

CONTRASTING WALKING IN DARKNESS WITH WALKING IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE
Part I: The PERSONAL Contrasts In NOT Doing So Versus Regularly Reading And Applying God's Word

I. Introduction

- A. At a Church like Nepaug Bible Church, one would expect to hear of the importance of heeding Scripture.
- B. However, actually **being IN** the Word takes more than hearing that it is important -- it takes **motivation**.
- C. For such **motivation**, this first of a two-part lesson series reveals the **stark contrasts** between **regularly** reading and heeding Scripture versus **not** doing so, and we **first** note the **personal contrasts** involved:

II. The PERSONAL Contrasts In NOT Doing So Versus Regularly Reading And Applying God's Word.

- A. If a person does not regularly expose himself to and apply Scripture, he walks in total spiritual darkness; if he reads and applies it, he walks in spiritual light according to Isaiah 8:20; 1 John 1:6-7 and John 8:12.
- B. A number of realities exist for the individual based on his either reading and applying Scripture or his **not** doing so, realities that **starkly contrast** the individual's **spiritual status** as follows:
 - 1. If one does **not** regularly **read** and **apply** Scripture, he walks in darkness and lives in a dangerous state:
 - a. He is spiritually ignorant of the angelic conflict and of the spiritual states of other human beings around him, including his **own** ignorance of his **own** spiritual **danger**, Psalm 82:5; 1 John 2:11.
 - b. He is insensitive to truth and error, being unable to know he can readily hold to error, Psalm 82:5.
 - c. He lacks foresight to avoid self-destructive directions in his life's path, Eccl. 2:14; Matt. 15:12-14.
 - 2. Conversely, if one **regularly reads** and **applies** Scripture, he walks in the light in a secured state:
 - a. He is insightful regarding the spiritual forces and realities he faces, Isa. 8:20; 1 Cor. 2:10-14, 15.
 - b. He has the foresight to keep himself from spiritual harm and humiliation, Pr. 22:3; Matt. 15:12-14.
- C. As a result of these contrasts, the **PERSONAL end products** of these two **states** contrast **starkly**:
 - 1. In the first place, walking in the darkness of not regularly reading and applying Scripture causes one to depart from God's upright paths, cf. Proverbs 2:13. However, walking in the light by regularly reading and heeding Scripture keeps the believer on God's upright paths, cf. Isa. 8:20 with 1 John 1:7; 2:3.
 - 2. Hence, a host of personal contrasts in one's **experience** arise from the decision of which path he takes:
 - a. In the first place, walking in the darkness eventually leads to a wretched series of events: (a) first, one runs into harm and humiliation due to his walk in darkness, so he indiscriminately goes from one counselor to another full of a sense of distress, Isaiah 8:20-21a. (b) Then, not finding sufficient insight to stay out of pain and humiliation, one who walks in darkness will become enraged at his counselors, and speak with contempt against them and even against God, Isaiah 8:21b. (c) Then, still very desperate, he will look to subordinates or godless mediums for any kind of insight only to find inadequate insight to meet his needs, Isaiah 8:22a. (d) Finally, he will go into deep depression, Isaiah 8:22b. [We get a glimpse of this process in progress in John 11:7-16: Jesus there had told His disciples to return to Judea with Him to raise Lazarus from the dead, a direction the disciples were hesitant to heed, for they reminded Jesus the Jews there had recently tried to kill Him, John 11:7, 8. Jesus responded, hinting His disciples were walking in darkness by their response to His directive, for He implied the Father would protect them were they to return to Judaea to raise Lazarus, John 11:9-10. Thomas then exclaimed in a depressing way, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (v. 16), for he was not convinced the Father would protect him in following Jesus back to Judea, for Thomas was then walking in spiritual darkness, cf. Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, fn. to John 11:8-10]
 - b. Yet, walking in the light yields blessing: (a) it yields mutual, gratifying fellowship with God and other godly believers, 1 John 1:7; (b) it keeps one clean from sin by God's grace (1 John 1:7b) and (c) his joy is complete, 1 John 1:4, 7. (d) Thus, in contrast with Isaiah 8:20-22, he enjoys freedom from great inner anger (e) and a lack of trouble with overseers and counselors as he does not speak contemptuously to them. (f) He is also free from the pain and humiliation that arise from following bad choices or bad advice as he heeds Scripture instead, and so (g) he has victory over depression.

Lesson: An **ENORMOUS** contrast in one's **PERSONAL** spiritual state and its effects in terms of the level of blessing awaits the believer based on whether he reads and heeds Scripture on a regular basis.

Application: We do well to be **MOTIVATED** to read and heed Scripture, and that on a **REGULAR** basis. Failure here can only bring **EXTREME** trouble; success can only bring **EXTREME** blessing!