sacrifice. Thankful for our calling, brethren. Most of the world has never been called. Thanks for the church and the ministry because they teach us. Thanks for the brethren because it would be pretty lonely if God only called you or me. When we are thanking God for all He has done for us and thinking about good and right things, and if our conduct is right and good, then we are living in the light and there is no room for darkness. Christ's death gave us, His called out ones, the ability to live in the light with the help of the Holy Spirit. That is what we should be thankful for, brethren.

**Ephesians 5:8** For you were once in darkness [he says], but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

That is our job. We learn to walk as children of light by training ourselves to walk into light. It takes training. It does not come naturally.

**Ephesians 5:11** And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

You know what God is saying here? God is telling us that we should not have any connection at all with paganism, with pagan worship, and with pagan practices such as Christmas. But some of us still, you know, engage in parts of Christmas, Christmas parties, or we have unconverted mates and we get tangled up with Christmas. We should not have any part with Easter and New Year's and birthdays. Again, birthdays. A lot of people still celebrate birthdays within the church, brethren, and that is living in partial darkness; Halloween and many other practices.

But some of these celebrations are alive and well within the church (I just said that.) because we love darkness. So we live a life that is a mixture of light and darkness, light within the church. All of these things that are associated with darkness have no use at all to mankind. Things like drugs, alcoholism, smoking, lying, adultery, stealing, murder; all of these things associated with darkness hurt mankind. These things of darkness destroy the things of life which do just the opposite. They bring joy, peace, a sense of well-being, happiness, and comfort. Then in verse 12 it says,

**Ephesians 5:12-13** 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.

Now, I think we all know what manifest means. It means to make clear or evident, to show plainly, or to reveal. We who have the Holy Spirit know what light is. The Holy Spirit sheds light on our thinking and we of all people should clearly see what darkness brings to mankind. It does not bring well being, brethren. It brings hurts and misery and death.

Let us turn to I Peter 2. Do we really realize who we are and what we have been called to? Here in verse 9 it tells us. You and I are this:

**I Peter 2:9** 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.

This is what we have been called to. Our calling is awesome, brethren. But we take it for granted because we love darkness.

Let us look at Isaiah 59. We love what the light brings. We want to live in the light, but we walk in darkness part of the time. That is our problem. We want light but we have this mixture of light and darkness.

**Isaiah 59:9** Therefore justice is far from us, nor does righteousness overtake us; we look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, but we walk in blackness!

Old mankind loves what the light brings, but we cannot obtain it because we walk in blackness and we do not teach ourselves to walk in the light. And that is for us in the church. We need to start teaching ourselves to walk in the light all the time.

**Isaiah 5:20** Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

That is what you do when you live a mixture, brethren, in a mixture of light and darkness.

And then in Psalm 82:5, I will just read this. Even us, God's people, just do not get it. We do not understand or we do not believe what God says because if we did, we would conduct ourselves differently.

**Psalm 82:5** They do not know, nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are unstable.

We have all kinds of problems in our lives and we do not know why, brethren. Is that not how the world is? They have all kinds of problems but they do not know why and they do not know how to crawl out of them.

**Proverbs 4:19** The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

The world does not understand why it stumbles. We struggle with so many things because we do not live in the light enough, brethren, even us in God's church. We do not train ourselves to live in the light. Instead we justify living in darkness. That is what we do. We as God's people struggle with many problems because we live in darkness part of the time and darkness blinds us. So we struggle.

Now, I am going to tell you a story. This story really is all *about* you young kids and it is *for* you young kids. I want you young people to think about how darkness works. Darkness wants everyone to live in darkness and the people that practice darkness want you and me to be part of what they are doing. That is how darkness works.

I was in my early thirties and I was working in downtown Portland here on a high rise building and a good friend of mine that I had met in apprenticeship school (and we have been friends ever since) was working on this job and we rode to work together because we were saving money and we were paid \$25 a week parking. So we rode together, we saved that plus the gas.

Well, this week I am talking about we were riding in his car and our boss, Harley, came and he said to Pete and I (that was my friend) that he was having a party that night. Now, he was a superintendent on the job, sheet metal superintendent. And Harley told Pete and I that he was having this get together, this party at his house after work and we were invited. Now, Harley was a real party animal, Harley would party every night if he could. Pete came and he said to me, "Hey, I want to go to Harley's house after work tonight." And I said, "Oh boy, you really want to go?" And he said, "Yeah." I was in his car. So I made a deal with him and I said



that I would go, but I only wanted to stay for one hour and Pete agreed to that. So I called my wife and told her and she said that was fine.

Now we got to Harley's house and there was already around 18 or 20 people there. And there were some construction workers there that I knew and there was some big shots from the general contractor's office and some other superintendents there and there were other people that I did not know and there were some school teachers there. I think the school teachers were Harley's girlfriend. Harley introduced Pete and I to everyone that we did not know. Now, do you know what all these people were doing when we arrived at Harley's house? They were all sitting in a big circle with their legs crossed in the living room for, you know, what they were doing. They were passing around three or four marijuana cigarettes, 3 or 4 joints of marijuana. This was their party; getting high on dope.

So all of these people said, "Come on, you guys. Come over here, Kim and Pete, come and sit in the circle and have some fun with us." Well, Pete sat down in the circle right away and I said, "No, I'm good" and I sat down on the couch. And I do not want you to think I am telling you that because I am righteous or any different than the rest of you. I live in darkness part of the time too. And I have done a lot of crazy things that were dark in my life. Just on this one occasion I did not partake of it.

You know what happened for the next hour? And this is what I want you kids to hone in on. I was on the couch and about every five minutes someone in the circle would say to me, now remember a lot of these people did not even know me, "Come on, Kim. This is good stuff. This is fun. You'll really enjoy yourself. Come and sit by me." And they kept this up for a solid hour, about every five minutes. I was pretty uncomfortable and I was glad when the hour was over. Well, Pete kept his word and we drove home. Of course, I drove because he was already pretty goofy and high.

Now, the reason I told you this story is that the people who live in darkness always want you to come over and participate in whatever darkness they are involved in. Those people did not let up for a whole hour. Like I said, the problem is, when you are young you are easily led by friends, peers, neighbors, fellow workers, bosses, and even family. They coerce you. They tell you it is fun. They tell you you will enjoy it, and then you feel like you are not cool or you are not part of the group. We all want to fit in. So it is pretty hard, especially when you are young, to say, "No, I'm good. I'm out."

I am not only talking about drugs. I am talking about darkness no matter what that is. It could be theft. I remember the couple of times I stole things it was because my friends talked me into it. It could be gossip. People that are gossips like other people that gossip. Gossips teach each other to gossip by their actions. It could be anything darkness loves. It could be anything that darkness does and it always teaches others to do it in its way.

Do any of you think that people just get up one morning and they say "I'm going to become a drug addict." That is not how it works. We all know that. Or "Today I'm going to commit adultery," or "Today I'm going to become a gossip" or a liar or a thief or whatever. That is not how darkness works. We are taught and coerced into darkness. Think about it. Most alcoholics come from alcoholic families. Most wife beaters come from a family where that was practiced, where it went on. Liars learn to lie from others, like an older sibling. If your mom or dad is a gossip, there is a good chance you will be one also.

Darkness loves darkness. It coerces us. Darkness looks like fun. It is alluring, it looks exciting, and it makes us think we cannot fit in or there is something wrong with us if we do not participate. Darkness really works on young people because when we are young, we want to be part of a group, we want to fit in, and we do not want to be looked at like we are a nerd or different or strange. But when we are old, it does not have as much impact on us and especially when you become old, fat, and ugly like I am. We do not care anymore, for the most part, because we are too busy rubbing Ben Gay all over us because we just like to feel good for another day. We are not too much about fitting in anymore.

**John 8:12** Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Light brings life and every good thing. Darkness brings death, suffering, misery, and heartache, brethren. That is what it does. And it wants you and me to be part of it.

**Colossians 1:13** (LNT) For he has rescued us out of the darkness and gloom of Satan's kingdom and brought us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

God is doing His part with all of us. Our problem is we fight Him at every turn. We love darkness and we will not let go of what we know is wrong in our lives. We struggle with it. We struggle tremendously with it.

**Colossians 3:5-10** (LNT) Away then with sinful, earthly things; deaden the evil desires working within you; have nothing to do with sexual sins, impurity, lust, and shameful desires; don't worship the good things of life, for that is idolatry. [and in these next verses here God is telling us what He expects of us] God's terrible anger is upon those who do such things. You used to do them when your life was still part of this world; but now is the time to cast off and throw away all these rotten garments of anger, hatred, cursing, and dirty language. Don't tell lies to each other; it was your old life with all its wickedness that did that sort of thing; now it is dead and gone. You are living a brand new kind of life that is continually learning [there is the learning and the teaching] more and more of what is right and trying constantly to be more and more like Christ who created this new life within you.

**Colossians 3:12-15** (LNT) Since you have been chosen by God who has given you this new kind of life, and because of his deep love and concern for you, you should practice tenderhearted mercy and kindness to others. Don't worry about making a good impression on them, but be ready to suffer quietly and patiently. Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the

Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Most of all, let love guide your life, for then the whole church will stay together in perfect harmony. Let the peace of heart that comes from Christ be always present in your hearts and lives, for this is your responsibility and privilege as members of his body. And always be thankful.

Now, let us go on with what God wants and expects from us here a little more. God is very plain with what He wants from us after He calls us and opens our minds to His life through the Holy Spirit.

**I Thessalonians 5:16-21** Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit [and we do this by living in darkness. We kill the Holy Spirit within us when we mix up darkness with light.] Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good.

We must think about and prove if it is right or wrong. All the craziness that finds its way into the church, like whether Christ was created. We need to prove these things. They are easily proved when we get all caught up in this stuff.

**I Thessalonians 5:22** Abstain from every form of evil.

I would like to continue on a little further.

**II Timothy 2:22-23** Flee also youthful lusts [God is talking to all you young people here, brethren. And it is hard for you to do when you are young.]; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord out of the pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.

Now, let me all ask you a question. Do you want answers to your prayers? You want God to hear you when you pray.

**I John 3:22** (AMP) And we receive from Him whatever we ask, because we [watchfully] obey His orders [we observe His suggestions and His injunctions, follow His plan for us] and [habitually] practice what is pleasing to Him.

This is what living in the light is all about, brethren, pleasing God by doing what is right no matter what.

Do we really understand what the benefits are if we truly live in the light? I am not talking about just going to church and keeping the holy days and tithing. That is *part* of living in the light. I am talking about real repentance and real, bonafide life changes.

**Revelation 21:6-8** (LNT) It is finished! I am the A [Alpha] and the Z [Omega]—the Beginning and the End. I will give to the thirsty the springs of Water of Life—as a gift! Everyone who conquers will inherit all blessings, and I will be his God and He will be my son. [This is what living in the light will do for us. We will inherit all things when we will be the sons of God.] But cowards who turn back from following me, and those who are unfaithful to me, and the corrupt, murderers, and the immoral, and those conversing with demons, and idol worshipers and all liars—their doom is in the Lake that burns with fire and sulfur. This is the "Second Death."

This is what cowards do, brethren, and they live in darkness. They refuse to change and repent. They justify their shortcomings. They do not have the guts to make changes in their lives. They refuse to fight their own human nature, they refuse to fight the world, and they refuse to fight Satan—because they are cowards and they prefer darkness to light.

Now, let me sum all this up for us. Our job as firstfruits, those of us that really want to live in the light is this: We need to overcome and repent, which means make changes in our lives. That is number one. We must keep the faith once delivered and do not add to it or take away from it. That is

number two. And number three, we need to always be expanding the light in our lives and diminish the darkness—diminishing the darkness in our lives. It is not complicated, brethren. We just need to do it.

Christ is the light. Without Him, there would be only darkness where the world lives. Let us train ourselves to live in the light.