



The God Plan: The Ephesians Account of Christianity

Ephesians 5 — The God Plan

Ephesians 5:1-14

Fifth Session

Ephesians 5

Ephesians 5:1-2

1Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children 2and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

therefore — Paul draws a conclusion from the preceding verses. He takes us back to 4:1 and 4:17, and Eph 4:32b “As God in Christ has forgiven you.”

Be imitators of God — This is what your new man already is and wants to do as created in line with God. Not just imitate, but do the will of, follow. Obey the word and will of the Lord. Eph. 4:24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. “Jesus taught his disciples that if they love their enemies and do good to them, they will be ‘sons of the Most High’. He urged them: ‘Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful’ (Luke 6:35-36; cf. Matt 5:44-48). God’s kindness and mercy are to be the model of their conduct” (O’Brien, p. 353)

imitators of God — The pattern of the new man is the pattern of God himself. God is perfect (Matthew 5:48).

as dearly loved children — This is the Gospel motivation. “AS” accentuates that you ARE God’s dearly loved (agape) children. Not loved for what we are but loved because God loved us.

Be Imitators of God

children — The emphasis is on one’s own, a term of endearment. Children who are loved by their parents will imitate them, so Paul urges us to be imitators of God, as his beloved children.

As if God only had one child to love, and he loves you that way — “Here, in the present context it cannot be pressed quite to that extent [an only child who receives all the love parents have to give], but believers must realize God’s ability to extend his love to each of his children because of the knowledge and security of his love” (Hoehner, p. 646)

Truth for Reflection: Even though we weren’t God’s natural children, he loves us dearly. God’s love for us, his relationship of love for us is the very reason. We saw the fact that God truly loves us from 4:32b. In knowledge we shoot for fullness of Christ in sanctification; in love we aim to be imitators of God.

And live a life of love - Beloved children walk in love. This is the third time Paul uses this verb (live a life) since Chapter 4:1. “First believers must walk worthy of the call (4:1), then they must walk in holiness and not as the Gentiles (4:17), and now they are instructed to walk in love. The present imperative conveys a customary idea to “make this your habit” and does not indicate whether the action has been going on.” (Hoehner, 646).

of love – The love (agape) shown to undeserving, seeking the best good for another person. It follows Christ command to love one another as I have loved you (John 13:34; 15:12, 17)

Just as Christ loved us – This is the standard and the power for our love. This is the first time that Paul mentions Christ’s love for us. Previously Paul stated that the Father loved us (2:4).

gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God – Christ delivered himself over to die, as a self-sacrifice. It was the outward act and the inward attitude. He did it as the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep (Jn 10:11, 15,17). He laid down his life for his friends (Jn 15:13). Jesus did this willingly, and had the power to take up his life again (Jon 10:18)

for us – vicarious atonement. “He was willing to leave heaven’s glory and die on the cross to become sin that sinners might become the righteousness of God” (Hoehner, p. 648).

“... Christ willingly gave himself to be offered and he did it to be a pleasant aroma to God. Likewise, we as believers should walk in sacrificial love so that we may be a pleasant aroma not only to God but also to fellow believers (2 Cor 2:14-16). Christ’s love cost him his life. Should our love be without cost?” (Hoehner, p. 651)

Ephesians 5:3-4 — Not Even a Hint of Sexual Immorality

Ephesians 5:3-5

3But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Not even A Hint of Sexual immorality

"All these forms of sexual immorality and greed are so serious that they must not even be mentioned among God's people" (O'Brien, p. 360)

"Clearly, such vices will be mentioned in lists as here but they are not to become the subject of Christians' conversation. Thinking and talking about sexual sins 'creates an atmosphere in which they are tolerated and which can ... even promote their practice'" (O'Brien, p. 360).



Footprint drawn in the marble street of Ephesus, thought to be an advertisement for a brothel.

V. 3 — **But among you** - Paul shifts from positive to negative exhortation, as shown by the adversative conjunction. Paul lists lifestyles that are diametrically opposed to the Christian life, which is to imitate God and walk in love.

Sexual immorality (porneia) – Rare word in classical literature, used to refer to prostitution or homosexuality. Essentially it means aberrant sexual conduct or, metaphysically, a deviation from the true worship of God. Refers to extramarital relations (Matt 5:32; 15:19, and more examples), spiritual and/or political prostitution (Rev 14:8; 17:2, 4; 18:3; 19:2). Here it refers to sexual conduct, normally thought of as extramarital relationships (eg Matt 5:32), including incest (1 Cor 5:1) (Hoehner, p. 652).

impurity —The defilement of the whole personality. This is reinforced by the adjective "all" translated as "any kind" (NIV).

greed - covetousness, the opposite of moderation. It is selfishness to an extreme degree. This could refer to sexual greed that shows itself in self-gratification at the expense of others. Thus the command, "You shall not covet your neighbors wife." Could also refer to greed for material possessions to "to be consumed by oneself rather than sharing them with the community of believers and depending on the LORD to supply them as the need arises" (Hoehner 653).

Stoeckhardt: "[Christians] should be so careful and discreet in guarding their good reputation, so earnestly should they follow purity, cleanliness, self-control, and chastity as to silence all slander and evil speaking" (Stoeckhardt, p. 228)

Not even mentioned among you -- There should not even be an occasion to mention these vices. "Bruce states it well: "such unholy things should not be acceptable subjects of conversation among people whom God has called to be holy." Therefore, believers must refrain from acts and thoughts of immorality which lead to impure talk and action" (Hoehner, p. 653).

because these are improper for God's holy people -- "Paul gives the negative exhortation against the sins of self-love that are so diametrically opposed to the love seen in Christ's sacrificial death. It is inappropriate for believers to even mention these vices. Paul will next discuss both improper and proper speech for the new person. Conduct and conversation are very closely tied to each other" (Hoehner, p. 654).

V 4 — **4Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.**

Nor should there be obscenity - ugliness, deformity (in classical period). It means something that "causes shame, dishonoring" (Homer, Iliad 23, 473). It also means something that is "shameful, base" (Herodotus). It is "disgraceful" or "shameful" for a woman to be shorn or shaven (1 Cor 11:6) or for her to speak in church (14:35), to speak of things the people of darkness do in secret (Eph 5:12), and he uses it to describe false teachers who teach for "base" gain (Titus 1:11). Hence, the basic concept of both the adjective and the noun is that which is shameful, disgraceful, base. (Hoehner, p. 654-5)

foolish talk – Rarer term refers to "silly, foolish, senseless talk," Only time this word is used in NT is here. Not found in LXX. May also refer to talk that is "empty and speculative, even dangerous to salvation. At any rate, it is at least likely to refer to futile talk that detracts from the issues of faith and edifying discussion. Accordingly, it is best translated "foolish talk." (Hoehner, p. 655)

Ephesians 5:4-5 — Live as a Christian, Not an Idolater

coarse joking - sarcastic ridicule. In classical times it is used in a good sense, that is, "witty, wittiness," and Aristotle alludes to it as the fondness of laughter characterized by the youth. Further, Aristotle states that it is the mean between buffoonery and boorishness, (*Aristotle Ethica Nicomachea*).

"But there is a tendency to move from that midpoint because people are so fond of jokes and ridicule that they will do anything to get a laugh (*Aristotle Ethica Nicomachea*). ... In the contexts it most likely indicates jesting that has gone too far, thus becoming sarcastic ridicule that cuts people down and embarrasses others who are present. It is humor in bad taste. Believers should build up and not destroy, even in humor. Or, since in the context the preceding words were concerned with sexual sins, ... could even have reference to dirty jokes or humor with suggestive overtones. This does not mean humor cannot not [sic] be used by Christians. However, it should not be employed at someone's expense thus running counter to Paul's injunction to edify each other (4:29). Consequently, Paul gives this warning. Like anger, humor is to be controlled." (Hoehner, p. 656)

which are out of place - which are inappropriate - Verb means "to reach up to, have come up to" as one pyramid which did not reach up to the height of another, or a wall that didn't reach up to a man's waist. The above type of talk does not rise to what it means to live as Christians.

but rather thanksgiving -- "Whereas sexual impurity and covetousness both express self-centered acquisitiveness, thanksgiving is the exact opposite, and so the antidote required; it is the recognition of God's generosity' (Houlden, 324, quoted by O'Brien). Thanksgiving is almost a synonym for the Christian life. It is the response of gratitude to God's saving activity in creation and redemption, and thus a recognition that he is the ultimate source of every blessing. ... Christians, because of the grace given to them in Christ Jesus (cf. 1:3-14, 15-23), are to live out their lives with joyful thanksgiving. It should be the accompaniment of every activity, being the appropriate response of those who have been filled by God's Spirit (Eph. 5:18-20)." (O'Brien, p. 361).

"In place of such scandalous talk we ought to find among Christians thanksgiving; they ought to speak much of the great and blessed things which God has done for them" (Stoeckhardt, p. 229)

V. 5 --**For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.**

"The reason they should not act like unbelievers is because unbelievers are not going to inherit the kingdom of Christ and God" (Hoehner, 659) "...Paul is drawing

attention to a certainty: persistent sinners are excluded from God's kingdom. In v. 3 he had denounced the sins of *sexual immorality, impurity, and greed*. Now he returns to them, censuring those who habitually practice them" (O'Brien, p. 362).

such a man is an idolater – "To covet is idolatry. That which is coveted becomes the center of one's life and is worshiped instead of the Creator (Rom 1:23). The greedy person is willing to exchange the glory of the incorruptible God for a corruptible idol (Rom 1:25). This is a flawed perspective. For example, Esau was so coveteous of the pottage that he sold his birthright—a ten-minute transaction in exchange for a life's inheritance" (Hoehner, p. 660f).

"Believers have already been assured that they have a secure hope of inheriting the glorious life to come (see on 1:14, 18 above). But they are here warned not to live like unbelievers, for they are not going to inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God. Those who have given themselves over to immorality, impurity, and greed, even if they call themselves Christian, show that they are excluded from eternal life. The apostle is not asserting that the believer who ever falls into these sins is automatically excluded from God's kingdom. Rather, what is envisaged here is the person who has given himself or herself up without shame or repentance to this way of life" (O'Brien, p. 363).

in the Kingdom of God and of Christ -- "There is a tendency in Paul's letters to distinguish two phases of the heavenly kingdom, reserving the expression 'the kingdom of God' for its future and eternal aspect (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 15:50; Gal. 5:21), while 'the kingdom of Christ' denotes the present phase of God's rule (1 Cor. 15:24; Col 1:13; cf. also Eph 2:6; 2 Tim 4:1, 18), which is destined to merge with the future. So in 1 Corinthians 15:24 Christ, after reigning until all things are put under his feet, delivers up the kingdom to God the Father. Thus, the double formulation the kingdom of Christ and of God signifies the divine kingdom in both its present and future aspects, from which those who have given themselves over to immorality, impurity, and greed are excluded." (O'Brien, p. 364)

"Those in slavery to their sexual appetites are surely excluded from the rule of Christ and God" (O'Brien, p. 364).

Stoeckhardt: "... Such a definite reminder stating that absolute and certain ruin and finally eternal damnation awaits all whoremongers and misers serves as a drastic and forceful warning which, to be sure, also Christians have need of, for they also still have their sinful flesh and blood" (Stoeckhardt, p. 229)

Ephesians 5:6-8 — Have No Partnership with the Sons of Disobedience

Ephesians 5:6-10

6Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7Therefore do not be partners with them.

8For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10and find out what pleases the Lord.

V. 6 —**let no one deceive you with empty words**

with empty words— “It is all too easy for believers to be influenced by the surrounding world and to succumb to its ways of thinking and behaving. The result is that what is acceptable to the culture of the day becomes acceptable in the church. This is particularly true in contemporary Western society in the area of sexual morality” (O’Brien, p. 364)

because of such things the wrath of God is coming— This can have a reference to present judgment from God and future judgment.

on those who are disobedient— “those who are disobedient” = the sons of disobedience. “God’s wrath or anger is not directed toward those who are sons of God but toward those who are the sons of disobedience—unbelievers. The word “sons” conveys distinction, and here the distinctive sons of disobedience ... these people do not believe that God judges and consequently they try to persuade all people of this, including believers. That is why Paul warns believers not to believe their words, which are void of content. Rather they are to believe the truth which is in Jesus” (Hoehner, p. 664)

V. 7 — **Therefore do not be partners with them.**

Do not be partners— Could also translate “be” as “become” which indicates the possibility of entering into a condition of becoming a fellow participant.

partners— refers to more than association. The term means partner, or fellow participant, accomplice in a plot. This is a term “which appears in the New Testament only here and at 3:6, is used to signify ‘one who shares in a possession or a relationship. Accordingly, the readers are to make sure that they do not share with disobedient Gentiles in their immorality and thus escape the judgment that rightly falls with it (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). Those who participate with Jewish believers in the promise of Christ Jesus through the gospel (3:6) cannot be partners with pagans in their sins. The two forms of participation are mutually exclusive” (O’Brien, p. 366)

with them— Best refers to the “sons of disobedience” in v. 6.

“Because believers are in a new fellowship with the Lord and his saints, they were not to be fellow participants with sinners who are going in the opposite direction” (Hoehner, p. 668f).

V. 8 — **For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light**

you were once darkness— “darkness signifies sin, both in realm and power. Those who are in darkness must grope through life without the light of God’s revelation (4:18). Their future will be a continuation of darkness but to an ever greater degree. Interestingly, in this present verse Paul does not say that the believers were *in* darkness but that they *were* darkness itself, that is, the embodiment of darkness. As such, they were held in sway by the power of sin and approved of others who practiced sinful deeds (Rom 1:32)” (Hoehner, p. 670).

but now you are light in the Lord— Light primarily used in LXX to refer to the character and revelation of God. God is clothed in light. God can turn darkness into light. Light comes from God and dwells with him. “Hearts that are open to the light of God’s revelation experience God’s salvation, which in turn lights life’s path (Ps 119:105; Prov 6:23)” (Hoehner, p. 670)

“People in darkness are on their own or are there by their own doing, but not so with light. The prepositional phrase IN THE LORD indicates that the believer is light in the Lord. The source of light is God and Christ. In this context, Christ is identified as the source (vv. 8, 14). “Lord” in this prepositional phrase refers to Christ as it does elsewhere in this epistle (2:21; 4:1, 17; 6:1, 10, 21)” (Hoehner, p. 671).

live as children of the light— with the privilege of being “light in the Lord” comes the responsibility to live as children of the light. Present Tense Imperative = shows habitual conduct for children of light. Children denotes a close relationship to the parent. “Since God is light (1 John 1:5) and believers are the children of God (5:1), they are to walk as children of God or light. As light reflects the glory of God, so should the believers reflect his glory because they are to be imitators of God” (Hoehner, p. 671-672)

of light (photos) – probably a descriptive genitive, and not genitive of source. The source of light is from God, but since they are children of God, their life conduct should be characterized by light.

John 3:20.21 – ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”

Ephesians 5:9-10— Live as Children of the Light

V. 9 —(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)

Eph 5:9 is a parenthetical statement explaining what light is and what its resulting fruit are.

fruit – fruit of the field (literal), fruit, product, or result of an action (good or bad), the profit. Here it is used metaphorically, showing the profit our outcome of the light.

In all goodness. Light shows itself in all goodness. This is the first of three virtues in which light shows itself. It shows in goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Goodness – It means that which is morally good and beneficial good, in that it benefits someone else.

“Thus, in general terms it has the idea of goodness or prosperity. With reference to the goodness of the Lord it conveys the sense of the Lord’s generosity. In addition to this verse it is used three other times in the NT, as follows: Paul is convinced that the Roman believers are full of goodness (Rom 15:14), a quality of the fruit of the Spirit is goodness (Gal 5:22), and Paul prays for the Thessalonians that God would make them worthy of his call and might fulfill every “good” desire (2 Thess 1:11)” (Hoehner, p. 673)

Beneficial Goodness = Generosity. Translated as goodness, it includes both the moral sense of goodness and the beneficial good shown to others and received from God. Goodness and generosity.

and righteousness. See 4:24 on righteousness. This term has in mind “the right standing of the believer who has trusted God’s work on the cross in the person of Jesus Christ. The righteousness of God has been imputed to the believer (Rom 3:21-22; 4:3, 5). Another connotation of the word is the attribute of righteousness. This, of course, characterizes God (Rom 3:25-26). There are also references to a person’s own inadequate righteousness (Matt 5:20; Rom 10:3) as well as to the believers call to righteous behavior (Rom 6:13). Paul prays for the Philippians to be filled with the fruit of righteousness (Phil 1:11). Both in Eph 4:24 and in the present context it refers to this quality of life from which righteous actions spring. Therefore, the fruit of light consists not only in goodness with generosity but also righteous actions or works.” (Hoehner, p. 674).

and truth — Shows reality, what is actual, as opposed to what is false. Here “it has the idea of right action or living as opposed to false living. It is a quality that comes from God and from which springs the actions of truthfulness.” (Hoehner, p. 674).

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

“The ‘new person’ of Ephesians has been created to display those ethical qualities that belong to God himself, such as *righteousness* and *holiness*, which have their origin in his *truth* (4:24). As a result, the new person speaks the *truth* in love (4:14, 25), since he or she has found the *truth* in Jesus (4:21).” (O’Brien, p. 368)

Divine Activity & Human Responsibility — “Once again in this letter, divine activity and human response are carefully balanced (cf. Phil 2:12-13, and see on 4:24). The trilogy is reminiscent of the statement in Micah 6:8 that God requires human beings to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with him” (O’Brien, p. 369)

V. 10 — and find out what pleases the Lord.

find out — You will lead your life by constantly finding out what pleases the Lord. **Find out** means “to put to the test” as testing witnesses for a trial. Along with this it means “to approve, sanction” or “to approve after scrutiny as fit,” for example, for the priesthood or for an office. In its use in the Gospels Jesus reprimands the people for their ability to test or scrutinize the weather but their inability to test his significance in their midst (Luke 12:56 *bis*); in another instance a man tells Jesus he is going to test his oxen (Luke 14:19). Paul uses this word to relate that sinful human beings do not test or approve God in knowledge (Rom 1:28), that the Jews are able to approve what is excellent in matters of the law (2:18), that believers are to prove or test what the will of God is (12:2), and that a person is to examine or test oneself before partaking of the Lord’s supper (1 Cor 11:28). ... What are we to approve? That is Paul’s next topic” (Hoehner, p. 675,676).

what pleases the Lord — Romans 12:1 – Paul to the Romans: “offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God.” Romans 12:2 “...be transformed by the renewal of your minds, then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Phil 4:18: their gift is pleasing to God.

Col 3:20 Children are told to obey their parents for this is pleasing to God. Titus 2:9 Paul tells Titus to tell slaves to be “pleasing” to their masters. Hebrews 13:21 God will equip believers with everything they need to do God’s will which is working in them to do what is pleasing in his sight.

For Reflection: Find out what pleases the Lord. This goes beyond God’s moral will which is revealed in Scripture. Paul’s command is to test the will of God for every aspect of life and to approve what would be pleasing to him. Christians have been instructed “with the truth that is in Jesus” (Eph 4:21). “This Christ-centered instruction, which focuses on the truth of the gospel, is the yardstick by which believers are to discern in specific situations what pleases their Lord.” (O’Brien, p. 370).

Ephesians 5:11-12 — Have Nothing to Do with Fruitless Deeds of Darkness

Ephesians 5:11-14

11Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 12For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. 13But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, 14for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said:

"Wake up, O sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."

"Therefore do not be partners with them." The Christians are not to be fellow participants with sinners (v. 7), nor are they to participate (share in) the unfruitful works of darkness (v. 11).

Have nothing to do with – verb is different from the noun for "partners" in verse 7. It is used in the LXX to talk about partnership of two kings (2 Chr 20:35), Job being accused of having fellowship with evildoers (Joh 34:8), take part in shedding blood (Prov 1:11), and being united with the living rather than the dead (Eccl 9:4). In apocryphal books, it has to do with fellowship and marriage. (Hoehner, p. 677). This verb occurs three times in the NT. Other than Eph 5:11 it is used in Phil 4:14, when Paul says that the Philippians are partners in his hardship. It is used in Rev 18:4 as a warning to the saints to come out of fallen Babylon, lest they share in her sins and coming judgment. (Hoehner, 677)

fruitless deeds of darkness – useless, no profit since their source is darkness.

rather, expose them – Word meant to expose or shame in classical times. Also used to cross-examine, question, investigate, convict, or expose. (Hoehner, p. 678).

"When wrong is exposed, a conviction must follow that should result in reproof or rebuke. This in turn should lead to discipline. Hence, exposing includes both convicting and rebuking. In the present context it is best translated as "expose" because the object of the imperative is not persons but works." (Hoehner, p.679)

Whose deeds are to be exposed? "...it is more likely that it refers to believers who are participating in unfruitful works of darkness. First, the context is speaking about believers. Second, Paul exhorts believers (not the world) not to participate in the works of darkness but rather to do the works or fruit of light. Thus, it appears that some believers were participating in the works of darkness, making the enjoinder necessary. Third, in the NT there is no reprimand of those in the world. Rather, Paul exposes, rebukes, and disciplines those in the church (cf. also matt 18:15-17). He explicitly states that believers are to judge those inside the church and not to judge those outside the church because God alone is going to judge the latter (1 Cor 5:12-13)." (Hoehner, p. 679).

O'Brien offers the opposing view: "Both the flow of the argument and the context of darkness suggest that the fruitless deeds which are exposed are the sins of unbelievers. The conduction of the children of light will shine as a beacon to others, revealing evil deeds for what they are" (O'Brien, p. 371)

V. 12 — **For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.**

What the disobedient do in secret - for the things done in secret by them. The conjunction "for" introduces the reason for exposing the unfruitful works of darkness and could be translated "because." The things done in secret cannot be hidden from God. God is omniscient. "Darkness tries to conceal sins that should be exposed. Best rightly observes that "the reference to secrecy is much more easily understood of members of the community" for unbelievers sinned opening without shame (Eph 4:19)" (Hoehner, p. 681).

It is shameful to mention. "But if these deeds are so bad that it is shameful to even mention them, why expose them? Exposing such things not only reveals unfruitful works but teachers believers two important lessons. First, it reveals the ugliness of the deeds done in secret. Second, it impresses on them the importance of producing the fruit of light, the works of darkness, righteousness, and truth (v. 9). Deeds of darkness cannot be allowed, therefore, to spread and encompass the community of believers." (Hoehner, p. 682)

"Wake up, O Sleeper,
Rise from the dead,
And Christ will shine
on you." Eph 5:14

No Secret Hidden from God

Isaiah 29:15, 16b "Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the LORD, who do their work in darkness and think, "Who sees us? Who will know?" ... Can the pot say of the potter, "He knows nothing?"

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V 11— Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

and – not found in NIV translation. It makes v 11 a parallel command with Eph 5:7.

Ephesians 5:13-14—Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from the Dead

V 13—**But everything exposed by the light becomes visible,**

everything exposed by the light becomes visible.

Everything doesn't refer to everyone, or every deed, but all that is done in secret.

becomes visible – Revealed, made visible, obvious to all. Take something that was hidden or unknown and make it manifest. To make something clearly visible to the human eye. “It is used to convey the idea that all hidden things will be made manifest (mark 4:22). Likewise, those who do what is true come to the light in order that their deeds accomplished in God may be clearly seen (John 3:21). Again these passages illustrate the importance of hidden things being made visible” (Hoehner, p. 681).

by the light – the light refers to both believers (v. 8) and their fruit (v. 9).

v. 14—**for it is light that makes everything visible.**

For it is light that makes everything visible – This finishes the thought which Paul began in verse 13. The period in the text comes after this phrase.

“The present context is not talking about unbelievers but believers who have become copartners in the works of unbelievers. These unfruitful works of darkness are to be exposed in order that offending believers might produce the fruit of light, namely, goodness, righteousness, and truth (v. 9)” (Hoehner, p. 685).

V. 14 — **This is why it is said:**

**“Wake up, O sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”**

It is difficult to find this text in any OT reference, although attempts are made to match it with Isa 26:19, 60:1, Jonah 1:6. Most think it is a quotation of an early hymn, possibly a baptismal hymn, or a hymn about Christ's second coming when Christ will raise the dead. It's also thought to be a resurrection hymn that was adapted for use as a baptism hymn.

Wake up, o sleeper – Matthe 8:24, Mark 5:4, Acts 12 7

– Imperative used for raising people from the sleep.

Arise! “Though normally used of physical sleep, Paul also uses it of spiritual lethargy and indifference (1 Thess 5:6). It is so used in the present context where some believers have become co-participants with the unfruitful works of darkness and need to be restored. It is much like the disciples sleeping when Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. He asked them why they could not be awake at that critical hour and urged them to watch and pray that they might not enter into temptation (Matt 26:40-41 = Mark 14:37-43 = Luke

22:46). Paul is addressing believers who had fallen in with the unfruitful works of darkness and he uses this quotation to say, “wake up from your spiritual laziness!” As “sleepers” they possibly did not even realize their spiritual indifference. … [this is not an awakening of knowledge but action and obedience] … “more a question of a decision of the will, a change in one's walking, away from sinful action towards actions which is pleasing to God” (Hoehner, p. 687)

and rise from the dead -- Normally think of resurrection from the dead as a physical, bodily resurrection. Here the reference is to spiritual conduct. Those who have fallen into a “spiritual deadening demonstrated by their unfruitful works of darkness” are called to arise from the dead (Hoehner, p. 688).

“Believers are told that those who continually practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God but will receive the wrath of God (vv. 5-6). This has reference not only to spiritual death but also the second death: the separation of people from God forever. Paul enjoins believers not to be partakers in their unfruitful works because their source is darkness, which is the sphere of the ungodly who do not know or care about God. In fact, these unbelievers use deceitful words to persuade believers to reject the mutual ideas of an inheritance for believers and a wrath for unbelievers. Hence, in their spiritual indifference Paul exhorts them to awake and with urgency arise from the path that leads to death” (Hoehner, p. 688)

and Christ will shine on you -- “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).” (Hoehner, p. 688)

“They are commanded to awake from the spiritual sleep and rise from the path of death. Their repentant response will please God and Christ will shine on them with approval” (Hoehne, p. 688).

Stoeckhardt: “Christ, the Sun of grace, is now shining upon and about him, and in this brightness he becomes happy and blessed as in the glory of day. Moreover, it is exactly the promise of grace which awakens the sinner from his sleep of sin and of death, gives him spiritual power, and makes him willing to obey the call “Awake! Arise!” to renounce sin, and in his innermost soul to turn to God and to Christ”