

引言 INTRODUCTION

Humans are habitual animals. We go through a lot of motions without even thinking about them. Experienced drivers can coordinate their eyes, hands and foot like second nature. Psychologists help us understand the science behind habits. Basically, three factors are involved in habit-forming: need, behavior and reward. For example, some people eat junk food when they are stressful. They feel more relaxed afterward. That good sensation motivates them to repeat the process whenever they run into a similar situation. Over time, a habit is formed. That explains why it is hard to break old habits and start new ones. We are so used to certain routines that we believe can serve our purpose. We need to evaluate if those activities can achieve our long-term goals. Eating a bag of chips in one shot may be comforting. But it will gradually affect your health, not to mention your wallet! Perhaps walking outside, talking with a friend and praying to God are better cures for anxiety. The concept of habits is relevant to our spiritual life too. Committing sins and pursuing holiness are contrasting habits. Turning away from sin and turning to God is more than mental and behavioral changes. It is an ongoing spiritual battle. In the previous section of Ephesians, Paul describes the transition we went through when we became Christians. We have put off our old self and put on our new self. Starting from chapter 5, Paul contrasts darkness to light to emphasize the same arguments. We should no longer go back to our former way of life. Rather, we must live like children of light. We represent God in the world. Our gospel witness is effective only when we are reflective of God's glory.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 黑夜的生活型態 Lifestyle in the Night

First of all, Paul recalls the lifestyle in the night. It is how we looked like before we became a Christian. Paul says such a lifestyle is incompatible with our new nature. Look at verses 1-2: **1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.** God restored our status as His children when we received Jesus. After we are saved, we must show the character of God in our new life. The nature of God is love. Love is in direct contrast to sin. Sin is self-seeking, while love is self-sacrificing.

A. 罪的表现 The Appearance of Sin

In the subsequent context, Paul shows us the appearance of sin. He highlights a few examples of sins in the body, in the mind and in the words. With regard to the first two categories of sins, Paul says in verse 3: **But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.** Sexual immorality is not a modern thing. It has been around since the days of Genesis. Remember Paul was writing to the believers in Ephesus. At that time, it was a busy coastal city like New York. It was a major commercial, military and religious center. People there worshipped many idols. Sexual immorality was common in their rituals. In the Bible, any union outside of a marriage is considered sexual immorality. God

created Eve for Adam. God sees marriage as sacred. Sexual intimacy is a gift from God for us to enjoy, but only in the confine of a marriage. Besides sexual immorality, Paul also mentions impurity. It is a general term that covers various kinds of sins. Sin is always impure in nature because it deviates from God's original design and purpose. The third item on Paul's list is covetousness. It describes a strong urge to ask for more. We need money to survive. But the pursuit after money will lead to greed. To celebrate success is a good thing. But the crave for people's praise and recognition will cause pride. Sin does not only appear in the body and in the mind, it can also appear in words. Paul continues in verse 4: **Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.** Filthiness can be understood as obscenity. It ties in with sexual sins mentioned earlier. Foolish talk is some silly remarks. Sometimes we say meaningless things just for the sake of talking. Crude joking is to make fun of others by looking down on them. We can think of demeaning comments about people with certain characteristics. Paul reminds us that words that tear people down should not come out of our mouths. Instead, we should give thanks. The word can refer to gratitude toward people or God. If we get into the habit of showing appreciation to others, then it will leave little room for criticism. If our hearts and lips are filled with praise to God, then there will be fewer complaints. We shift our focus from ourselves to others and to God. We pay attention to something we should admire rather than to disapprove.

B. 罪的結局 The Consequence of Sin

God is holy and righteousness. He will hold people accountable for their sins. Therefore, sin has its consequence. Paul gives us a two-fold warning here. He says in verse 5: **For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolator), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.** Paul repeats the same three sins he mentions in verse 3. He also equates people who covet with idol worshippers. People who bow down to false gods are more than likely self-centered. They are greedy for the things they want, whether it is fame, money or materials. Paul says that people who practice those three sins have "no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." This inheritance can refer to both blessings in this life and in eternity. They do not have an eternal relationship with God. Besides sharing no inheritance in God's Kingdom, there is another similar consequence of sin. Paul states in verse 6: **...because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.** The "sons of disobedience" are in stark contrast to the children of God. People who insist on their own way will not obey God. Paul says the wrath of God will come upon them. Such punishment can occur in this life or in eternity. God can use wars, diseases, natural disasters, etc. to execute His judgment. In addition, there will be an eternal judgment to come. Those who are saved have received undeserved grace from God. Therefore, we should not be prideful and look down on sinners because we used to be like them! They need God's salvation as much as we do. Paul describes our spiritual condition before we received Christ in 2:3 of the book: **...we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.** A few things of note. First, we are all sinners before we became Christians. Second, sin triggers the wrath of God because it damages His glory. Third, by saying "once" it refers to our past. By the grace of God anyone can be changed. God is not a teacher who educates moral lessons. He is not a counselor who provides therapy sessions. God is a heart-transplant surgeon. The Bible says He replaces our heart of stone with a heart of flesh. He brings new life to our dead souls so that we can respond to His love.

Knowledge and techniques may help us become a better person. But only a new nature in Christ can make us obedient children.

2. 光明的生活型態 Lifestyle in the Light

In Christ, we said goodbye to the lifestyle in the night. We have been changed on the inside. There must be some visible changes on the outside as evidence. Therefore, Paul urges us to adopt the lifestyle in the light. Verse 8 is an over-arching statement: **For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.** God has transferred us from the dark domain to the Kingdom of Light. After our title is restored as children of light, we must live accordingly by walking with the Lord.

A. 斷絕關係 Cut It Off

First of all, we must cut off all the sins of the past. Paul tells us in verse 7: **Therefore do not become partners with them.** We must cut off any involvement with sinner in their behaviors. The word “partners” reminds us of teammates in business or sports. They work toward the same goals. They must have the same value in order for the team to succeed. However, we must not be companions with sinners as we walk in the light. Rather, we should partner with the Holy Spirit and follow His guidance. Other than not associating with sinners in their ungodly behaviors, it goes without saying that we should also cut off sin. Verse 11 reads: **Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.** Paul asks us to take both passive and active actions. We should cut off any sinful act. Instead, we should expose them, meaning the sins and not the wrongdoers. We have the obligation to report criminal activities to the police. But we should not intentionally shame people for their bad conduct. After all, we are prone to different sins. You may not chase after name-brand products, but you may be jealous about people’s success. You may not love money, but you may love to brag about yourself. We should hate sins but love sinners like God does. By exposing sins, we remove the source of temptation, lest we may stumble on it. Imagine someone says to you: “I heard about some bad things so and so did.” You do some investigation before believing those stories as facts. Suppose that report turns out to be false. The person in question is proved to be innocent. You will protect yourself from accepting and even passing on a rumor. However, not joining non-believers in their sins does not mean we should cut off relationship with them. Paul advises us in 1 Corinthians 5:9-10 – **9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people – 10 not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.** It is impossible for us to be isolated from non-Christians since we live in the world. God does not put us on an island after we are saved. Instead, He sends us back into our circle of influence to witness for Him. Think of it this way: if all your friends are Christians, then to whom do you share the gospel? We can and should make friends with non-believers. You use godly conduct to inspire them. At the same time, you ask God for wisdom and protection so as not to be influenced by sin.

B. 身體力行 Act It Out

Besides cutting off our previous lifestyle in the night, we must also act out our lifestyle in the light. Paul encourages us in verses 9-10: **9 (For the fruit of light is found in all that is good and**

right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Paul uses the term “fruit” to describe the results when we act out our lifestyle in the light. We reap what we sow. Lifestyle in the night is characterized by self-centeredness. It may benefit us for a moment. But it may harm others and it will definitely ruin God’s reputation. In contrast, lifestyle in the light produces results that are good, right and true. Paul reminds us to discern what is pleasing to the Lord in all that we do. The key is to think before we act. We need to examine if our actions can edify others and glorify God. Paul says something to the same effect in Philippians 4:8 – **Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.** Ponder those eight virtues for a few moments. I am sure every person will say it is a noble thing to do good. But why do we not constantly act those good qualities out? It is because we are so ingrained in a protective mode. We are afraid that people may take advantage of us if we show kindness. We have concern that people may use our words to accuse us if we are completely honest. I told you before the conflicts in my former church. It is ugly, but true! At one time, we had to do audio recording at coworker meetings. That way, no one could excuse later that “I didn’t say that.” You can imagine that the atmosphere was quite tense. Everyone thought twice before speaking. After a period of time, we were tired of that practice. How could we serve the Lord together when we did not have trust? Then one time someone proposed that we did not need to record anymore. We held ourselves accountable for what we said. If we cannot love our own brothers and sisters, then how can we love outsiders? Indeed we need to stay alert and be wise when living in a fallen world. Ultimately, we commit ourselves to God. We may suffer loss when people cheat us and lie to us. But we trust that God will protect us. His presence is much better than any insurance policy, safety deposit and alarm system. God loves us and He will love us to the end.

結論 CONCLUSION

Our gospel witness is effective only when we are reflective of God’s glory. We must show people that we are Christians even before we tell them so. We live in the world, but we should not copy the pattern of the world. God sends us children of light into a dark world. We may think that the little kindness one believer displays may not matter much. But if your godly conduct encourages other Christians to do the same, the result will be significant. We can demonstrate that by a simple experiment. May I ask someone to turn the sanctuary light off? Pull out your cellphone and turn the flashlight on. Imagine this dark room is our world, and each light is a Christian. When God lights up our lives, we can make a difference. Jesus says: “You’re the light of the world. Let your light shine before others.”

引言 INTRODUCTION

人類是慣性的動物。有很多動作我們甚至不假思索地就做出來。有經驗的司機可以很自如地協調他們的眼睛、手和腳。心理學家幫助我們了解習慣是如何形成的。基本上有三個因素：需求、行為和獎勵。例如，有些人感到有壓力時便會吃垃圾食物。之後他們感覺比較放鬆。於是每次他們遇到類似情況時便重複整個過程。久而久之，習慣就形成了。這就解釋了為什麼很難打破舊習慣並開始新習慣。我們不斷在做某些事情，以為它們可以達到我們的目的。我們需要評估這些行為是否真的有益處。一次吃掉一包薯片可能很過癮。但它會逐漸影響你的健康，更不用說你的錢包！也許出去散步、與朋友傾訴和向神禱告是解決憂慮的更好方法。習慣這個課題也與我們的屬靈生命有關。選擇犯罪和追求聖潔是兩個極端的習慣。遠離罪惡並轉向神不只是心態和行為上的改變，也是一場持續的屬靈爭戰。在以弗所書的前一部分中，保羅描述了我們成為基督徒時所經歷的轉變。我們已經脫去舊人，穿上了新人。從第五章開始，保羅對比黑暗與光明來強調相同的重點。我們不應該再回到以前的生活方式。相反，我們必須活得像光明的子女。我們在世上代表神。只有當我們反映神的榮耀時，我們的行為見證才會有果效。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 黑夜的生活型態 Lifestyle in the Night

首先，保羅回顧黑夜的生活型態。那是我們成為基督徒之前的樣式。保羅說那樣的生活型態與我們的新生命不相符。請看 1-2 節：**1 所以，你們該效法神，好像蒙慈愛的兒女一樣。2 也要憑愛心行事，正如基督愛我們，為我們捨了自己，當作馨香的供物和祭物，獻與神。**當我們接受耶穌時，神恢復了我們作為祂兒女的地位。我們得救之後，必須在新生命中彰顯神的品格。神的本質就是愛。愛是與罪直接相對的。罪總是自我中心的，而愛是自我犧牲的。

A. 罪的表現 The Appearance of Sin

接下來，保羅告訴我們罪的表現。他提出一些身體、思想和言語上的罪。關於前兩類的罪，保羅在第 3 節說：**至於淫亂並一切污穢，或是貪婪，在你們中間連提都不可，方合聖徒的體統。**淫亂並不是現代人的東西，它從創世記時代就已經存在了。請記住，保羅是寫信給以弗所的信徒。那個城市在當時就像紐約一樣，是繁華的沿海區域。它是一個主要的商業、軍事和宗教的中心。那裡的人們崇拜許多偶像。淫亂的行為在他們的儀式中很常見。在聖經中，婚姻以外的任何關係都被定為淫亂。

神為亞當創造了夏娃。神看婚姻為神聖的。親密關係是神給我們的禮物，但只能在婚姻的範圍內享受。除了淫亂之外，保羅也提到了污穢。它包括各種其他的罪。罪的本質總是不潔淨的，因為它偏離了神最初的設計和目的。保羅列出的第三項罪是貪婪。它描述了要求更多的強烈慾望。我們需要錢才能生存。但對金錢的追求會導致貪婪。慶祝成功是一件好事。但渴望人們的讚賞和認可會引起驕傲。罪不僅發生在身體和心靈上，也可能出現在言語中。保羅在第 4 節繼續說：**淫詞、妄語，和戲笑的話都不相宜；總要說感謝的話。**淫詞可以理解為污穢的言語。它與之前淫亂的罪有關。妄語就是一些沒有益處的廢話。有時我們只是為了說話而講一些無意義的話。戲笑的話是一些貶低別人的笑話，例如一些針對別人特徵的形容。保羅提醒我們不應該出口傷人。相反，我們應該說感謝的話。這個字可以指對人或對神的感激。如果我們養成了讚賞別人的習慣，那麼就不會留下批評的空間。如果我們的心和嘴唇充滿對神的讚美，那麼抱怨就會減少。我們將注意力從自己轉移到別人和神身上。我們集中看一些藉得欣賞而不是否定的事物。

B. 罪的結局 The Consequence of Sin

神是聖潔、公義的。祂會追究人們罪的責任。因此，罪有它的結局。保羅在這裡給我們雙重警告。他在第 5 節說：**因為你們確實的知道，無論是淫亂的，是污穢的，是有貪心的，在基督和神的國裡都是無分的。有貪心的，就與拜偶像的一樣。**保羅重複了他在第 3 節提到的三種罪。他也把貪婪的人與拜偶像的人等同起來。敬拜假神的人很可能是以自我為中心的。他們可能貪心名譽、金錢或物質。保羅說，犯這三種罪的人「在基督和神的國裡都是無分的」。這些產業可以指今生和永恆的祝福。那些人與神沒有永恆的關係。除了無法分享神國的祝福之外，罪還有另一個類似的結局。保羅在第 6 節說：**...因這些事，神的忿怒必臨到那悖逆之子。**「悖逆之子」與神的兒女形成鮮明對比。堅持己見的人不會順服神。保羅說神的忿怒會臨到他們。那些懲罰可能發生在今生或是在永恆。神可以用戰爭、疾病、天災等方式來執行祂的審判。此外，將來還會有永恆的審判。已經得救的人領受了神格外的恩典。因此我們不應該驕傲並看不起罪人，因為我們曾經也像他們一樣！他們和我們一樣都需要神的拯救。保羅在書中 2:3 描述我們信耶穌之前的屬靈光景：**我們從前也都在他們中間，放縱肉體的私慾，隨著肉體和心中所喜好的去行，本為可怒之子，和別人一樣。**有幾點值得注意。首先，我們在成為基督徒之前都是罪人。其次，罪會惹起神的憤怒，因為罪玷污了神的榮耀。第三，「從前」就是指我們的過去。靠著神的恩典，任何人都可以改變。神不是一位道德教育的老師。祂不是提供治療課程的專家。神是一位心臟移植的外科醫生。聖經說神用肉心代替我們的石心。祂為我們死去的靈魂帶來新的生命，使我們能回應祂的愛。知識和技巧可以幫助我們成為一個更好的人。但唯有在基督裡的新性情才能使我們成為順服的孩子。

2. 光明的生活型態 Lifestyle in the Light

在基督裡，我們告別了黑夜的生活型態。我們的內心已經改變了。我們的外在也必須有一些變化作為證據。因此，保羅勸勉我們要顯示光明的生活型態。第 8 節是一句總括性的經文：**從前你們是暗昧的，但如今在主裡面是光明的，行事為人就當像光明的子女。**神已經把我們從黑暗的權勢轉移到光明的國度。當我們恢復光明子女的名份後，我們必須與主同行，過相應的生活。

A. 斷絕關係 Cut It Off

首先，我們必須與過去的罪斷絕關係。保羅在第 7 節告訴我們：**所以，你們不要與他們同夥。**我們必須切斷與罪人的任何牽連。「同夥」這個字讓我們想起做生意或運動中的團隊。成員朝著共同的目標努力。他們必須持有相同的價值觀才能使團隊成功。然而，當我們行走在光明中時，我們不能與罪人作伴。相反，我們必須與聖靈同行並跟隨祂的帶領。除了不與罪人的不敬虔行為同夥之外，當然我們也應該斷絕罪惡。第 11 節說：**那暗昧無益的事，不要與人同行，倒要責備行這事的人。**保羅告訴我們，我們需要採取消極和積極的行動。首先，我們應該斷絕一切罪惡行為。另外，我們應該揭露罪。這裡指的是責備罪惡，而不是責備犯罪的人。例如我們有義務舉報罪案，但我們不應該故意羞辱別人的不良行為。畢竟，我們都會犯不同的罪。你可能不會追逐名牌，但你可能會嫉妒別人的成功。你可能不愛錢，但你可能愛吹噓自己。我們應該像神一樣恨惡罪，但愛罪人。藉著揭露罪惡，我們消除了試探，免得我們被它絆倒。假設有人和你說：「我聽說某某人做了一些壞事。」在接受那是事實之前，你做一些調查。比如你證實根本沒有那回事，而當事人是無辜的。這樣你便保護自己不相信甚至散播謠言。然而，不與非信徒一起犯罪並不等於要與他們切斷關係。保羅在哥林多前書 5:9-10 中勸勉我們：**9 我先前寫信給你們說，不可與淫亂的人相交。10 此話不是指這世上一概行淫亂的，或貪婪的，勒索的，或拜偶像的；若是這樣，你們除非離開世界方可。**我們生活在世界中，因此不可能與非基督徒隔離。我們得救後，神並沒有把我們放在荒島上。祂乃是差派我們到不同的場所為祂作見證。想想看：如果你所有的朋友都是基督徒，那麼你向誰傳福音？我們可以而且應該與非信徒交朋友。你用敬虔的行為來感染他們。同時，你祈求神賜智慧並保護你，免受罪的影響。

B. 身體力行 Act It Out

除了切斷我們以前在黑夜的生活型態之外，我們還必須身體力行，表現出光明的生活型態。保羅在 9-10 節鼓勵我們：**9 光明所結的果子就是一切良善、公義、誠實。10 總要察驗何為主所喜悅的事。**保羅用「果子」來形容我們在光明的生活型態中的結果。所謂種瓜得瓜，種豆得豆。黑夜的生活型態的特徵是自我中心。它可能會讓我們暫時得益處。但是可能會損害別人，也一定會敗壞神的名聲。相比之

下，光明的生活型態會產生良善、公義和誠實的結果。保羅提醒我們在一切事上要辨別什麼是討主喜悅的。關鍵是我們在行動前要謹慎思考。我們需要看看自己的行為是否能夠造就別人並榮耀神。保羅在腓立比書 4:8 中也說了同樣的話：**弟兄們，我還有未盡的話：凡是真實的、可敬的、公義的、清潔的、可愛的、有美名的，若有什麼德行，若有什麼稱讚，這些事你們都要思念。**這裡提到八種美德。每個人都認同行善是一件好事。但我們為什麼沒有常常把這些特質表現出來呢？原因是我們有根深蒂固的自我保護模式。我們擔心如果表現出善意便會吃虧。我們恐怕如果完全的誠實，人們可能會用我們的話來攻擊我們。我跟你們說過我在以前的教會發生的紛爭。雖然很難看，但卻是事實！有一段時候，我們在開同工會議時必須錄音。這樣的話，事後就沒有人能說：「我沒那樣講過」。你可以想像，當時的氣氛是相當緊張的。大家在說話前都要想清楚。沒有多久，大家都厭倦了那種做法。如果我們不能互相信任，又怎麼能一起事奉主呢？後來有人建設不要再錄音了。我們對自己所說的話負責。如果我們不能愛自己的弟兄姐妹，又怎麼能愛教會外面的人呢？事實上，我們在墮落的世界生活時需要保持警惕並需要有智慧。最終，我們將自己交託給神。如果人們欺騙我們、對我們撒謊時，我們可能會蒙受損失。但我們相信神會保護我們。祂比任何保險計劃、保險箱和警報系統都要好得多。神愛我們，祂會愛我們到底。

結論 CONCLUSION

只有當我們反映神的榮耀時，我們的行為見證才会有果效。在我們告訴人們我們是基督徒之前，我們必須表現出相應的行為。我們生活在世界中，但我們不應該跟從世界的模式。神把我們這些光明的子女放在黑暗的世界。我們可能認為，一個信徒所表現出的一點美善可能微不足道。但是如果你的敬虔行為能激勵其他信徒，結果將會產生巨大的功效。我們可以用一個簡單的實驗來證明這一點。我可以請那一位同工關掉大堂的燈嗎？請大家拿出你的手機並打開手電筒。想像這個黑暗的房間就是我們的世界，每一盞燈都是一個基督徒。當神照亮我們的生命時，我們就能帶來改變。耶穌說：「你們是世界的光。你們的光應該照在人前。」