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3/22/20
Lent 4 (A)
Ephesians 5:8-14
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Life As Children Of Light

“At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.” “At one time you were light.”

Dark Ages is a term that we use to describe time in the past that didn't have the things and the advantages we have today. The Dark Ages are a time without antibiotics and MRIs. The Dark Ages is an age without the internet or indoor plumbing. The Dark Ages are a time without satellite communications, where kids walked to school uphill both ways, and where there was no electricity.

No matter how we use the term 'Dark Ages', it describes a time when things were not as they should have been. Things could have been different, better. Today, the Apostle Paul doesn't pull any punches. “For at one time, you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.” A world without the Savior, Jesus Christ, is a world where wickedness and evil run rampant. It's a world where the powerful prey on the weak and take advantage of others. A world in darkness is a world where the first attitudes are on open display. A world in darkness, a world without Jesus Christ, is a world ruled by fear and panic, a world without hope in the present and for eternity.

And, it's not just out there. Tragically, darkness is what we were. And it does accurately describe our lives at times. Nobody ever wants to be stumbling around in the darkness. Nobody ever wants to be blinded by sin. But that's what happens. It happens when we secure our own future at the expense of everyone else because we believe that we have to take care of ourselves.

Zachaeus and Matthew tried that. They could tell us all about the darkness of loneliness. How about selling out principles and our loyalties? Judas could tell us all about it. What about taking charge and acting like we're in control, like we know all the answers? It was a dark night in the courtyard and in Peter's soul when the rooster crowed. Desire, manipulation, using others – talk to King David and ask him about his bones wasting away from guilt.

Life in the darkness, life in the Dark Ages is terrible. It's why God the Father sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, into the darkness of this world and our lives. Jesus said: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." God's Word in John says: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." Jesus left paradise behind and entered this world for us to bring us light and life. A dark night in the fields outside Bethlehem was turned into light when His birth was announced. The Savior, Jesus Christ, entered the darkness of Herod's kingdom and brought light to the Magi who sought the true king. Jesus went into the wilderness to battle the Prince of Darkness for us. He resisted the darkness. Jesus resisted the lies and temptations of Satan. Jesus exposed all of Satan's lies with the truth of God's Word. Jesus stepped into the darkness of lives wrecked by sin and death and disease. He brought life and light and hope. Jesus stepped into a world full of deceitful scribes, disciples who abandoned Him, crowds who screamed for His death, and soldiers who physically and emotionally abused Him.

Jesus took all of this sin, all of this darkness upon Himself on Good Friday. Dying on a cross in the darkness, He took the darkness of our sin and everyone else's sin to the grave. He was judged in our place so we would never have to depart into the outer darkness of hell. Jesus promised that He would overcome the darkness. And He did! Having risen from the dead, He

has conquered the darkness. He has triumphed over sin. He has conquered death. He is victorious over Satan. Because the Savior, Jesus, was victorious over the darkness we have forgiveness for the sin in our lives. Because Jesus was victorious over the darkness, we have eternal life and the sure and certain hope for a resurrection on the Last Day. And right now, we have the light of God's Word to guide us in our lives. Jesus said: "Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

If we are to live as children of light, especially in the dark days of these days, we will want to consider our relationship with our Heavenly Father. We are not the parent. He is. He knows what is best. As His children, we will want to listen to what He has to say in His Word. He determines what is light and what is darkness. He determines the right way to live and the wrong way to live. Living as a child of light means remembering our relationship with our Heavenly Father. It means spending time hearing, studying, and even memorizing His Word, the Bible. It means spending time in prayer.

When we remember our relationship to the Light, Jesus Christ, that we have become light in the Lord, we can look to the light found in the Bible. When we follow that Light and walk as children of light we will want what pleases God. What pleases God? He tells us in His Word, the Bible. What pleases God is spelled out in the commandments. Put by God another way: "Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law." Or put another way by God: "Do not neglect to do good....for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." Faith in Jesus Christ produces the fruit of faith – helping the elderly neighbor, lending a listening ear to the frightened man, woman, or child, caring for and playing with the kids, cooking the meal and washing the dishes, praying for the people around you.

Today, the Apostle Paul reminds us who we are. Light in the Lord. And he calls us to reflect that light by walking as children of light.

“Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”