

In this short section of Paul's letter to the Ephesians the Apostle describes here the theme of light as he contrasts what he calls the fruit of light with the works of darkness.

Verse 8 says: For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

In other words, Paul says that having believed the Gospel, the identity of these Ephesian Christians has changed so much that they're no longer the people they once were.

He says for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

During this current outbreak of corona virus, we've seen something of the contrast Paul talks about.

So, for example there've been some genuine acts of kindness and community spirit as people have looked out for each other

But we've also seen some pretty ugly and selfish behaviour, as we've witnessed panic buying, people hoarding food and toilet rolls, and even stealing hand gels from hospitals.

And so, this crisis gives Christians an opportunity to be different.

You see in time of trouble Christians should be the very best citizens.

Paul says for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

In other words, says Paul, be who you are, by being different from what you were!

Or to use the analogy of Jesus, Christians are to be like salt, men and women who are called to prevent decay by loving, befriending, and caring for their neighbours as they live out the Gospel and reflect the light Christ in a dark world.

So, during this time of national crises as people struggle to cope with the devastating effects of coronavirus, let's remember who we are in Christ, as we share his love and light with people, who may be vulnerable, fearful, lonely and isolated,

Because as one Christian writer puts it:

A frightened world needs a fearless church.

So, listen to this that I read just a few days ago:

The coronavirus outbreak has shown how quickly fear can cause panic which is understandable for people who don't know Jesus. This life is all they have. But Jesus tells his people not to fear:

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. ([John 14:27](#))

And so, a few nights ago, we prayed for our neighbours and for the world. We prayed Jesus would move in powerful ways by his Spirit during these troubled times.

We prayed God would bring healing to the sick and hope to the afraid. We prayed Jesus would move his body, the church, to love their neighbours sacrificially amid their fear; that they'd love people by showing the world Christ's love. End Quote

And we can show that love by simple acts of kindness.

So, for example, for people who are having to self-isolate we could offer to go the shops for them, pick up a prescription or just make a phone call to make sure they're OK.

But more importantly we can pray and live lives that reflect the love of Jesus who gave himself for us sacrificially on a cross.

Paul says: You were once darkness; but now walk as children of light for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true.

Let's Pray.

Heavenly Father Thank you that you have called us out of darkness to live as children of light, help us to discern your will so that everything that is good and right and true might be seen in our lives. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen