

**EPHESIANS – THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S CHURCH –
OUR IDENTITY, OUR WALK, OUR WARFARE
PROGRAM 50 (#912230)
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**SERIES: Ephesians – The Mystery Of God’s Church –
Our Identity, Our Walk, Our Warfare**

TITLE: Program 50 – Walk As Children of Light

FRIDAY

OPEN

Are you aware of America’s reputation across the oceans? Do you realize that we are looked at as a very decadent nation? At one time we were admired. At one time we were a beacon of light but the darkness in America has overtaken us so that we have exported our immorality. We have exported all sorts of things that are causing other people to fall. Why, because we’re a nation in darkness, not in light. We’ll talk about it today.

PART ONE

At one time the United States of America was a nation of light. It was a nation that people wanted to come to and people wanted to live in, and they wanted to live here because we were a good nation. We were a good people. We were founded on the precepts of God. There was a fear of God before

our eyes and when we would get in trouble and when we would start to stray then the president of the United States of America or the governors of various states would call the nation to repentance, would call the nation to prayer and fasting. But, Beloved, things have changed, and things have changed because we have turned our back on God. We are no longer a nation of light. We are a nation of darkness and I hate to say that because the United States of America is my land. It is my nation but what has happened is we have lost the fear of God. How do you know when a nation has lost the fear of God? You see this in Romans chapter 1 when men knew God and they glorified Him not as God. They became vain in their imaginations. [Their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and they changed the glory of God into an image, an image of corruptible man and birds and beasts.] (PARAPHRASE, Romans 1:21b-23) And it says, [“Wherefore] **God gave them over....” (Romans 1:24a)** And when it says, **“God gave them over...,”** [He gives them over first of all to the lusts of their flesh.] (PARAPHRASE, Romans 1:24a) Then [He gives them over to perversion, to homosexuality and lesbianism] (PARAPHRASE, Romans 1:26a) and this is what He says [the man leaves the natural use of the woman and he turns to a man] (PARAPHRASE, Romans 1:27a) and the same for a woman. And then He gives [them over to a reprobate mind.] (PARAPHRASE, Romans 1:28b, KJV) Now what is a reprobate mind? A reprobate mind is when someone does what they think is right rather than holding to the absolutes of God. So what is the mission of the church? What is the mission of those who come to know Jesus Christ? The mission of the church is for you and me to walk in the light in the midst of a crooked and perverse and darkened generation. The mission of the child of God is to hold forth the Word of life in the midst of that crooked a perverse generation. To walk like a people of God so that we show others you don’t have to live this way. Well as we’re looking at this segment of Ephesians chapter 4 and 5 and 6 we see how we are to walk. And then we see the warfare that is connected

with that walk and with that righteousness. So right now we’re talking about the walk. Well when you come to Ephesians chapter 5 he’s talking about [immorality and impurity and greed which must not be named among you, as is proper as saints.] (PARAPHRASE, Ephesians 5:3) Verse 4, “**...There must be no filthiness [or] silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.**” (Ephesians 5:4) And he says, “**For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has [any] inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things...,**” now listen carefully, “**...the wrath of God comes [on] the sons of disobedience. (Ephesians 5:5-6)** When I see the word “wrath” what I do is I take a red pen and I put squiggles up and down just like fire because the wrath of God ultimately ends or really is consummated in the lake of [fire where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched.] (PARAPHRASE, Mark 9:43b-44) And so he says, “**...Because of [this] the wrath of God comes [on] the sons of disobedience. (Ephesians 5:6b)** Now that’s where we stop but listen to verse 7. “**Therefore do not be partakers with them.**” (Ephesians 5:7) Them whom? Them, sons of disobedience. He says, “**For you were formerly...,**” now watch, “**...darkness...,**”(Ephesians 5:8a) Now watch the contrast here. “**...You were formerly darkness...,**” and I put a black cloud around that, “**...but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light.**” (Ephesians 5:8b) Now when he’s saying that I am to walk as a child of Light, what I need to do is to mark “walk” again. Bring those two lines down and then put those little feet on those two lines for this is another incident of walking. So Ephesians 5, verse 2 opens up that I am to “**...Walk in love....**” (Ephesians 5:2a) Now Ephesians chapter 5 tells me in verse 8 that I am to walk as children of light. “**...Walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light....**” The what the Light produces “**...consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth)....**” (Ephesians 5:8b-9) United States of America

has never been a perfect nation but I want you to know that at one time there was more goodness and there was more righteousness than there is now. And there’s not righteousness now because every man is doing what is right in their own eyes. They’re saying, “There’s no absolutes and they don’t want us to talk about sin, and they don’t want us to say that this and this is sin.” But he says, “**...Walk as children of Light.**” (Ephesians 5:8b) and then he has in parenthesis, “**(for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth).**” (Ephesians 5:9) What is truth? This Word is truth. This is what tells us right and wrong. Not your emotions, not the culture, not the philosophy of man, it’s the Word of God. And it says, “**...Walk as children of Light.**” (Ephesians 5:8b) “**Trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.**” (Ephesians 5:10) Now this word “trying to learn” is the word in the Greek, d-o-k-i-m-a-z-o and the reason I’m giving you this word is because it means to put to the test. In other words what you do is you put something to the test and say, “Okay, does this line up with the Word of God? Does this line up with the plumbline of God’s Word?” In other words is it telling me what is absolutely true? And he goes onto say, “**Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them.**” (Ephesians 5:11) So the contrast is darkness versus light and that’s really the history of America. It’s gone from light into darkness and when it goes from light into darkness, Beloved, then the culture, just disintegrates and goes down and down and down and down. I want to tell you some things from the book “Under The Influence.” It’s by Alvin J. Schmidt. It is an excellent, excellent book. I would recommend it for your library. It’s called “How Christianity Transforms Civilization” (*the full title is “Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization”*) I would like to share with you some things and I’m going to share with you later about marriage. When we get to that passage but what I want to do is to show you what happens when we walk as children of light in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation when we by our lifestyle expose the

darkness and this is what he wants us to do. He wants us to reprove. The word “expose” could be translated reprove the darkness. In other words we’re to say that’s not right and we’re to say that’s not right by the way that we live and by the words of our mouth. Well when you look at the Roman empire it says, “Roman literature written by it’s own authors such as Juvenal, Ovid, Marshall and Catullus indicates that sexual activity between men and women had become highly promiscuous in a sensually depraved before and during the time that Christians appeared in Roman society. The British historian Edward Gibbon (*Edward Gibbon’s, “The History Of The Decline And Fall Of The Roman Empire”*) says in his history at the decline and fall of the Roman empire that the breakdown in sexual immorality began after the Punic Wars in 146 BC.” And if you trace our history you’re going to find that World War II really affected our morality because our society got whopper jawed because we didn’t really hold to the precepts of God. Women stepped out of their home and they stepped out of their roles and in the 1960’s everything really started disintegrating. When you look at the society what I want you to see is these people, these Christians living in the midst of a culture that was absolutely decadent and I want to show you just several things about that culture. Caesar Augustus in 18 BC, now this is just before, Jesus was born about 4 BC, okay. And so he enacted a law against adultery. It was a law that tried to curb the people’s addiction to widespread illicit sex, the people’s addiction to widespread illicit sex. Do you think that our nation is guilty of that? Oh! Just turn on television. Watch the innuendoes. See what is being shown in the movies and on the screens and what was once unacceptable is now acceptable. O Beloved, listen to me. We can turn the society around if we will walk as children of light. If we will be what God tells us to be. If we will walk as wise men and women and not as unwise, we will be filled with the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit we will have the power of God upon us and we can impact a nation. There’s no

need for us to be known as a nation that is degrading the world. We can be a nation of righteous people. We’ll talk about it more in just a minute.

PART TWO

I thank you very, very much for listening carefully to what I am saying because it’s so important for you and I to take the Word of God and then match it with history. History is in essence God’s story and there are lessons to be learned from history. So when we look at the book of Ephesians we’re looking at a Roman society. We’re looking at the days when the Roman Empire is in power. We’re looking at a time when the Roman Empire is at the depths of decadence and so Paul is telling the people in Ephesians that they are to walk as children of light and that they are not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness rather they are to expose them. Now I want us to go back to this book “Under The Influence” and I want to share with you a little bit more so that you understand what was happening in this immoral society because things were very, very desperate and it just got worse and worse and worse and worse. Rome was like the United States of America. They didn’t start out this way but they descended into the depths of degradation. It says about marriage. “They had become a loose and voluntary compact and religious and civil rights were no longer essential. Marriage was detested as a disagreeable necessity.” And it says, “Since people had become obsessed with sex, marital unions were very short lived.” Now you’re seeing the same thing in the United States of America. You’re finding people starting off getting married after they’ve lived together and then usually if you live together the greater percentage of you will get divorced because you’re looking for someone else. And so we are going down and down and down. And we have to understand that these are deeds of darkness and we are to expose them. He goes on to say that these depraved sexual practices were not just among the common people but it

was among the leaders. It tells about how they lived in incest. This was the Roman Empire and it says, “There was nothing in which the Romans did not indulge or which they thought was a disgrace.” In other words it was all part of the culture. Now what is God saying to us in Ephesians? You are children of the light and you must walk as children of the light. He says, “[Don’t] **participate in [those] unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead ... expose them.**” (Ephesians 5:11) Reprove them. What does this mean to you and me practically? Well it means this. That when I’m sitting in a movie and it starts to become so immoral I need to get up and I need to walk out. I remember when I went to a Broadway production. It was out in Seattle, Washington and I went with my friend. And when they started this thing they became so gross in what they were saying. I mean they were talking about all sorts of sexual activity and I just said, “I can’t sit here.” And my friend said, “I can’t either.” We paid our money but we got up and we walked out. But really what I wanted to do, what I really wanted to do was stand up and turn and look at the audience and say, “Why are you laughing at such debauchery? What is wrong with you that you can sit here and laugh and snicker over this decadence of lifestyle?” That’s what I wanted to and sometimes in my sleep I would think I should’ve done it. I should’ve done it. I’m sure they would have tackled me and carried me out of there but I think Oh, God, we’ve got to expose it. He says, “**...It is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.**” (Ephesians 5:12-13) So what are you and I to do? What is God’s Word to you and to me today? I am to walk as a child of the light. I am to stand in the light and not in the darkness but when I turn around and I see the darkness I’m to reprove the darkness. I remember when I was walking down the beach one day and it was Spring Break. Everybody was out. All the college students were there, high school students were there and I looked up and on top of this house was a big sheet, a bed sheet. And

they had painted in huge letters “Get laid here.” I remember turning and looking at Jan Silvius and I was there writing a course on “Marriage Without Regrets.” I said, “Jan, that’s awful. There are kids walking this beach. There are young girls watching this beach. Somebody’s got to speak to them.” Well you know who the somebody was; it was me, and I turned around, left my friend, walked up to the house. I was in a bathing suit. The guys saw me coming. I don’t know if they ran and hid because they thought I was taking the sign seriously or what. But they hid and then they opened the curtain. And so two of them came out, and I talked to them about what they were advertising. What was I doing? I was exposing the unfruitful deeds of darkness. I was telling them, “Listen, do you want somebody to do this to your sister? Do you want somebody to do this to the woman that’s going to be your wife? Do you want somebody to do this to your mother? Then why do you have that sign up there?” “Oh, we don’t mean anything by it.” I said, “Listen, it’s got to come down.” And I want you to know down it came. When I was on the beach the next day it was not there but I had a long talk with them and I shared what the Word of God had to say. So what is His precept for life today? Well His precept for life is this word of exhortation. **“For this reason it says, ‘Awake, sleeper, and [rise] from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.’” (Ephesians 5:14)** In other words listen, don’t be lazy. Get out of that bed. Stand up. Rise up and go forward. Walk as children of the light and know this that Christ will shine on you. He delights to shine on you. He delights to shine through you. He delights to manifest to the world what it is to be a child of the light, to be a son of God, to be a daughter of God. And so, Beloved, as you awake, as you look at what is going on around you, as you arise sleeper, as you expose the unfruitful deeds of darkness, as you reprove them just know this. That Christ is shining all over you. Now when you reprove them, when you expose them you have to do them the right way. You have to do it with gentleness. You have to do it with kindness. You can’t be brash. You can’t be mean. You have to do it

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with a grace, with a winsomeness. I had to learn this but God has taught me and so many times when I have to reprove the unfruitful deeds of darkness like telling someone, “I’m sorry but that T-shirt is so offensive. You don’t want to wear it because a Holy God is going to hold you accountable for what you are saying.” When you approach them like this and you approach them with that grace and especially if you’re older you can get away with it then, Precious One, know this. That Christ is shining on you because you’re walking in the beauty of the light of God’s Word and the light of life. Remember Jesus is the light of life. Walk in the light as a child of the light.