



First Baptist Church Selmer

JESUS VS CULTURE: BUILDING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW • WAKE UP! •
EPHESIANS 5:8-14 • 2/11/2024

MAIN POINT

To live in the light means we must be intentional in putting off the things of darkness and putting on the things of light.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

In an average movie or TV show, how many immoral things will be shown?

Was there ever a time that you turned a movie off because of its blatant immorality? Are you more likely today to turn it off or keep watching it?

In the book, *Who Speaks for God?* by Charles Colson, he states, "Since TV is a business, it gives its customers - the public - what they want. It is a mirror image of us." It is very common today in an average movie or TV show to see adultery, promiscuity, homosexuality, violence, murder, and many other immoral acts with little regard anymore on what ages can easily access it to watch. Not only TV, but over 70% of U.S. adults access Facebook and other social media daily many times flooded by blatant immorality or words that grieve the Holy Spirit. IT IS EVERYWHERE!!!

Years ago, I befriended a devout atheist and former patient, named Mr. Tommy Cox. Mr. Tommy was an interesting individual and we became quite good friends. Through many conversations and visits, we discussed many things from religion to TV shows to everything in between. During one visit, I noticed a program running on his laptop that was called "Sin Counter."

Intrigued by the program, I asked Tommy what it was about. He said that since he didn't believe in God, he might as well be as sinful now as he could be. The "Sin Counter" was a

program that counted numerically how many immoral acts (or sins) were committed on a TV show or movie. His goal was to watch as many things as he could that would make him sin the most.

Mr. Tommy has since passed away. There is a really good chance I may never see him again but the last conversation we had was about a Bible that another coworker and I gifted him with highlighted passages in it. Maybe, just maybe, he came to a saving faith in Jesus through the power of the Word of God and the love shown to him by followers of Jesus.

But, the "Sin Counter" still intrigues me to this day. Intrigue is one word but the other is conviction. The conviction is what if my electronic devices had a sin counter on them. How many sinful things come through my television or phone that do not bring glory to God?

In Ephesians 5, the apostle Paul calls on Christians to live as lights in a world darkened by sin. God has given His children the responsibility to reflect Him and His holiness to the world to draw people to Him. In today's text, Paul helps us understand how we do this.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 5:8-10.

"8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord." (ESV)

What stood out to you about this passage?

What does it look like to live as children of the light (vv. 8-9)?

Paul began Ephesians 5 by calling his readers to imitate God. One of the ways we do this is by living as children of light who reflect God and His holiness to the world around us. The darkness of sin makes humans themselves dark (ungodly) by nature. But when sinners respond to the gospel, they become light in the Lord. Because this is true, believers should live (or walk) as children of light, characterized by what is godly and holy. We are to live according to our new nature as beings of light. In Ephesians 5:9, Paul explains that we

live as children of the light when our lives produce three types of fruit: goodness; righteousness (i.e. living in light of the Lord's commands); truth (His truth, i.e. His word.).

Living as children of light involves pleasing God instead of ourselves. How can we find out what pleases the Lord? (v. 10)

Those who have become light and who walk in the light are responsible to thoughtfully choose the right actions and attitudes. If we have previously determined to walk as children of light, we will gladly put what pleases the Lord ahead of what pleases us. We must read the Bible to get to know who God is and what pleases Him and pray regularly to hear from Him.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 5:11-14.

"11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.'" (ESV)

What are the fruitless deeds of darkness (v. 11)? How can you expose them?

How can believers expose sin without violating Jesus' command not to judge others (Matt. 7:1-5)? How can we expose sin without seeming to shine the spotlight on our own goodness?

Although light produces fruit (v. 9), darkness is fruitless; it can never produce virtue. There are only works or deeds of darkness. So what should be the attitude of children of light to deeds of darkness? Paul offered first a negative command: don't participate. This echoes what he had said in verse 7, *"Do not become their partners."* For Christians to take part in deeds of darkness was unthinkable for Paul. It should be unthinkable for us as well. Paul also offered a positive command: expose the works of darkness. The verb expose means to show something for what it really is—to unmask it. We expose the sins of others by imitating God in our own holy conduct and when appropriate by verbal discussion. Paul's command does not authorize an arrogant attitude or a critical, condemning spirit.

Can you see growth in your life in the areas of goodness, righteousness, and truth?

What could you do to more effectively welcome or cooperate in gaining these qualities?

We are to turn from sin and turn to the Lord. The better we get to know God, the more easily we know what He would desire in any given situation. God speaks to us through His Word, through prayer, through circumstances, and through the advice of mature believers.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What was the most challenging thing for you about this passage?

How has the lesson challenged you to wake up to the things of darkness we view daily?

How well is the light of your life shining in your world, and by its contrast making dark deeds obvious?

PRAYER

As you conclude your group meeting, pray that God's grace would deliver each person from sinful temptations as they seek to imitate Him. Pray that you would desire the light more than the darkness, and that you would be characterized by love and truth.

COMMENTARY

| EPHESIANS 5:8-14

5:8-10. It would be a gross inconsistency for a Christian to participate in the flagrant sins of non-Christians. The Ephesian Christians were once just like those who are disobedient. But no longer! Rather than doing deeds of immorality, impurity, and greed, they should do deeds of goodness, righteousness, and truth. Christians are no longer darkness, but children of light. Therefore, we should do deeds of light, not darkness. Only as you walk in God's light can you please Him.

5:11-14. Not only ought we not to do the same sins as those who are disobedient, but we should try to expose them. If a Christian lives in flagrant, unrepentant sin, the church is to

try to get them to turn from their sin (see Matt. 18:15-20; Gal. 6:1). Sins are exposed by shining light into sin's darkness. An amazing thing happens. Darkness can no longer hide its nature and acts in secret. All is exposed to light. Light that makes everything visible brings an even more radical element. Light turns darkness into light. This is the church's mission. Whether the people in darkness are church members or society members, the goal is to transform them completely from darkness to light.

The poetic passage in verse 14 may be a quote from an ancient hymn based on Scripture. It is not a direct scriptural quotation. A person who was participating in the deeds of darkness is to wake up and rise from the dead, meaning to turn from those deeds. "Christ will give you light" may mean that Christ is pleased with the person who turns from such deeds. He is light and the source of their light. His shining light exposes all their darkness and transforms them into light.