

Walking In Darkness

A Teaching Outline

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Walking in Darkness

Those who walk in darkness will stumble

Proverbs 4:19

The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

Strategy for Effective Living *Begins with* God's wisdom respecting and appreciating who God is; reverence and awe toward God *Requires* Moral application trusting in God and his Word; allowing his Word to speak to us personally; being willing to obey *Requires* Practical application acting on God's direction daily *Results in* Effective living experiencing what God does with our obedience

For the believer, darkness will be turned to light.

Isaiah 42:16

"I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, in paths they do not know I will guide them I will make darkness into light before them and rugged places into plains These are the things I will do, And I will not leave them undone."

How could Israel and Judah be God's servants and yet be so blind? How could they be so close to God and see so little? Jesus condemned the religious leaders of his day for the same disregard of God (John 9:39-41).

Yet do we not fail in the same way? Sometimes partial blindness—seeing but not understanding, or knowing what is right but not doing it—can be worse than not seeing at all.

The Bible reveals God's wisdom to us.

Proverbs 2:13

From those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness;

We gain wisdom through a constant process of growing.

First, we must trust and honor God.

Second, we must realize that the Bible reveals God's wisdom to us.

Third, we must make a lifelong series of right choices and avoid moral pitfalls.

Fourth, when we make sinful choices or mistakes, we must learn from our errors and recover.

People don't develop all aspects of wisdom at once. For example, some people have more insight than discretion; others have more knowledge than common sense. But we can pray for all aspects of wisdom and take the steps to develop them.

Those with evil deeds loved darkness.

John 3:19

"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

Many people don't want their lives exposed to God's light because they are afraid of what will be revealed. They don't want to be changed.

Don't be surprised when these same people are threatened by your desire to obey God and do what is right, because they are afraid that the light in you may expose some of the darkness in their lives.

Rather than giving in to discouragement, keep praying that they will come to see how much better it is to live in light than in darkness.

The angel of the Lord will pursue those who walk in darkness.

Psalm 35:6

Let their way be dark and slippery, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.

These psalms sound extremely harsh, but we must remember the following:

(1) David could not understand why he was forced to flee from men who were unjustly seeking to kill him. He was God's anointed king over a nation called to annihilate the evil people of the land.

(2) David's call for justice was sincere; it was not a cover for his own personal vengeance. He truly wanted God's perfect ideal for his nation.

(3) David did not say that *he* would take revenge, but he gave the matter to God. These are merely his suggestions.

(4) These psalms use hyperbole (or overstatement). They were meant to motivate others to take a strong stand against sin and evil.

Jesus came to bring light to those who set in darkness.

Luke 1:79

To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Although God has unlimited power, he chooses to work through frail humans who begin as helpless babies. Don't minimize what God can do through those who are faithful to him.

The sunrise from on high will visit believers.

Luke 1:78

Because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,

This was God's promise to Abraham to bless all peoples through him (see Genesis 12:3). It would be fulfilled through the Messiah, Abraham's descendant.

Allow the wisdom of God's light bring sunrise to your life?

A slippery path and calamity await those who walk in darkness.

Jeremiah 23:12

"Therefore their way will be like slippery paths to them, they will be driven away into the gloom and fall down in it; for I will bring calamity upon them, the year of their punishment," declares the LORD.

How did the nation become so corrupt? A major factor was false prophecy. The false prophets had a large, enthusiastic audience and were very popular because they made the people believe that all was well. By contrast, Jeremiah's message from God was unpopular because it showed the people how bad they were.

Waling in darkness shakes the foundations of the earth.

Psalm 82:5

They do not know nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

God judges human judges. The integrity of the justice system in a nation provides a clear indication of the health of that society.

As is the case with all leadership, judges derive their authority ultimately from God and will give an account to God for their verdicts. Believers are commanded to pray for "kings and all who are in authority so we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity" (1 Timothy 2:2).

This psalm reminds us to include judges of every kind in our prayers because we directly benefit from their integrity.

Without light, we walk in gloom

Isaiah 59:9

Therefore justice is far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us; we hope for light, but behold, darkness, for brightness, but we walk in gloom.

Sin offends our holy God and separates us from him. Because God is holy, he cannot ignore, excuse, or tolerate sin as though it didn't matter. Sin cuts people off from him, forming a wall to isolate God from the people he loves. No wonder this long list of wretched sins makes God angry and forces him to look the other way.

People who die with their life of sin unforgiven separate themselves eternally from God. God wants them to live with him forever, but he cannot take them into his holy presence unless their sin is removed. Have you confessed your sin to God, allowing him to remove it? The Lord can save you if you turn to him.

Distress like blindness will come to those who sin against God.

Zephaniah 1:17

I will bring distress on men So that they will walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the LORD; and their blood will be poured out like dust And their flesh like dung.

The day of the Lord was near; the Babylonians would soon come and destroy Jerusalem. The day of the Lord is also near for us. God promises a final judgment, a day of worldwide destruction (Revelation 20:12-15). The Babylonian conquest occurred just as surely and horribly as Zephaniah had predicted. And God's final day of judgment is also sure—but so is his ability to save.

To be spared from judgment, recognize that you have sinned, that your sin will bring judgment, that you cannot save yourself, and that God alone can save you.

Blind guides will lead you into a pit.

Matthew 15:14

"Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind and if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

Jesus told his disciples to leave the Pharisees alone because the Pharisees were blind to God's truth. Anyone who listened to their teaching would risk spiritual blindness as well. Not all religious leaders clearly see God's truth. Make sure that those you listen to and learn from are those with good spiritual eyesight—they teach and follow the principles of Scripture.

Those who stumble have no light in them.

John 11:10

"But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

"Daylight" symbolizes the knowledge of God's will and reliance on his guidance, and "night," the absence of this knowledge combined with self-reliance. When we move ahead in darkness, we will be likely to stumble.

Those who have fellowship with God practice the truth.

1 John 1:6

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

Here John was confronting the first of three claims of the false teachers: that we can have fellowship with God and go on living in spiritual darkness.

False teachers who thought that the physical body was evil or worthless taught one of two approaches to behavior:

They insisted on denying bodily desires through rigid discipline, or they approved of gratifying every physical lust because the body was going to be destroyed anyway.

Obviously the second approach was more popular! Here John is saying that no one can claim to be a Christian and still live in evil and immorality. We can't love God and court sin at the same time.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door.

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House
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