

"The Practice of the Believer"

Ephesians 4-6

Part 13

Introduction: Jesus tells us that when He walked on this earth, He was the Light of the world.

John 8:12

¹² Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 9:4-5

⁴ I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

Now Jesus has ascended back to heaven and as His body we are the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

As we have been working our way through the letter to the Ephesians, we learned in the first three chapters about who we are IN CHRIST. Then as we stepped into the last three chapters, we have been learning how to live out what we learned in those first three chapters. The first three chapters focused upon DOCTRINE and the last three on DUTY.

Ephesians 4:1

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

We are to live in a way that is worthy of who we are IN CHRIST.

Now the last time we were in this letter we looked at Ephesians 5:8-10.

Notice Ephesians 5:8

Here we are reminded that there was a time when we WERE DARKNESS. We were not just a contributor to the darkness, but we were actually DARKNESS. But we have been saved from the darkness and we are children of light.

Notice Ephesians 5:8 again.

We are LIGHT IN THE LORD and therefore we are to live as children of light.

This now brings us to where we are today.

➤ **Living in the Light**

Notice Ephesians 5:11

The subject of this verse would be the "WORKS OF DARKNESS". We are to have no fellowship with the works or the deeds of darkness. I want to focus upon this thought because there is something in this that is very important concerning where we are in our world.

We finished up our study of Revelation a while back and in that study, we learned of a time of darkness that will come upon this earth known as the Tribulation or as the Day of the Lord.

Joel 2:1-2, 10, 31

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand:

² *A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.*

¹⁰ *The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:*

³¹ *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD come.*

Amos 5:18-20

¹⁸ *Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.*

¹⁹ *As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.*

²⁰ *Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?*

Zephaniah 1:14-15

¹⁴ *The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.*

¹⁵ *That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,*

These prophecies would find partial fulfillment in judgment that would fall upon Israel and Judah, but they also look ahead to the terrible Day of the Lord that is yet to come.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

² *For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*

³ *For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

Now, as our world moves rapidly toward the Tribulation/Day of Darkness we can be sure that we shall see the increase of spiritual darkness all around us. This means we will see the increase of the unfruitful works of darkness.

We are definitely seeing the increase of the works of darkness all around us. Sin that used to be never spoken of is now paraded in the open every single day. Just look at the LGBTQ community. The promotion of transgenderism and the promotion of abortion.

Let me read something for you from CNN News.

"The CNN "news" story by Lauren Holt states as truth that "Much of the legislation that is pending or has been adopted restricts athletes' participation in public school sports to the gender that matches the sex that athletes were assigned at birth. But it's not possible to know a person's gender identity at birth, and there is no consensus criteria for assigning sex at birth (CNN)."

This reminds me of what Paul wrote in Romans 1.

Romans 1:21-22

²¹ *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

²² *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,*

Notice what Paul wrote to Timothy.

2 Timothy 3:1

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

I point all of this out as a warning to you.

Illustration:

Have you ever been out in the blazing sun and then walked inside a darker building and not been able to see? So, you must stop and allow your eyes to adjust to the darkness they once that happens you are able to continue. You will eventually get used to the darkness.

This is exactly why I am going so far with this thought. If we are not careful, we can start to become accustomed to the spiritual darkness that is around us.

I want to take sometime to show you how this happens.

Genesis 12:10

¹⁰ *And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.*

Genesis 13:1, 5-10, 12

And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

⁵ *And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.*

⁶ *And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.*

⁷ *And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.*

⁸ *And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.*

⁹ *Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.*

¹⁰ *And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.*

¹² *Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.*

Genesis 14:12

¹² *And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.*

Genesis 19:1

And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

We can see the adjustment of Lot. He was exposed to Egypt then he chose land toward Sodom that reminded him of Egypt. Then he pitched his tent toward Sodom and then we read he sat in the gate of Sodom.

Genesis 19:15-16

¹⁵ *And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.*

¹⁶ *And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.*

Before the judgment came Lot had to be dragged from the city of Sodom.

2 Peter 2:6-8

⁶ *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;*

⁷ *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:*

⁸ *(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)*

This is what can happen to us as the darkness increases if we are not willing to separate from the deeds of darkness.

Listen to the words of one writer:

"The depths of present-day human depravity are too vile for any word in our language to describe. We are seeing not ordinary moral corruption, but evil double-distilled and compounded in weird, uncanny, and demonic combinations and concoctions of iniquity never heard of a generation ago. This putrefaction of the carcass of civilization awaiting the vultures of judgment is not confined to Skid Row; it shows up in the top brackets of society. Plenty of prodigals live morally among swine while garbed in purple and fine linen. A Bishop once said: "There is no difference in reality between the idle rich and the idle poor, between the crowds who loaf in gorgeous hotels and the crowds who tramp the land in rags, save the difference in the cost of their wardrobes and the price of their meals."

Man lives in the dark and even his nuclear flashlight cannot pierce it. We not only live in the dark, we get used to it. There is a slow, subtle, sinister brainwashing process going on and by it we are gradually being desensitized to evil. Little by little, sin is made to appear less sinful until the light within us becomes darkness—and how great is that darkness! Our magazines are loaded with accounts of sordid crime, our newsstands with concentrated corruption. We are engulfed in a tidal wave of pornographic filth. Television has put us in the dark with Sodom and Gomorrah—right in the living room. We get used to it, acclimated to it. We accept, as a matter of course, its art, its literature, its music, its language. We learn to live with it without an inner protest."

2 Corinthians 6:14-17

¹⁴ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

¹⁷ Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

Notice Ephesians 5:11b again.

Instead of fellowship with the deeds of darkness we are to reprove them. This is speaking of reproofing the deeds of fellow believers. This is church discipline. This is what is to happen when a fellow believer gets into the deeds of darkness.

Matthew 18:15-17

¹⁵ Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

¹⁶ But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

Now, there are those who say that we should never confront another believer because of sin. They are fearful of hurting someone's feelings and they say if you love them, you will not do that. The Bible says the opposite.

Leviticus 19:17

¹⁷ Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

Conclusion:

Sin within the church must be dealt with. We know the story of Achan in the book of Joshua chapter 7 and how Israel could not move forward while sin was in the camp. This is also true when there is sin in the church.

John 11:43-44

⁴³ And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

⁴⁴ And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.