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ERASE THE DARKNESS BY TURNING ON THE LIGHT!

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
NUMBER 53
EPHESIANS 5:11-13

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EPHESIANS 5:11-13 "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."

This scripture is a direct command to us to take a stand as Christians. We are here exhorted to separate ourselves from unbelievers. This has a personal application and a national application. As individuals, we should separate ourselves from unbelievers. As a nation, it is my firm personal opinion that we should disassociate ourselves from the Communist nations like Russia and Red China. But through what we call "detante" we are now being led by liberals into tighter and tighter relations with these godless nations.

EPHESIANS 5:11 "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." "Have no fellowship" is a present, active, imperative of "sunkoinoneo." "Sun" means with and "koinoneo" means fellowship. This says that if you are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, then stop it. This was addressed to the Ephesians. Paul was in Rome at the time when he wrote this letter to the Ephesians. At this time he also wrote Colossians. Colossai was located in the Lycus Valley and was under great pressure from without. The Ephesian church was the center of the Roman Province of Asia. To these two great churches Paul wrote these two strong messages. The Roman Empire was about to go down and their only hope left them was the power and stability that would come from the Christian communities and the Christian churches that were scattered throughout the empire. The church members of that day were under terrific pressure from the outside world and they were having fellowship with the unproductive works of darkness. These Christians were becoming liberals. The Ephesian church was so strategically located that they were in the position to change the course of history in the Roman Empire. In order for them to do this, they would have to heed the admonition of Paul and stop having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

There is a parallel to this in this country now. We have a fantastic number of dedicated, born again, Christ-centered believers in this nation. Many of them are within the ranks of our own Southern Baptist Convention. There are enough of these born again people in the nation that they can become a remnant that will save the nation. But if they compromise with the liberals and with the unbelievers, then this nation will be destroyed by the Godless Communist forces of the world.

Pride--a major sin.

The basic mental attitude sin is pride. The results of pride, and sins that originate from pride are driving us away from the great Christian standards that have made us the most powerful nation in the world. We are now having fellowship with nations that are Godless, and are "the unfruitful works of darkness." If you are going to have a part in the deliverance of your country in the dark days that are ahead, then remember the scripture says, "Separate yourselves from the barren works of darkness." The attempts for world peace and disarmament and the war

on poverty are the barren works of darkness. But today believers do not separate themselves from the barren works of darkness because they do not know the Word of God and they spurn the building of an edification complex in their souls. Discernment comes from having Bible truth in the mind.

The Ephesian church was the most publicized church in the ancient world and in the apostolic age. They had the fantastic opportunity to turn the tides from darkness to light in the Roman Empire. Paul, Timothy, Titus and John were the pastors of that church, and even with men as great as they were, they still didn't make it. If the people in that one church of Ephesus had listened to this verse of Scripture, the whole empire might have been spared. Back up in verse six of this same chapter, they were warned, "Let no man deceive you with empty words." Now here in verse 11 they were warned, "Stop having fellowship with the barren works of darkness."

Distinguish Between Human Good And Morality

If you are going to be able to stop having fellowship with the barren works of darkness, you need to distinguish between human good and morality. You must distinguish between human good and cosmic good, between human good and cosmic evil.

Cosmic evil is a satanic system whereby law and order breaks down in a nation and evil moves in and takes over, like it did in the French Revolution and in our time in the Communist Revolution in 1917 in Russia. There must be law and order. The court must uphold the law and the policeman must enforce the law. Cosmic evil is the violent overthrow of the divine institution called the nation. But there is also "cosmic good" and this always serves as a front for cosmic evil. Cosmic good finds a problem in the nation and they step forward and say, "We will give you a solution." An illustration of this was the French Revolution when they said we will give you, "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." But cosmic evil comes along and does the same thing by violence. The Communists take this path. They appeal to the down-trodden and the have-nots. In this way they bring on revolution. All these evil systems have borrowed certain things from the Millennium and they say they will usher in a day of peace and an age with no poverty. They say this will exalt the down-trodden and bring equal opportunity for all. So both cosmic good and cosmic evil are used by Satan. And it is possible for a believer under the control of his old sin nature to produce human good and human good is also rejected by God. Cosmic good is rejected by God because it is the accumulation and sum total of just so much human good.

The best illustration of cosmic good is the social gospel, which in our day has been changed to "social action." Human good in the believer is the energy of the flesh trying to give, trying to pray, trying to witness, and trying to worship in the energy of the flesh. Human good is all the believer does when he is under the control of the old sin nature. So the command is before us both personally and as a nation--
DO NOT HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH THE BARREN WORKS OF DARKNESS. So with this in mind, let us look at the doctrine of human good under eight points.

1. HUMAN GOOD IS CALLED DEAD WORKS IN THE BIBLE.

HEBREWS 6:1 "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,"

Human good is dead to God. God's plan and God's character both reject human good. Human good violates every attribute of the character of God. All ten of the essence qualities of the character of God are rejected by human good. Human good vasclates but God is immutable, he never changes. Human good violates the principle of grace. Grace means that God does all the work and God gets all the credit. Human good means man does the work and God is supposed to get the credit for what man does. Grace rejects human good. There is no place for human good in salvation, in the growth of the Christian life or in our inheritance of heaven.

2. HUMAN GOOD IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.
ISAIAH 64:6 "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." "Our righteousnesses" are human good.
3. THEREFORE THERE IS NO PLACE IN THE PLAN OF GOD FOR HUMAN GOOD.
2 TIMOTHY 1:9 "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"
4. HUMAN GOOD WILL NOT SAVE MANKIND.
TITUS 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit;"
5. THE BELIEVER'S HUMAN GOOD IS BURNED AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.
1 CORINTHIANS 3:11-15 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."
6. GOD WILL NOT TOLERATE HUMAN GOOD IN ETERNITY.
2 PETER 3:10 "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." God won't tolerate human good in time and he won't tolerate human good in eternity. We will all look better in eternity stripped of our human good.
7. HUMAN GOOD IS THE BASIS OF THE UNBELIEVER'S INDICTMENT AT THE LAST JUDGMENT.
REVELATION 20:12-13 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

8. HUMAN GOOD IS NOT THE SAME AS MORALITY.
Please do not list morality in the things we call human good. From the beginning of time people have had difficulty distinguishing between human good and morality.

THE DOCTRINE OF MORALITY

1. CHRISTIANITY IS NOT A MORALITY BUT A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH CHRIST.
You can be moral and not be a Christian.
2. HOWEVER, MORALITY IS A BY-PRODUCT OF CHRISTIANITY.
Morality leads to patriotism.
Morality prompts us to give freedom to men.
Morality prompts us to obey the law.
Morality leads to honesty and truthfulness.
3. MORALITY IN ITSELF HAS NO DYNAMICS.
The dynamics in the Christian life comes from the filling of the Holy Spirit and the knowledge of Bible truth in the mind.
4. THE DYNAMICS OF CHRISTIANITY IS THE ERECTION OF AN EDIFICATION COMPLEX IN THE SOUL.
This results from learning of Bible truth.
5. MORALITY IS NECESSARY FOR THE ORDERLY FUNCTIONING OF THE HUMAN RACE.
Man cannot long survive in the human race without morality. The divine institutions (volition--Marriage--Family--Nation) are all dependent on morality.
6. MORALITY CANNOT PROVIDE EITHER SALVATION OR SPIRITUALITY.
To accept morality as a means of salvation or spirituality is legalism.
TITUS 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"
GALATIANS 3:2 "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"
7. MORALITY IS BASICALLY DESIGNED BY GOD FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE HUMAN RACE DURING THE SOLUTION OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT.
8. MORALITY PROTECTS HUMAN FREEDOM AND THEREBY MAKES EVANGELISM POSSIBLE.
Evangelism will not survive long apart from morality.

The end of verse 11 says that the way we are to treat "the unfruitful works of darkness" is to "reprove them." This is a present, active, imperative from "elegcho" and it means to rebuke, expose, or to resist. Now how are you to resist the unfruitful works of darkness? The stabilizing force that will prepare you for this conflict is the inhale of Bible truth from the Word of God. You store this truth up in your human spirit, and then from this reservoir of truth, you are able to resist the unfruitful works of darkness.

EPHESIANS 5:12 "For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." These disgraceful things are a shame. But you can't overcome evil by speaking against it. Yes, we are to speak against evil in the context of our work and living. God's prophet is always to speak against evil. But the principle still abides. You cannot overcome evil by speaking against it. Then how overcome it? The next verse tells us.

EPHESIANS 5:13 "But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." The light of the truth of the Word of God will expose these evils. Communism will be exposed by the truth of the Word of God. In this verse it says, "manifest" and the word is "elegcho". It means evil and truth will be exposed by the truth of the Word of God. Defense is important in any game, but no game can be won apart' from offense. The light in your soul, the light of the Word of God is the offense which takes you across the line to victory.