



# Sermon Growth Guide

**August 15, 2021**

**Vision Sunday – Motivated for Ministry**

**Ephesians 5:8-20**

**Key Verse:** Ephesians 5:14 “This is why it is said, ‘Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead and Christ will shine upon you.’”

**Big Idea:** We are called to be a life-changing, thriving ministry of Jesus Christ in our city.

---

## Foundations

As we enter our 150th year of ministry in Colorado Springs, Pastor Tim has challenged us “to boldly follow Jesus into the next chapter of ministry for our church.” As we do that, the best place to look for guidance is Scripture. Ephesians 5: 8-20 is almost a summary of the entire letter. It describes a great deal about the promise of the gospel, the lostness of the world, and specific ways in which followers of Jesus can shine the light of Jesus into darkness.

The prominent metaphor in this passage for life-giving good news is “light.” We know what it’s like to stumble in the dark—it’s tentative and frightening. Even the smallest point of light can give some assurance of direction. But when the lights go on, there is a sense of relief in knowing where you are and seeing where you are going.

We are called to navigate in the darkness, shining Christ’s light to show others the way. That means waking up to what is going on around us. We are not called to run away from those who live in darkness but to bear “fruit of the light” for the life of the world.

That means we are kind instead of dismissive, truth-tellers instead of quibblers, good instead of selfish, pleasing the Lord rather than seeking our own desires (v. 9-10).

## Understanding God’s Word

The writer of Ephesians warns us to have nothing to do with the “fruitless deeds of darkness.” (v. 11) We rightly think of the “deeds of darkness” as visibly abhorrent evil, and they are. But how would you describe “fruitless” deeds?

Read verse 16 in several translations. What would life look like if disciples “redeemed the time, making the most of every opportunity?” Frenetic? Calm? Purposeful? Engaged, etc.?

## Applying God’s Word

It’s not enough to just “wake up.” We are to wake up to live in a way that shines light into dark places, that demonstrates that real life is possible in a broken world. That is a huge task and one that seems impossible to sustain over a lifetime. “I could do that on a mission trip or working with the homeless for a year or two, but my whole life? I’d burn out.” As you read verses 18-20, what do you discover about the source and quality of your life in union with the triune God?

## Witnessing God’s Word

As you seek to live into the things that please the Lord and which bring light into darkness, look around. What do you think you need to “wake up to” as each of us and all of us together move forward in ministry?