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**“Became a light.”**

Ephesians 5:8

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**Ephesians 5:8 (PowerPoint)**

Preface

When I meditated on the words, “You were darkness before, but now you are light in the Lord,” I was reminded of the beauty of the light that came through the lace curtains and through the gaps between them to illuminate the room when I got up out of bed at my homestay after the night when I first believed in the Lord Jesus as a junior in college. I remembered the beauty of the light of the day.

The room, the bed, the outside world, and the sunlight were all the same as they had been two days before, but before and after I believed in Jesus, the scene that came into my eyes looked completely different.

I wonder if the light is so beautiful. I wonder if the sky is so blue, wide, and beautiful. The world looked so different before and after believing in Jesus.

Part One

Until then, no matter how much sunlight I saw, I could not recognize it as beautiful.

I didn't even realize that no matter what I did, there was something like a misty cloud hanging in front of me. When I saw the dense greenery woven by the trees, instead of feeling “beautiful,” I thought “eerie. It's scary. I was instantly enlightened when I saw the morning light at dawn on the day I believed in Jesus.

I can still recall the experience of having my eyes opened when I believed in Jesus, and the fog in front of my eyes cleared up and the light shined through.

As we learned last week, Jesus Christ, who is the very Word of God, “Let there be light,” Genesis 1:3, illuminated my dark body, my dark spirit, and my dark life, and I became a person who knows the true light.

In light of today's verse, "Hong Feng Hwa used to be darkness, but now he has become light in the Lord. I want to walk as a child of the light" has happened to me.

I was truly made to believe in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit and experienced being born again.

I thought to myself, "Ah, this is not a religion that can be put into a silly framework created by people and evil spirits. Christianity is not a religion, not a choice, but a fact that everyone must know because they are born as a human being, a duty that must be realized, an absolute necessity, a foundation, a foundation, a core for a person to be a person. The root cause of all the problems and struggles people have is that they are wandering in the darkness without knowing the true Light of God. That was it.

Since then, for me, sharing Jesus has become less about being embarrassed or wondering what people will think of me, and more about sharing that good food tastes good, fun things are fun, and interesting things are interesting.

Whether at school, at your part-time job, at your place of employment, among friends, to your teachers, or to your neighbors, you can say, "Not knowing the One who is the light of Jesus is the root cause of your troubles, your pain, your anger, your cynicism, your loneliness, and your fear, so if you don't believe in Jesus, you are in big trouble! The only thing we can do is to show the fact that we are not doing anything fishy to get people to join some religion, but just to speak a certain fact and live in that light.

The problem is that it is a sad and lonely struggle in our walk on earth to present facts that are not accepted as facts.

## Part Two

In today's scripture, Ephesians 5:8, the apostle Paul says, "Before you were darkness," and indeed, not knowing Jesus Christ, the Light, is darkness itself.

It is not the level of wandering around groping in the darkness, but the very darkness that makes that darkness even deeper and darker, that is us, born-again human beings.

Let's go to the book of Romans.

**Romans 1:22-2:1 (PowerPoint)**

We are without excuse.

We are human beings without excuse in that we ourselves are darkness.

We are the ones who refuse to value the knowledge of God and continue to do what we should not do in our worthless thoughts.

The fact that we think we are better than this person, that we want to look down on them, judge them, and assign superiority or inferiority to them, is proof that we are darkness.

The trouble with darkness is that no matter how far you go, no matter how long you stay in darkness, you will never realize that you are darkness.

Even when darkness enters into darkness, even when darkness surrounds darkness, they are both darkness, and darkness itself cannot realize that it is darkness, because it is only by adding darkness to darkness or multiplying darkness with darkness that darkness itself can realize that it is darkness.

So, when can darkness realize that it is darkness?

Only when the light shines on it.

When the light shines, then and only then does it realize that it is darkness, and that it is darkness itself.

Then God directly revealed to us, "The only One who is the Light is Jesus Christ.

In the presence of that light, nothing can remain covered, nothing that is hidden can remain unknown, and Jesus Christ is that light that God said, "Let there be light," which is the root and beginning of all things that are exposed to the world.

The Bible consistently speaks of the same thing.

The only thing this world lacks and needs right now is to be illuminated by the light, the light of Jesus Christ.

### Part Three

The contrast between light and darkness, the ultimate contrast that can never be mixed or coexist, is spoken of in the Bible from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation.

It tells us that light is God and darkness belongs to Satan, evil spirits, and other spirits that seek to oppose all the works of God.

The book of Revelation tells us that the earth rotates around the sun 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, creating day, the symbol of light, and night,

the symbol of darkness, so that God can make known to us humans the existence of the demonic spirits of darkness against Jesus Christ, the God of light. The night is the symbol of darkness.

That is why bad things always take place in all kinds of darkness, including the darkness within us, and why we instinctively feel fearful in the presence of darkness.

The problem with darkness is that it disguises itself as light and deceives people who were originally created in the image of God, and those who are deceived come to love darkness rather than true light.

As we will see later, in John 3:19, we have fallen into the state in which “people loved darkness rather than light,” which is the fundamental problem of us human beings.

As I said earlier, darkness is darkness itself, and it cannot realize that it is darkness.

In order for darkness to realize that it is darkness, it needs light.

And it is Jesus Christ who came to earth as that light.

However, man has become darkness itself, so deep and profound that even if he sees this light, he does not notice it; even if he sees it, he does not see it; even if he hears it, he does not hear it; even if he touches it, he feels nothing.

We find coolness in the darkness, we have authority in the darkness, we find enjoyment in the darkness, we pretend to be able to see in the darkness, we declare our freedom in the darkness, we create things like value in the darkness, we learn pride in the darkness, and we wander in the darkness, launching knowledge in the darkness.

How dark it is, the demons, who are the root of darkness, when they see Jesus, come running and worship Him, saying in a loud voice, “Jesus, Son of God Most High, what have I to do with You? I beg you by God. They recognize who Jesus is and plead with him, even invoking the name of God in spite of their demonic nature, but the humans, who are darkness, do not think anything of Jesus, but rather try to use him when they feel he is worth using, and if they feel he is not worth using according to their own measure of darkness, they kill him. If they felt that He had no value, they tried to kill Him, and in fact, they did.

They tried to cover the impossible with their own darkness, smothering the One who is Light.

In the Gospel of John chapter 3, a man named Nicodemus, who had a social status, was well educated, and had lived a life that would have been recognized by others, came to Jesus and said, "I am a man who has lived a life that I am not ashamed to admit to myself and others. I immediately understood that you are a man of honor even from my point of view. I think I have acquired what you would call admirable in my own way, but what do I need and what more do I need to add to become even more admirable? The scene describes a scene in which a person, as if unaware that he or she is in the darkness, throws at Jesus words that seem to express his or her feelings of weighing himself or herself and others based on a way of looking at things that is an extension of the world's values.

I wonder if his feelings are expressed in the fact that he came to Jesus at night, which symbolizes darkness, perhaps because he was worried about being seen by others.

To such Nicodemus, Jesus looked at him warmly and said, "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Unless one is born again by the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Everyone who believes in Me, Jesus the Christ, will have eternal life, will know the light, and will come to the light. You will come to realize that until then you hated the light and loved the darkness. Quit hating the light, quit loving the darkness, and believe in Me, the Light, instead of trying to add something to what you are. And be born again," He responded.

Let us go to the Gospel of John.

### **John 3:1-21.**

Nicodemus asked Jesus, "What can I add that will make me a better and more worthy man?" But Jesus answered, "Darkness is darkness, even if you add to it, and you sinners love such darkness. The only way you can change is not by adding to it, but by believing in Me, the Christ, and being born again by the Holy Spirit.

Unless you believe in Christ and are born again by the Holy Spirit, you will never quit loving the darkness, you will never quit hating the light, and you will always remain trapped in the values of darkness, such as being a respectable person or who is respectable, and you will eventually reach eternal destruction in eternal darkness. Believe in Me, the Light that has already come into the world, the living and true Light that is before your eyes," He said.

If a person believes in the Lord Jesus as He said, he or she will become light.

Fortunately, whatever his initial motives and thoughts, Nicodemus came out feeling something about the person of Jesus, and as we continue reading the Gospel of John, we see that he would have been transformed into a believer in the Lord Jesus.

And, according to one account, he was scolded and vilified for being a believer in Jesus, and rejoicing that he was made worthy of being humiliated for Jesus' sake, he was martyred, dwelling in the light and hoping for the Kingdom of Heaven, the new heaven and the new earth, where Jesus the Lamb is the light. Jesus the Lamb is the light of the world.

#### Part Four

As the Apostle Paul said, "You were darkness before, but now you are light in the Lord," we who were darkness have become light in the Lord Jesus.

However, this is not the end of the story.

Let us look at the words that follow.

#### **Ephesians 5:8 (PowerPoint)**

Walk as children of light.

Once we have become light, we are naturally given the mission to walk as light.

In a sense, that is exactly why we must live on this earth, rather than being lifted up to the kingdom of heaven immediately after becoming Christians.

The apostle Paul also seems to have been troubled about this.

In I Corinthians, we read, "He wondered, 'Since God is light Himself instead of using men as light, why doesn't He just shine His light on people at once and show them that He is God? God loves us so much that He decided to take what seems to us to be a slow and foolish way of saying, "Use us, together with us."

He wants more than anything for us to be connected to each other through our lives as children of light, with Christ as our head.

He wants us to know through our life as children of light that He would rather die than suffer eternal destruction with darkness, and that He truly believes that we, as darkness, are more valuable than God Himself. We can see that.

Let us go to First John.

**1 John 1:5-10 (PowerPoint)**

**1 John 2:8-11 (PowerPoint presentation)**

It seems to me that no one received a revelation to realize that God is light and wrote down that revelation more than John, the youngest of the 12 disciples who wrote the Gospel of John, the Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation.

John speaks thoroughly of God, that Christ is the Light, and that all that is contrary to that is darkness.

He then divides the nature of that darkness into two main categories.

The first is the refusal to admit that one is a sinner in every category of sin, as we have just seen in the book of Romans.

The second is darkness, which is the hatred of comparing oneself with others, always thinking and talking about one's own righteousness, insisting on the wrongs of others, and trying to maintain one's superiority by judging others.

In other words, to be a child of light, to walk as a child of light, is to constantly admit that you are a sinner.

And before hating and judging others, we must live remembering that we ourselves are still living in darkness, that we are lax in living in darkness, and that the sin of wanting to hide in darkness lives within us.

Jesus said, "Love your enemies. The apostle Paul, I believe, was the one who bore the grace of this Word more than anyone else.

Paul was truly passionate about living as an enemy of Christians and risked his life to seize and kill them.

Who would have thought that such a man who was the greatest enemy of Christians would become a Christian, an apostle, and an evangelist while Jesus spoke directly to him in a vision, saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

The greatest enemy became a friend.

What God does is timely and beautiful. There is a time to kill and a time to heal. There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh. There is a season to

mourn, and a season to leap. Everything God does is timely and beautiful. Through Paul's conversion, the saints of the early church experienced the true words, "But man cannot discern from the beginning to the end of the works that God does.

God has prepared for us a time when hatred will end, when fighting will end, when hurting, breaking, and tearing will end.

Then likewise, "Everything God does is timely and beautiful. Man cannot discern the beginning of God's work from its beginning to its end," we must first search ourselves and our own darkness before Jesus, the Light.

Then, while expecting, waiting, and believing in the time God has in store for us, I must first admit that I am a sinner, and confess that it has become normal for me to hate my brothers and sisters, shouting out my own righteousness, without realizing that I am walking in darkness.

#### Conclusion.

Once, a person who is now living a faithful and faithful life in another church came to me out of the blue and said, "Dr. Hong, I am sorry. I am sorry. I am so sorry for criticizing you and criticizing the church at that time.

To be honest, I was filled with hatred toward that person, and I had been praying about it for a long time, so I felt sorry that he said that to me, and I felt sorry and thankful to God.

I realized once again that we human beings, even though we believe in Jesus Christ and are made to be light, always have the fear of choosing darkness and walking in darkness without realizing it.

Let us walk together as children of light, examining ourselves before the Word of God, and away from the spirits of the world that try to deceive us with empty words, as children of light.

Let's pray.

Benediction : Ephesians 5:8