

## Column

Have you ever found yourself in a dark room struggling to find the light switch, or, perhaps the electricity has gone off, and you are searching for a candle and match? I have, and it can be pretty daunting. Before accomplishing your mission, depending on how dark the room, you may well find yourself completely disoriented. Being in the dark is scary.

So was the case once when I was riding the Underground (Tube) in London. Deep in the bowels of the earth, the lights went down and my fellow passengers and I were plunged into darkness for a few seconds. Once the power was restored the thought that came into my mind was: What if this had been a real emergency?

Had I been there four days later on July 7, 2005, I would have found out. For you see, it was on this day that four crazed Islamic terrorists set off bombs in central London, killing 52 people. The line on which I was travelling was one of those affected, and no doubt those riding the Underground that day experienced more than a few seconds of darkness, or worse.

If you think about it, darkness is everywhere in our world, especially in recent days. As of the beginning of September, for example, 31 law enforcement officers have died in the line of duty from gunshot wounds. Mayhem stalks the streets of many of our cities. More than that there is more than a little darkness in even the best of us humans.

What is the answer? How are those who name Christ's name to live in such times? St. Paul gives us our answer in Ephesians 5:8: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

Here the great Apostle to the Gentiles is addressing former pagans in the first century who had come to Christian faith. His admonition to walk as children of light, however, is for all in all times.

"If it were a crime to be a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" This tongue-in-cheek question was making the rounds in Christian circles in the days of my youth. It is still worth considering.

You have been picked out of a police line up as possibly being a Christian. Answer "guilty" or "not guilty" to the following questions:

--Using the name of Jesus Christ and trying to get others to follow him?

--Worshipping (either online or in person) in a Christian church every Sunday?

--Openly reading and studying the Bible.

--Praying for the sick; calling and encouraging those unable to leave their houses; speaking out against violence; modelling civility; opposing any agenda that demeans and destroys lives.

--Giving and praying for the work and spread of the Gospel.

May we be convicted on every charge and thus counted worthy to be called 'children of light'.

*LORD, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.  
(Collect, Trinity 18, Book of Common Prayer)*

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