

Walk Honestly

The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly [walk honestly] as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. (Romans 13:12-14)

Brethren, we are living in the dispensation of the grace of God. We are also living in an evil age (Galatians 1:3-5). This seems to be a paradox, but this is a time in the eternal plan of God when He is saving us (formerly children of wrath—Ephesians 2:1-3) despite the sinful world we live in that deserves His judgment. We are exhorted to walk honestly (as translated in the KJV), or behave properly, as in the day among our fellow brethren and toward nonbelievers.

In human thought and action, sin is often associated with night; that is, we assume that darkness will hide our sinfulness. Because of our sin nature we can easily fall into or continue in the same trap. As children of God, however, He considers us as children of the day (I Thessalonians 5:5). Consequently, we are exhorted to not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness (Ephesians 5:11-12). Instead, we are to behave properly as in the day.

Not only are we to walk honestly among fellow brethren, but we are to do so toward nonbelievers with whom we associate. We are representatives of Christ and should endeavor to live in such a way that brings glory to Him and to God our Father (I Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:6-8). Are we walking as in the day or as of the night?

Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly [walk honestly] toward outsiders [nonbelievers] and not be in any need. (I Thessalonians 4:9-12)

As exhorted in the above passage, walking honestly includes leading a quiet life, attending to our own business, and working with our own hands. I believe that this addresses the difference between humility and pride, as well as the need to lead disciplined lives so that we are not an unnecessary burden on others. Do we do things to seek attention, or do we endeavor to quietly do the right thing in obedience to God? Do we gamble away our money and time, or do we perform honest work to provide for ourselves and our loved ones (I Timothy 5:8) and to be ready to help others in their time of need (Ephesians 4:28)?