

Title: Light Vs Darkness (How To Live in a Sinful Society)

Text: Ephesians 5:6-14

In your Bible, I am reading from Ephesians chapter 5 beginning with Vs 6.

(Read Ephesians 5:6-14)

Prayer

In Genesis 1, God simply said: "Let there be light and there was light."
He called the light day, and the darkness night.

And then throughout scripture God takes that concept of "light" and "darkness" and makes it a moral and spiritual truth as surely as a physical phenomenon. For "light" becomes the representation of "righteousness and holiness", and God, himself." ~~You~~ I John 1:5 says that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.

^{you} God is not merely "light". But, He is light. The very presence of God, ~~evidently~~, gives off the physical phenomenon of light. For that is seen clearly in Scripture in cases of what we call Theophanies or Christophanies or appearances of God or Christ. Often there is a brilliant light. In fact we are told that there is no need of any artificial sources of light in the future in eternity for God, himself, is all the light that we will need.

But, ^{light} ~~it~~ ^{also} is a moral and spiritual truth representing "righteousness" and "darkness" ~~which~~ represents "sin." As a matter of fact, Paul uses that here in the book of Ephesians. Not only in this passage but also earlier when he told us that formerly we walked in darkness, but now we are light in the Lord.

It is amazing how often that concept is found in the Word of God...LIGHT... AND...DARKNESS.

^{clear from}
We live in a dark world whether it is day time or night time. And that darkness represents the sins of people.

In this passage there is really only two things that Paul is saying concerning HOW TO LIVE FOR THE LORD IN THIS SINFUL SOCIETY. Or, how to be light rather than darkness even though you live in a world ~~of~~ darkness.

(1) One is, that we need to recognize the danger of deception. There are people in the world telling us that what is darkness, isn't. ~~It's~~ ^{It's} O.K. It's light

(2) And the second thing that we will look at is refusing to engage in these ~~fruitful~~ deeds of darkness.

(1) So, let's start with the matter of recognizing the dangers of deception. You see, you and I can't really live in this sinful society ^{as} ~~in~~ the light, ~~and it is a dark world that we live in, we can't really do that~~ unless we recognize the danger of deception. Because there are empty words as the Bible says in Vs 6, ~~that~~ ^{that} people are using to deceive us. To try and make us think that it is O.K. to do things that God calls sin ~~and darkness~~. That you can do it and nothing will happen to you. You can do it and get away with it.

God simply says, "Be sure your sin will find you out." The light will sooner or later ~~show~~ ^{expose} the darkness whether in this life or in the life to come. You cannot escape the judgment of God. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God."

The Bible says that all things are open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to deal.

But, ^{from} people do not want to deal with that fact. And so folks come with dangerously deceitful words. And that is why Paul warns the Christians:

^{Vs 6} "Let no one deceive you with empty words." Words that have no substance and content. ^{Now} ~~And friends~~, this whole passage is talking about morality. And we live in that age, ~~don't we~~.

The words that we are hearing about morality and law. And what is right and what is wrong are empty because there is no substance to them. They are ^jwords of deception. Man does not make somethings "right" or "wrong". It is an impossibility. ~~We~~ don't have time to deal philosophical with the problem of law and immorality. But I say to you it can be proven, Philosophically, as well as theologically, it can be proven that you cannot establish a law, you cannot establish anything right or wrong, or ^I have any morality anywhere, except as you begin with the existence of a supreme being who has a right to tell ^{you} what is right and what is wrong. *And of course that substance is God.*

Empty words...I will tell what they are...They lack content because they lack submission to the creator who has a right to tell us what to do.

Morality begins with the existence of God. And any step down from that is doing just what he said whould happen. ^{deception} That is why the scriptures ~~them~~ themselves form the bases of what is really content "WORDS".

"Empty words"...they have no substance. And they are deceiving. People are trying to relate to people and saying, "Well it is O.K. as long as you don't hurt me. You can do whatever you want to."

Regardless of what God says. And that is empty and deceitful. And God says to be very carefull as to the content of what people are saying. Because often it is empty and nothing to it.

In fact, just turn over to Collossians 2 for a moment and look at Vs 8.. "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception (There are our words again---empty--no substances), according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

You can tell every time when there is an empty philophy, and emphy talk. It happens when the teaching being given is according to what men say, rather then according to what God says.

This is a very important matter.

Turn over to I Timothy chapter 6. Here we find another interesting passage. I Timothy chapter 6 verses 20 and 21..."O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called knowledge."

Now, what does God say to do about stuff that is not really His word and His truth? Hesays "avoid it. Do not have anything to do with it."

"Empty chatter and opposing argument of what is falsely called knowledge."

Do you know what God is saying? It is a big, big wast of time to agure about nothing.....Think about that for a moment. Gods little joke on the human race...Their brillent mind...

And any of you who have been to college know what I am talking about. You get into these arguments and you find yourself arguing about nothing.

There isn't any substance to anything that they are saying.

Let me give you an ~~example~~

God says to avoid this empty chatter. There is nothing to it.

Look at 2 Timothy chapter 2. He uses it again with Timothy. In Vs 16, he says, "avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead (watch this) to further ungodliness."

You get involved listening to these empty words, these deceiving words, no substance, no content to them from God's viewpoint and what will happen is that you will go astray and it will lead you into further ungodliness.

And we all need to keep coming back to what God's Word said: Is it right or is it wrong. And who said so!

God has a right to say what he says. He made us. That is why people don't want to believe in a creator. They want to deny his existence. They want to act like He is not around.

WHY? Because the existence of God immediately establishes an argument on morality. It is no wonder people want to get rid of ~~God~~. It is no wonder the dominant philosophy of this country, today, is secular humanism. Man is God. Not God. Who wants God? Who needs God? You can't see him. Get rid of Him. Who wants him in our vocabulary or our thinking.

And all Paul says is "that if you want to live for Christ in this sinful society you must face up to something." You cannot follow empty words, and deceitful words. There must be substance to what is said.

And by the way, there is something a little bit more serious here, as it relates to deception. ~~That~~ deals with the consequences as to what is done

() Look ~~back~~ at Ephesians 5:6 ~~again~~. ... "Let no one deceive you with empty words" ... WHY? ... "Because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of" ... and there should be the little article "the" in front of the next word. It is "sons of the disobedience."

He is talking about one particular kind that has caused everybody else to be corrupt. He is talking about the disobedience of ADAM.

omit He said the same thing back in chapter 2. Ephesians chapter 2 verse 1. "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the curse of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of (again) the disobedience —

Now, what does that mean? That means that there is a sin nature, a spirit that has come from Adam, himself, who did THE disobedience.

What was Adam's disobedience? Adam knowing what God had said decided to go against what God said.

SIN is a transgression of God's law's. (I John 3:4). The sons of The disobedience are everyone since Adam's time. We are born with a sinful nature. A nature bent towards self and against God's law. We are against what God says by way of our natural desires and motives.

So, we read in Ephesians 5, again, that I am not to be deceived with empty words because of these things, that they do and they say, God's wrath is going to come on all those who disobey.

So, empty words are words that when ever you see them are disobeying what God has said. When ever it occurs. It has no substance or morality to it, it is empty.

It is very interesting that when I think of this and living in a sinful society, I realize more and more the importance of what Paul is saying here.

Dear Friend
People, we are literally being brain washed by radio, by T.V. by newspapers, by friends, by business, by every means possible. We are being brain washed and deceived. [And it takes some pretty sharp Christians who know the authority of God and willing to submit to it, to say ~~that~~ when we hear *this* ~~that~~ *gosh* ~~gosh~~, THIS IS NOT RIGHT...I WILL AVOID IT....I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH IT...

Instead of letting it all just sink into your life and into your mind.

And then let it begin to control you *and think immoral is all right*

(2) Now, the second thing he says just flows out of that. If you are really convinced that God's Word has substance to it and it is the only thing not empty, then you are going to refuse to engage in sinful practices as discribed by God. And that is what verses 7 through 14 is all about.

Now, it is interesting that in these verses there are three commands. So, in order to refuse to engage in sinful practices, I do that by Following ~~three~~ three statements or commands.

(1) Command number one I find in Vs 8...I am to walk as children of light.

(2) Command number two is in Verse 11. "Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness."

(3) And command number three is in the last part of Vs 11, "Instead even expose them."

So, there are the three commands. ⁽¹⁾ Walk as Children of light....⁽²⁾ Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness....and ⁽³⁾ expose them.

If I am really going to live for the Lord, I must follow those three commands in my life. *Now, lets look at them*

Now, back to Vs 7. Paul begins by saying "therefore". In the light of the fact that we can be deceived, in light of the fact that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, "Therefore do not be partakers with them."....PERIOD....

That means to join with them....to participate with them....don't do this. Well how? How do we avoid not partaking with them? How do we live in a sinful society? How do we be in the world, but not of it?

Again...by walking...by not participating..by exposing.

Now, all three of these commands are in the present tense. That means they indicate a continual habit of life. You cannot leave this service and say, "I will get victory, today, by not participating from 1200 to 3:00 in the unfruitful deeds of darkness."

OH, NO...Paul is talking about a habit of life. A life style of not doing this. Or, as walking as children of light...Or, continually exposing... which as far as I am concerned is the number one problem in the christian world today, right now, in relation to sin. More about that in a moment. Let's look at each one of this issues...

(1) Number one, He says to "walk as children of light." What he is saying is ..respond continually to the light of God's Word. How do I refuse to engage in sin? One...by continually responding to God's Word. I must know what God says and continue to respond to it.

I have that ability, by the way, to obey God when I became a christian. There is a war going on inside of me. My old sin nature and the spirit of God. And they are waring against one another says Gal 5:16

But as a Christian I have the Spirit. I have the ability to obey God. Where as an unbeliever doesn't. An unbeliever always goes toward self and sin. But the moment I become a Christian I have a choice. And what I decide to do, I will find that the second time it is easier to do and the third time it is easier, and eventually I wind up being a slave of what I decided to do.

I cannot blame God or the devil. Because the Bible says that every person is led away by "his own lust." You see, I do make my choices. I do make my decisions. And I am faced with what God says. And I am faced with what the world says. And Satan tempts me. And I must make a decision. What I decide to do will be easier the second time. That is why it is so important the first time I face it.

And in order to break a habit that I have built up over a long period of time, let's say in sin, one often thinks that there is some sort of spiritual hyperdermic needle I can shoot into my veins and I have instant success. That is not the truth of the Scripture.

Anybody that gives you any little spiritual formula that will immediately deliver you from the habit of sin, I would watch that very carefully. Because the chances of you facing that again are very strong. Just as the progression into sin is a long and continuous habit, so also the progression into righteousness is a continuous habit of obeying God. It is a step by step. It is not worrying about what will happen 10 years from now. It is worrying about right now. What I am facing right now.

Step by step obedience. To walk by means of the Spirit as Gal. 5:16 says is walking one step at a time.

I must respond to God's Word.

Look at what Vs 7 says.. "Do not be partakers"....Vs 8.... "you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord."

(IF) What He is saying is that you have a new position. You don't have to continue ^{to sin} ~~sining~~. Your new position is clearly stated here. "FORMERLY DARKNES BUT NOW YOU ARE LIGHT IN THE LORD." *Your position is in the Lord.*

This means Two things.

Turn to I John chapter 1, please. I John chapter 1. You were formerly something...but now...you are different. We have to apply that difference, that is true. We have to live in the light of God's Word and respond to it. But by way of position a difference has been created the moment you come to Jesus as your saviour.

In I John 1:5 it says(Read Vs 5-7)

Now, there is a lot of misunderstanding about this verse. Some people believe that he is telling christians to try and go out and walk in the light. Now, that is a concept in Ephesians 5. But, not here!.

He is saying that "if we walk in the light as He is in the light." HOW FAR IS JESUS IN THE LIGHT? Half way? 3/4 of the way?....HAY! He is all the way....

If you are continually walking in the light, according to I John, you are a christian. If you are continually walking in the darkness, you are not a christian. That is why Vs 6 is important. You say that you have fellowship with Him. That means to share His life. The word fellowship means "that which we share in common."

You read the first four verses of I John 1, it is talking about eternal life. That is what I share in common with God.

If I am walking in the darkness as a habit of life, I am not a christian. That is what he is saying. And if I say that I am, then I am lying. But, if I continually walk in the light as He is in the light. That is not saying that I will not sin or you willn't have trouble along the way. But as a continually habit of life, if I am continually walking in the light as He is in the light then two things are true of me:

(1) One, I have fellowship. That is I share God's life; and (2) I have ^{Two} cleansing and forgiveness through the Blood of Jesus.

These are present possessions of every christian. It is talking about position. My standing with God.

Now, WHY IS THAT SO IMPORTANT?.....

Do you know what the devil does to us? He loves to convince us that our position is not true....He loves to make you and me believe that some how because of what I do or I don't do in my life, that ~~I am no longer what God says I am.~~ *not determine whether*

Now, I can be rotten today. And I have the potential(don't say AMEN).... I have the potential to really be rotten, today. I mean I tell you that I could really let it roll.

And you know, the devil would love, under those circumstances to say, "Bill, there is no way...there is no way that you could claim to be perfect in Jesus Christ." *Because you are rotten*

Now, you see, you must be carefull here as you live the christian life. In your effect to understand one truth, you might denie another one.

No matter what I do as a believer, I am already forgiven by Jesus Christ. *no christ life* is not based upon my performance, dear frinends, it is based upon what Jesus did at the cross. PRAISE GOD...

That is the only comfort and encouragement I have at times. CLEANSED... FORGIVEN....I AM PERFECT IN CHRIST...My position was "FORMERLY DARKNESS"... NOW...IT IS LIGHT IN THE LORD.

The trouble is that I still have this old sin nature to worry about. It is there. And it will continue to brother me untill the Rapture of the church or untill I am with the Lord. It will never be taken away.

So, I must struggle with this problem. And so do you.

Now, let's come back to Ephesians 5. And please don't mix up "position," *how* (2 F) The second thing deals with you pattern of life. First, your Poistion.. You were formerly darkness, now you are light. Now, here comes the application. Here comes the command. "WALK....OR, CONTINUE TO ^{LIVE} ~~WALK~~ AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT:"

1/55 If you are a child of light, if you have really come to know Jesus, now he is telling you to continually walk that way. And the only light is God's light. "Thy word is lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

WHERE DO I GET THE LIGHT? From God's Word. God shows me the light. WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT.

That is why we say that the first way in which I can live in this sinful society for God, instead of for sin, the number one way is by responding to the light of God's Word. WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT.

You say, "Well, how do you really know that you are?" "What is the proof?" Well, he gives you the proof in Vs 9 by saying.. "For the fruit (that is the product of one that walks in the light) the fruit of the light is in three areas... HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THAT IN VS 9? There are three things that prove that you are really walking as God wants you to.
 a) goodness
 b) neighbor
 c) truth
 (1) One, "in all goodness"..... The Bible says that when Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, he went about doing good. "In all goodness"... Goodness is named as the fruit of the Holy Spirit in Gal. 5:22.

In all ¹⁾ goodness and ²⁾ righteousness and ³⁾ truth. Three things that prove that you are really responding to the word of God in your life *and you are walking in the light*

"Goodness" comes from the Holy Spirit. We have to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We have to be controlled by the Spirit of God to be good. Do you realize that. When you are not controlled by the Spirit you are bad.

I know that in this day, bad is good. But I am thinking of the old sins. BAD IS BAD....O.K.

It is interesting that in Romans 15:14 it says that until you are filled with all goodness you don't have the ability to admonish other Christians. To counsel them. We can't deal with one another unless we are filled with goodness.

(2) And righteousness. This word is used over 92 times in the Bible. Certainly there is a righteousness that I have when I come to know Jesus as to my standing before God. I have been declared righteous.

But, there is also a practical righteousness. Jesus said of the Scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 5:20 .. "unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

But he also said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." He said, "blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied."

There is a practical righteousness, just like there is a position one.

I am to be righteous before God. 2 Timothy 3:16 says that "all scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness."

You say, "What is righteousness?"

Well, in the simplest language that I can come up with it means...
"DOING RIGHT!"

How do I know that I am really living for the Lord? How do I know that I am really responding to God's Word? When goodness characterizes my life; and when I am doing what is right.

WELL, HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT? What is right is found in God's Word (3) Then we come to truth. And of course TRUTH is the opposite of "empty words". Paul said in Ephesians 1:13 that these Christians had come to know the Lord by believing in the message of THE TRUTH.

In Chapter 4 of Ephesians verse 15 Paul says "speaking the truth in love Vs 25.. "Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speaking truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another."

Vs 21 says "if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus."

Jesus said "I..AM..THE..TRUTH..and no man can come to the Father except by me."

Jesus said in John 17:17 in his prayer to the Father, "Sanctify them through thy Word. For thy word is truth."

The Psalmist said "The sum of that word is truth."

Jesus said, "The truth will set you free."

Truth is the opposite of a lie...a deception...

Goodness, righteousness, and truth is the proof that I am walking as a Child of light...that I am responding to the Word of God.

() But there is one ^{more} thing. And that deals with motive. And that deals with your pleasing the Lord, as you respond to God's Word. Why are you doing that? Sometimes we do it with a slavish duty to Christian principles, rather than understanding the issue is the Lord. My accountability to Him..My responsibility to Him..

Read vs 10

Ephesiand 5 verse 10 says "Trying to learn" Acturally the word there is "to prove". Literally it means "the proving of a metal." The metal is tested for impurities. If there are none, it is then said to be ~~good~~ ^{good} for use. So when it is used here you are saying, ⁴ I prove by the way that I live, I come through a life style that is honoring the Lord, and there are no impurities in it, therefore, I prove that I am pleasing to God.

You know, that really fasinated me. God is really pleased when we live the way he wants us to. I can prove that I am plaeseing to God by being obedient to His Word. And I don't even have to ask about it. I don't have to say, "Lord, just show me that you are pleased with me." I don't have to ask that. I can prove it, if I obey God's Word. AND...THAT...PLEASES..GOD.

Dear friends, this is so very important.

O.K. ~~We~~ ^{we} said that there were three commands. One, is to walk as childrer of light. That means....repond to the Word of God which ^{is a} ~~the~~ light to our path, the lamp for our feet.

(2) The second thing he says is in verse 11.."DO NOT PARTICIPATE."

Simply.."resist any participatèon in sinful practices." And he indicates that we cannot only do this, but indicates that it ought to be a continual fact in our life.

DO NOT CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE. ^{non sinful practices (Read Eph 4:15-32 Gal 5:5-21)} Face the fact that you can not participat in the unfruitful deeds of darkness." ^{What are they}

You say, "Well what are they"? These are unfruitful. Vs 9 says the fruit of light. So, they are the opposite of Goodness, righteousness, and truth. But we have a clear cut list of what the unfruitful deeds of darkness are....Turn back to Galations chapter 5.....

What are the unfruitful deeds of darkness that I should never participate in?...What are they.....Galatians chapter 5 verse 19...(READ 19-21)

Now, look at Vs 22....."But the fruit of the Spirit"

So, obviously we have a contrast here with the flesh which is unfruitful. You say, WHAT ARE THE UNFRUITFUL DEEDS OF DARKNESS?. We have a list in the Bible....Ephesians 5 verses 19 to 21..

So, every time you are persuaded by someone to participate in something that you have a question about say: "HOLD EVERYTHING." Pull out your New Testament and read over that list. IS that one of those things in that list?

Do you know why a lot of us get involved? When we shouldn't? It is because we don't renew our minds in the Word of God.

Friends, the number one way to resist sin is by obeying what This book says....I cannot remember everything that I have study in the Bible. And neither can you. The Bible says that our mind forgets. That is why we must renew our mind daily in the Word.

If you want to get victory over a personal sin problem in your life, and you are a christian, I suggest to you that you fill your mind with the Word of God. And even memorize the verses that are in the Bible on your particular sin.

No..it isn't a funny idea to pull out your Bible and check that list in Galations and say, "Let me see if that is one of the things that I can do?" And you read that list. "The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, and is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

No wonder we don't read our Bibles. No wonder we don't want to pay any attention to it. No wonder it is hard to have a daily time when I go to the Word of God. WHY"??? That book has power. It will renew your mind.. Some of us don't like our sin exposed. So, we stay away from the Book.

Do you want to take a stand against sin in your life? Do you want to have victory? DON'T ENGORE THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD IN YOUR MIND.

If we are going to resist participation, we need to walk as children of light..we need to recognize what are the unfruitful deeds of darkness..And that I have a choice. And if anyone is to blame for what I have done it is me. It isn't my environment...my parents,...the society in which I live.... I HAVE A CHOICE...EVERY PERSON IS LET ASTRAY BY HIS OWN LUST...

And I don't care how bad you may think it is. The Lord tells me that there is no temptation taken you such is common to man. But God is faithful. And He will not permit you to be tempted above that which you are able.

I thank God for that vesse. I never have an excuse to say to God, "God, I was overwhelmed by it. I couldn't do anything about it."

OH, NO..You can do something about it. And God in his wonderful grace gave you the Holy Spirit. An unbeliever doesn't have the Spirit of God. We have the ability by God's wonderful provision to obey him in the hour of testing and he never permits the temptation to be greater than we can bear. If we sin, we did it for a very simple reason. Because we wanted to.

You know, we would be so much happier if we would just admit that. We did it because we wanted to.

But, real freedom comes when we walk in obedience to the Word of God.' And we are filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

(3) Well, this brings us to the third command. And this is the hardest one of all. This is the one that all the christians are running away from. We are told to reveal these sinful practiaces. This isn't an oppostion. It is a command to all believers.

Ephesians chapter 5 verse 11.."but instead even expose them." This is the whole problem of confrontation. When you know that something is wrong, and it is wrong according to what God's word says, you need to expose it.

How do you live for God in a sinful society by keeping quiety and letting

people go to pot?...~~no~~! *You just Can't do That*
We need to exposing the problem. Now, that is hard to do. Because there has to be the Spirit of God controlling, There must be the sweetness of the Lord. And there has to be love.

But, the problem is that most of us have decied ~~ed~~ that we are not going to confront the sin. We are not going to expose it.

And look at what Paul says about this in vs^s 12...(READ Vs 12-14)

Now, he jis really giving us three reasons why we should confront and expose sin.

Not Now, what I am going to share at this point is for me very interesting. In is interesting in terms of the Lord's plan for sermon preparation and delievery. There is more pressure on me to keep my mouth shut then you dear folks realize.

Great pressure. And the sad thing is that Christians are clamoring up. It is a problem in society, But do you know how the devil has treaked us? He has us thinking that O.K. we are to confront other christians, but let's don't ~~confront~~ confront sin in society, after those are unbelievers and we can't do anything about it anyway.

And while we find our freedoms being cut back and cut back, a lot of christians have decided to clam up and keep quiet. DO YOU KNOW WHY? BECAUSE EVERY TIME YOU STAND UP AND SAY THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG, YOU ARE GOING TO BE THE VICTIM OF A LOT OF PRESSURE. Withdrawal....isolation.....

Do you think you have persecution?....Just stand for what is right... This is a serious issue among christians. And I read this ,, "Expose them"... WHY? Because that is the number one tendence of the old sin nature not to confront..not to expose...It is easier...It is safer....

There is only one way to avoid criticism. Say nothing...Do nothing.... and be nothing. It is the only way.

And I am concerned as a Pastor about this. Because I know that according to this text, freedom from sinful practices in our people's lives is not going to come by us being ~~at~~ quiet about what is right and what is wrong. It is not going to come.

It never does come in a persons own life. Hay, I know the power of exposeure. I know the power of that.

When you get ready to sin, do you go down to South Shore shopping center and stand out in front of everybody and say, "I would like to announce my latest sin.".....NO!!.....You are afraid that someone might see you. And you often do it in secret.

Your character is what God knows you to be. Your reputation is what people think you are.

WHY SHOULD WE CONFRONT? WHY SHOULD WE REVEAL SINFUL PRACTICES? WHY SHOULD WE TAKE A STAND AGAINST UNFRUITFUL DEEDS OF DARKNESS?

Well, Paul gives us three reasons.

(1) Oⁿe, because these things are disgracefull. V512

He says in Vs 12 "For it is disgraceful." It is a shame. By the way, shame was originally felt in the Garden of Eden between Adam and Eve and God. It is before a Holy, perfect, righteous God that we feel shame. And these things are a disgrace. They are a shame to even speak of these dirty details of what people are doing in their lives.

God is very serious about this. That word shame or disgrace is used 21 times in the N.T. Over in the book of Titus it says that we ought to rebuke these things because it is upsetting whole families.

Colossians 3:8 says "put off all anger, wrath, malice, slander, and ~~abus~~ abusive speech from your mouth." And God says that we are to confront this because it is ruining our lives. It is destroying whole families says Titus. (2) Second, because these things can only be exposed for what they really are by the light itself. You will never really be able to tell what sinful deeds really are and their consequences until you read God's Word. Only the light itself can expose them. That is what Vs 13 says, "All things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light." "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good work and glory your Father in heaven."

A light was not meant to be put under a bushel. It is to be put on a candlestick. So that it will expose the darkness. You are the salt of the earth, Jesus said. You are a light set on a hill.

In other words we are not to hide and be embarrassed about taking a stand. Instead we are to stand up and be counted. God even rewards that believer. Because according to this text the way to live for God in a sinful society is not to hide, but to take a stand. And you and I know what that means in our personal lives. It is not easy when that sin is in our life to take a stand and say, "Hay! that is wrong."

Because the more you tolerate that sin in your life, the less you want to take a stand against it. Oh, dear friends, this is a serious problem.

Turn to John chapter 3....John chapter 3 verses 19 to 21...These are the words of Jesus to Nicodemus....

John 3:19 says, "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their eyes were blind." Is that what it says?..... NO....Because what?..."their deeds were evil."

Why do people not want the light? Why don't they want to hear what God's Word says? Why? Because their deeds were evil. Now, watch this.... Vs 20.."For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should...be...exposed.... But he who practices the truth |comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

(3) ~~One final thing~~ ^{And then} Not only should we confront because these things are disgraceful and because they can only be exposed by the light; but also because the condition which these things cause can only be changed by the light of Jesus Christ.

Here is the good news. Back to Ephesians 5 again, look at Vs 14.... "For this reason it says." WHAT REASON?.....Because the light is the only thing that can expose the darkness.

"For this reason it says, AWAKE, SLEEPER.: "ARISE FROM THE DEAD."

Ephesians 2:1 says we were dead in our trespasses and sins.

^{about} By the way , the word "awake" is the same word translated "resurrection. This is talking about salvation. "AWAKE SLEEPER...ARISE FROM THE DEAD...AND CHRIST WILL SHINE ON YOU."

~~One last reference. 2 Corinthians chapter 4. @ Corinthians 4.~~ The only thing that can delivery you from what these ~~things~~ ^{sin} cause in your life is Jesus Christ, ^{who is} the light. Untill you come to Jesus with all your sin and lay it on him, until you recognize that he |paid the price of death for your sin, and ~~he~~ ^{He} is the only one who can delivery you, HAY! THE LIGHT WILL NEVER COME ON IN YOUR LIFE.

2 Corinthians 4: 3and 4 says this: " Even if our gospel is veiled, it is vieled to those|who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of christ, who is the image of God."

~~Look at~~ Vs 7... "But we have this treasure (meaning the light of Jesus), in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves."

The moment you come to know and receive Jesus you are a child of the light. The lights come on. It exposes the darkness. ^(NOW AND) as a believer you will never live successfully in this sinful world until you walk as a child of light. ^{AND} you refuse to participate in unfruitful deeds. ^{AND} you expose and rebuke these sinful deeds. Both in your life and in society and in those around you. Taking a stand for what is right....

~~SIMPLY SAY~~

That is the challenge that comes to us from God's Word - may you do God's will in your life -

Stand we may

Hymn
11 STAND UP, STAND UP FOR JESUS 616