

**Sunday July 10<sup>th</sup> 2016**  
**Walk in the Light**

**Romans 13:11** *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

It was night three of the race, my feet were hurting, I had slept only two hours in the past 2 ½ days, and I was heading out on what would be an all-night trek through Florida forest and swamps. My teammate and I had been running, biking, and paddling for over 60 hours and still had over 15 hours of racing to go. Thirty teams had set out three days earlier from Honeymoon Island on Florida's west coast and would continue non-stop to a finish line in Cocoa Beach on Florida's east coast over 400 miles away. We were competing in the Sea to Sea Adventure Race - and it was proving to be the toughest physical challenge I had ever faced. However, as we headed out on that section of the course we found ourselves near the front of the pack and knew the possibility of finishing on the podium was in play. As the navigator it was my job to lead the team to each check point along the course, using only map and compass. After checking the map we headed out on what would be a 30-minute trek down a lonely Florida highway before turning into the woods and onto trails that would take us to our first checkpoint. It was about 11 pm and my teammate Erik was starting to lag behind. Although we had stopped to sleep for two hours that morning he had been unable to rest and it was now catching up with him. We decided that once we reached the trails he could lie down and sleep for 20 minutes while I worked on the maps. After 30 minutes of trekking down the long straight section of highway I once again checked my map, confused as to why the highway was starting to bend to the west. A sudden realization hit me like a train - in my sleep-deprived state I took my teammate and I in the complete opposite direction...I don't know how, perhaps I flipped the map in my hands before taking my compass bearing. After sharing my revelation with my teammate he just looked at me and said,

“I have to sleep now”, and promptly laid down in a ditch on the side of the road and began to snore. I sat down beside him and spent the next 20 minutes trying to come to grips with the situation. Had I just caused us to run our race in vain?

No matter how our good intentions may be, having the wrong perspective can lead us in a direction we do not want to go! As we have seen over the last two weeks in our studies, we must see the world through the lens of the scriptures. In other words -- everything we do, everything we think, everything we know, should all be interpreted by God’s Word. With this in mind we are going to spend some time this morning looking at how Satan works to try to prevent us from having the right perspective. And as a counter to his efforts we will also look at how we can have victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, keep our focus and stay on the right path –

**Jeremiah 6:16** *Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls.*

First let’s remember that Satan is currently the ruler of this world and will remain as such until the return of Christ and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom. God has placed Satan in this position and God alone will subsequently remove him.

**Daniel 5:21b** *till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses*

Over the past 2000 years a great deception has been orchestrated and perpetuated with regards to the Christian’s true identity in Christ. For the most part Christians do not understand the reason for their creation, nor the purpose for their eternal salvation and the Church does not teach the truth of Scripture regarding God’s future plans. We know from God’s Word in Genesis that man was created to rule-

**Genesis 1:26-28** *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28Then God blessed*

*them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

And yet because of the sin in the garden that right to rule was never held by Adam and that which was lost has yet to be restored. Satan, the god of this age, is still ruling over this earth and will continue to do so until God removes him and man is restored to his rightful position as God intended –

**1 John 5:19** *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*

This realization that God is restoring Man to the position of rulership for which he was created is one that Satan and his angels understand perfectly. And because this knowledge will one day be their undoing, they are currently working against anything that brings this knowledge to light. It is their aim that we walk in darkness and not in the light (the knowledge of the truth- our true identity as a son of God in training to be adopted as a firstborn son.)

Currently though we find ourselves in a time of spiritual darkness- because the world is being ruled by Satan and his angels.

**Ephesians 6:12** *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the **darkness** of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

However, in the process of restoring Man, God has called us away from this darkness and has commanded us to walk in the light.

**Ephesians 5:8** *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light*

To shed more light on this (pun intended) - let's look at the parable of the wise and foolish virgins in Mathew 25.

**Matthew 25:1-13** *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*

*6“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ 7Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ 10And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11“Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ 12But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

This is another parable about ‘the kingdom of heaven’ and in it Christ is represented by the bridegroom and Christians are represented by the wise and foolish virgins. The absence of the bridegroom represents the time of spiritual darkness seen in Ephesians 6; the time we find ourselves in currently, as Christ is still sitting at the right hand of the Father and has not returned for His bride.

The foolish and the wise virgins, represent all Christians, and are only differentiated by having the extra supply of oil or not. The wise virgins are properly prepared having the extra supply of oil and thus did not allow their lamps to go out. The foolish virgins were not prepared, and consequentially missed the coming of the bridegroom and were denied entrance to the marriage feast.

God’s has given each of us a “lamp”, His Word, so that we can find our way in the darkness of this present age.

**Proverbs 6:23** *For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life,*

David writes in **Psalms 119:105-112** *Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path. 106 I have sworn and confirmed That I will keep Your righteous judgments. 107 I am afflicted very much; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your word. 108 Accept, I pray, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, And teach me Your judgments. 109 My life is continually in my hand, Yet I do not forget Your law. 110 The wicked have laid a snare for me, Yet I have not strayed from Your precepts. 111 Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever, For they*

*are the rejoicing of my heart. 112 I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes Forever, to the very end.*

David knew that he was living in a world full of darkness and that it was only through the Word that he was able to see. The Word illuminated his path, allowing him to see where to walk. And the verses that follow show that David recognized that it is only through the Word that he could be revived from affliction and kept from the snares laid by the wicked one –

**Acts 13:2**...*'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'*

God has given us everything we need to navigate our way through this dark world by giving us His Word and His Holy Spirit to be our guide.

**2 Peter 1:3-4** *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

**2 Corinthians 4:6** *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Given that God's Word is the light that reveals not only our true identity but also Satan's- it should come as no surprise that Satan seeks to deceive Man through the distortion of God's Word. In Genesis Chapter 3 we see for the first time Satan at work in this manner- deceiving Eve so that she ate the fruit.

**Genesis 3:1-6** *1Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"2And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"4Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."6So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.*

We see here that Satan is using the Word (that which God had spoken to Adam regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) to deceive Eve. This is a first-mention principle that establishes how Satan will always appear-distorting God's Word in order to deceive.

In Matthew Chapter 4 we see this exact same thing when Satan tempts Christ in the desert.

**Matthew 4:1-11** *1Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. 3Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' " 5Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " 7Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' " 8Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." 10Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' " 11Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.*

In the same manner as in the Garden, Satan uses the Word in an effort to deceive. Christ resists Satan however, through the Word as He is the Word made flesh. And this is exactly how we are to resist Satan- through the epignosis knowledge of God's Word!

**Psalms 119:11** *Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.*

Satan seeks to blind Christians from seeing the truth that would reveal to them who he is and prevent them from seeing the gospel of the glory of Christ.

**2 Corinthians 4:3-4** *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe,*

*lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

Scripture also tells us that Satan masquerades himself in light and righteousness. In warning the church to beware of false apostles, Paul says in **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*

By studying what God reveals in His Word through the way He has given it to us, we therefore can walk in the light and we can have the perspective required for having victory in this life. Victory that will lead to the realization of our inheritance. The world must be seen through the lens of the scriptures, so that what is darkness might be brought to light.

It was 30 minutes and 2 miles of walking in the wrong direction that night before the “darkness” I was walking in was brought to light. In the moments before realizing what I had done I struggled to understand why the map wasn’t adding up to what I was seeing and what my compass was saying. I tried to make it work in my mind, willing the compass to reverse its poles and spin in the direction I was headed. But it was no use, I was walking in the wrong direction and the only way to get where I wanted to be was to stop, turn around, and begin the long trek back. I let Erik sleep for 20 minutes before waking him (more like violently shaking him and yelling to get him to move). When he finally stood up I realized he no idea what had happened and explained to him again what I had done and that we were now over an hour behind our competition. What we did in the next 10 hours would end up defining our race. Erik and I began to run (actually a slow, hobbled jog is more accurate). We knew we had to make up time. We also knew that it would be a long night for all the teams ahead of us as well and that anything could happen. I knew we had to keep the mentality that we were still “racing”. So that’s what we did- we trekked through the night and steadily passed team after team as we made our way into final transition area where we would get on bikes and ride to the finish. As the sun came up we arrived to find out that our closest competition had been overcome with their own sleep deprived navigation issues- and we had now secured a position on the podium.

I share this story with you to say- If you are walking in darkness, living a life deceived by Satan, stop! Turn around- and begin walking in the light!

**1 Corinthians 9:24** *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body*

Perhaps you are reading the scriptures the same way that I tried to read my map. I tried desperately to make the map match what I wanted to see, in the direction I was headed. Satan tempts us to do the same thing with God's Word, using scriptures to support our own thoughts and agendas.

However, we must let scripture interpret scripture, seeking to understand it while being led by the Holy Spirit –

**Isaiah 28:10** *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, Line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little."*

**1 Corinthians 2:13** *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

During the race the map was the lens through which I had to interpret the land in front of me. In the same way the scriptures are the lens through which we must interpret the world we live in.

If we do this- we can receive the promises that God's has laid out for us. We can receive our inheritance in that future day when God restores man to positions of rulership in the heavenly kingdom as joint heirs with Christ.

One final point regarding navigating with a map - often in a race the most direct way to get to where you want to go is to take a bearing, or a compass heading, and then to follow that bearing for a certain distance. The most critical part of this tactic is remaining on the bearing while you travel. In an open field with no trees or brush this is easy. But in a dense forest or swamp this becomes quite the task. The team has to slow down and focus more on the course than on our speed. Coming off the bearing, even by just a couple

degrees, will send you farther and farther off course the longer you travel. What begins as a small mistake grows exponentially if not corrected.

The same principal exists regarding the study of God's Word. Studying apart from the guidance of the Holy Spirit and leaning more on man's interpretation (rather than letting scripture interpret itself) can lead us to deviate from God's intended message. And the longer we neglect the proper study of scripture the farther we find ourselves from where God is leading us.

**2 Peter 1:19-21** *And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

I'd like to close with a final admonishment from Paul to the Philippians.

**Philippians 2:14-16** *Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you **shine as lights in the world**, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I **have not run in vain or labored in vain**.*

- Hold fast to the Word- love it more than life itself, for it is of more value than anything in this world
- Don't run or labor in vain- make what you do now in this world matter for the time to come- when the Sons of God are revealed

**Romans 8:18-19** *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*

- Shine as a light in the world- Live your life in a way that you shine amongst the darkness

**John 12:46** *I have come as a **light** into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in **darkness**.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:5** *You are all sons of **light** and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of **darkness**.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:4** *But you, brethren, are not in **darkness**, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.*