

TURNING ON THE LIGHT

Ephesians 5:3-14

Do you enjoy standing out in a crowd?

Do you *like* to be different?

How different should God's people be?

Our society's descending into depths of moral cesspool!

Politicians lower standard; *NOBODY* cares!

Decay infecting society is infecting the church as well.

We imitate speech & behavior of neighbors!

Why do we fall into same traps as secular society?

Kent Hughes: "**Cookie Jar Syndrome**"—Little boy's mother bakes fresh batch of cookies, places them in cookie jar: "Don't *touch them until after dinner!*" It isn't long until she hears lid move. "*What are you doing?*" Meek voice responds: "*My hand's in the cookie jar, resisting temptation!*" ***We can't resist temptation with our hand in the cookie jar!***

Open cookie jars surround us: television, DVDs, computers, place open cookie jar in front of us everyday, seducing us. When we take cookies from the jar, they rot, resulting in gangrene of the soul. Keeping our hand out of the cookie jar isn't easy!

Do we stand out because of what God's done in our life?

Paul writes church at Ephesus— where society calls out to reach into cookie jar—as "culturally-acceptable" way.

2 PURPOSES FOR WRITING:

Wants us to *know* great job God's done in us!

He's made a great change in our life!

Wants us to live like God's changed us!

Live appropriately—in view of what God's done **4-6**

How should God's work change our lives?

=> "Therefore WALK ..."

Walk in unity 4:1-16

Don't walk like pagans—attitudes & actions 17-32

Walk in love 5:1-2

If God so loved us, we should love each other

WALK IN HOLINESS 5:3-14

5:8 "Walk as children of light"

Begins from *negative* perspective:

4:17-32=>Contrast with pagans emphasizes **attitudes**

Now focuses on ungodly conduct of people without God; urges *us*: avoid it; walk in light.

Prohibition of participating in darkness 5:3-7

"Sexual immorality & all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. ⁵For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral, or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ & God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not become partners with them."

We shouldn't have *anything* to do with world's lifestyle!

What are characteristics of secular society? 5:3

1. Sexual immorality (<= prostitution)

2. Impurity (<= uncleanness)

3. Greed/Covetousness

2nd set of 3—related to how we talk—*words* we use: **5:4**

4. **Filthiness**–**shameful**, indecent talk, “*harassment*”
5. **Foolish talk**–*silly*, foolish (“**moronic**”) talk
6. **Crude joking** lit. witty, ready answer, => “**quick wit**”
degenerates into jokes with double meanings
=> dirty jokes

What does God think about ways of our society?

- 3 They’re “**inappropriate**” among God’s people
- 4 These characteristics are “**out of place**”
- 5 Such people have **no inheritance in God’s kingdom**

=> People *characterized* by these aren’t God’s children,
=> don’t receive His inheritance.

- NOT talking about how we *become* God’s children
- Talking about conduct that comes from *being* God’s children
- God’s children avoid things the world’s known for.

Greedy people worship created things,
instead of worshiping the Creator!

Give 1st place to *stuff*! –place God alone deserves!

WE shouldn’t be *characterized by* that attitude!

Not condemning to hell people who commit 1 sin!

He’s referring to lifestyle–people known for this–it’s ***who they are***.

People known for lifestyle aren’t part of family!

God’s children don’t *persist* in this lifestyle.

People who live this way are recipients of God’s anger 5:6

How then *should* God’s people act? (=>contrast)

5:4 **We should be characterized by gratitude**

Speak ***words of thanksgiving & gratitude!***

5:7 **Don't be partners with them** (in traits)!

[After showing how we should be different, tells us why.]

We're to function as light in darkness

8-11 *"At one time you were darkness, but now you're light in the Lord. **Walk as children of light**⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that's good & right & true), ¹⁰ & try to discern what's pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in unfruitful works of darkness, but instead **expose them.**"*

God designed us to be *light* in dark, to expose nature of people's deeds; bring others to light in Christ.

Malcolm Muggeridge: "When we're conscious of so much darkness in the world... Sometimes people ask me what I most want to do in the little that remains of my life." He responded: "I should like my light to shine, even if only very fitfully, like a match struck in a dark, cavernous night, then flickering out."

=> That's God's plan for His people!

It's a Fact: We are light! 8

Because of our position in Christ, that's what we are.

Not a command! He doesn't urge us to *become* light!

We can't make ourselves into what we already are!

Couple got tired of feeling in dark to find a glass, bought glasses that glow in dark, put them in cupboard, expecting to get one out that night. When they opened cupboard, they were disappointed. They still couldn't find a glass. Wife noticed writing on box: "If you want me to shine in the dark, keep me in the light." As WE expose our life to Jesus, **Light** of world, His image shines in us! **"If you want to shine in the dark, stay in light of Christ!"**

What kind of conduct does light produce? 9

- It's fruit:** 1. Goodness (doing good)
 2. Righteousness (=>Just => toward others)
 3. Truth

4 commands: in 8-11

1. Walk as children of light 8
2. Discover what pleases God 10
 As we walk in light, He produces His fruit in us,
 so we discover what pleases Him.
3. *Have nothing to do with* deeds of darkness 11a
4. **EXPOSE** deeds of darkness. 11b

Purpose of light: 12-14 *"It's shameful even to speak of things they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is **exposed** by light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, arise from the dead, & Christ will shine on you."*

Light reveals what's in dark

It shows nature of what secular society tries to hide.

People in darkness believe a lie.

Only thing that should surprise us: *we're surprised* when secular society propagates the lie!

When frustrated by extent of our degenerate society, we have to remind ourselves: ***light's most noticeable when shining in the dark!***

Light reveals what's lurking in the shadows!

Our culture tolerates everything—except intolerance!

When we accept all conduct as equal—everything's OK because people do it—we're *everyone's* friend.

But Scripture won't let us live that way!

We're light! We MUST shine in the dark!

When light does what it's supposed to do,
it lights up darkness!

It hurts eyes of people who're used to the dark!

WHAT DOES GOD WANT FROM US?

Paul isn't presenting bunch of rules to *make* us spiritual.

When we walk like God's children,
 we stand out in secular society.

Griffith-Thomas: "There are people around us who never read this Book. But they *are* reading *us*. Can they see God in our lives? Does our light so shine that men may see, not us, but our Father in heaven?

We're kidding ourselves if we think we can be popular among pagans, while living for God.

"All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus WILL be persecuted!"

People *may* respect us;

but we'll make pagans uncomfortable!

Why do we expect it to be otherwise?

Even so, God calls His people to **walk in the light:**

"You shall be holy, for I am holy!"

That's not something we do to BECOME children of God.

It doesn't come naturally.

We could never pull off this kind of lifestyle.

We BECOME children of God by trusting His Son.

When we trust Jesus and receive His life => we become His children—we become light.

Now, charge to His children: Act like part of His family!

Walk in the light!