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"Wake Up"

Ephesians 5:13-20

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5:13 But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. 14 This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

We've talked a lot about what happens when we keep things hidden in the darkness. The guilt of one moment turns into the monster of shame. The unspoken feelings of hurt turn into monsters of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. The unspoken words of how we were abused turn into monsters of worthlessness, abandonment, and rejection. Expose them. Bring them into the light.

Wake up, friends. Speak about what you've done, what has been done to you, and how you feel. Take what is dead, what is wounded and suffering in you, and bring it into the light. Talk about it. Pray about it. Stop hiding, ignoring, and numbing the pain you're carrying. Wake up! But how? Our relationships with each other matter.

Jesus is inviting you to bring your pain into the light so He can heal you and love you back to life through your friends. That's when you start to shine. The brightest light we shine to our loved ones is the goodness of God, which occurs when we allow Him to take our pain and heal it for our good and His glory. We shine because that which was killing us in the darkness has now been transformed by Jesus. It's proof that Jesus and His love for us is real, and that He truly resurrects the dead.

5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

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Ephesians 5:13-20

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Ephesians 5:13-20

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Jesus is inviting you to bring your pain into the light so He can heal you and love you back to life through your friends. That's when you start to shine. The brightest light we shine to our loved ones is the goodness of God, which occurs when we allow Him to take our pain and heal it for our good and His glory. We shine because that which was killing us in the darkness has now been transformed by Jesus. It's proof that Jesus and His love for us is real, and that He truly resurrects the dead.

5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Psychologist Henry Cloud writes that a wise person is open to feedback, willing to ask for help from God and others, and values what is told to them enough to implement it into their life. Wisdom is taking the risk to talk, to confess, to be vulnerable. Wisdom isn't intention. It's action. Look friends, the days are evil. The stakes are real. What you do matters.

5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

We've all had parents, siblings, or friends who refused to listen to advice. They gave lip service to feedback but never actually did anything different. That's called being a fool. The only way to handle a fool is to give them consequences. We must tell them what they're doing wrong, where they're not listening, and allow them to suffer the consequences of their choices.

This takes courage because we don't want the people we love to get hurt. Yet the foolish literally need to experience the pain of their consequences so that they will learn. But what about people who don't care if they experience negative consequences?

5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery.

Debauchery is pursuing evil for evil's sake. It's not just about drinking too much, but that's a great example, because it exposes our thinking when we blow past foolishness and start choosing evil for evil's sake: "I don't care about the consequences. I don't care about the hurt I'm causing. I'm going to do this because I want to." What do you do with people who blow past foolishness and are now in the category of choosing evil?

You remove them from your life, creating firm boundaries to contain their damage. But don't do this alone. You'll need wisdom. Ask for help. Pray...a lot. But don't be mean as you separate. Your kindness, compassion, and forgiveness towards someone choosing evil shines God's light in the dark. But how do we keep choosing this wisdom?

5:18 Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- We aren't here to teach/fix each other, but to share our experiences.
- Show respect by listening to one another, asking clarifying questions.
- If you're quick to share, allow space and time for others to speak up.
- If you're slow to speak, your experience is valuable so please share.

INTRO

Invite everyone to introduce themselves and then read the Bible verses.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What part of the message and Scripture was most encouraging, and which part is most challenging?
- 2. What did You notice about God, and what did you notice about yourself as well as other people?

GOSPEL EXCHANGE (REDEMPTIVE WORK)

Jesus asks us to give Him our burdens (Matthew 11:28-29), whatever they may be (a lie we have believed about God or ourselves, our hurt or negative emotions, or even our concerns for loved ones), so He can carry them for us, giving us His peace (His completeness) in exchange.

What do you want to exchange with Jesus today?

What is the burden? "Lord Jesus, I give you my..."

What's His gift? "Lord Jesus, I receive your..."

ACTION QUESTIONS

- 1. What is one step of obedience you can take this week, based on what you've discovered today? (NOTE Consider prayerfully asking God to answer this question for you, taking 30-45 seconds to listen in silence, writing what you heard. If nothing comes clear, keep praying this week.)
- 2. During the coming week, who can you share what you learned today? (NOTE Consider repeating the same step with this question as the previous question.)



Sermon Study - Conversation Guide

January 21, 2024

"Wake Up"

Ephesians 5:13-20

This guide is a discipleship tool for personal reflection, family conversations, for home groups, and for Table Talk on Sundays @10:40 am and 12:15 pm on the Lowell Patio

5:13 But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. 14 This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

We've talked a lot about what happens when we keep things hidden in the darkness. The guilt of one moment turns into the monster of shame. The unspoken feelings of hurt turn into monsters of anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness. The unspoken words of how we were abused turn into monsters of worthlessness, abandonment, and rejection. Expose them. Bring them into the light.

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