

## Ephesians 5:7-14 – Love Doesn't Share in Evildoing

Intro: A while ago Marion Jones came clean about her use of performance enhancing drugs in her quest for Olympic gold. In her humiliation and her confession she went on Oprah Winfrey's show and proclaimed that she covered up her use because "I didn't love myself enough." This phrase is the mantra of our world's understanding of love. The highest form of love in our culture is self-love, self-esteem, pride in oneself. And we have bought into it, too, church. Not that we would say that it is the best, but we participate in its culture of self-love and self-assurance and self-esteem. In fact, we deem counseling to be "Christian" if it uses the same forms of self-love with some type of shout-out to "God." But at the root of self-love is a foundation that is adamantly opposed to Christ and His gospel. Marion Jones didn't cover up her use of PED's because she loved herself too little. She covered it up because she loved herself too much! And therein lies the problem. Love in Scripture rejoices with the Truth, it does not rejoice in the lie. God's love rejoices in His glory, not in our self-esteem. In fact, as Paul has been proclaiming to the Ephesians, all the glory goes to God and this is why we walk in unity, holiness, love, and now in light. God has called us to love without sharing. That is, to love without sharing in the sinfulness of our culture. True love does not participate in that which is harmful, detrimental, and worthless to those whom it sets its love upon. In fact, true biblical love doesn't even "make much" of its object w/o the gospel. Rather, it works to do everything within its power to show them the Truth, the deep, deep love of God in Christ, which ultimately brings them true fulfillment. Look at Piper's quote on the front of your bulletin (READ QUOTE).

Rather than merely being empathetic toward those among us in darkness, true love shows them the light of Jesus Christ. Rather than merely "being there for them," true love walks in goodness, righteousness, and truth, proclaiming the wondrous gospel of Jesus Christ. True love does not share, empathically or actively, in the futile deeds of darkness. Let us read Ephesians 5:7-14.

### 1. Love does not share...in evildoing

- a. Don't be "sharers"
  - i. used in 3:6 of Gentiles being "sharers" in the promise through JC
  - ii. "to have share together with"
- b. Don't "cast your lots" with the "sons of disobedience" as if they were family
  - i. This does not mean that you completely separate from the world
  - ii. Our relationship is, however, non-participatory in the darkness
    1. The church has too much emphasis on "empathy" rather than on "hope" (see Piper quote regarding suffering in this world)

The gift that followers of Christ bring to the suffering world is not the empathy of doubt, but the power of hope. We do not join the world in their anger at God or their questioning of his existence or justice or mercy. The very thing that survivors of suffering need most is hope in God through Jesus Christ. This will not be given by those who make its uncertainty the measure of our compassion. It is unbiblical and unmerciful to say that what suffering people need most must be doubted in order to prove our love for them. ~John Piper

2. "Christian counseling" w/o the gospel is illusory; reflective listening, while a good first step, is incomplete unless it leads to Gospel hope in Jesus
3. People need to hear the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ

### 2. Believers are now Light in Christ

- a. BECAUSE you were *formerly* darkness (see Col 1:12-14)

- i. Your identity was that of darkness
- b. BECAUSE *now* you are light in the Lord!
  - i. Your identity is now that of light, in Christ
  - ii. Remember who you are in Christ
    - 1. ILLUSTRATION: Roberts' act a certain way
  - iii. "in the Lord" is the source of the light
    - 1. It is in our identity with Christ that we are made Light
    - 2. As we behold HIM, we produce the fruit of the Light
- c. Fruit of the Light is:
  - i. goodness - moral quality of beneficence for others
    - 1. Rom 15:14 - goodness linked to admonition
    - 2. 2 Thess 1:11 - good linked with powerful faith
  - ii. righteousness (justice) - in line with God's character
  - iii. truth - corresponding to what is REAL
  - iv. contrasting with the triad of darkness: immorality, impurity, and greed, also combined with the adjective "all"

### 3. Walk as children of Light

- a. Walk AS
  - i. Because you are children of God, walk like it, in Light
  - ii. Qualitative way of living
- b. remember who your Father is
  - i. God as Light:
    - 1. Ps 4:6 – Lift up the light of your face upon us, Lord!
    - 2. Ps 27:1 – The LORD is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?
    - 3. Ps 36:9 – In your light, we see light
    - 4. Ps 119:130 – The unfolding of your words gives light, it gives understanding to the simple
    - 5. Is 10:17 – the Light of Israel will become a fire, and His Holy One a flame...
  - ii. Christ as Light:
    - 1. John 1:5,9 – JC is the "true light" who came into the world
    - 2. John 3:19ff – JC is the rejected Light b/c men loved their evil deeds; darkness and evil deeds correlated against the Light
    - 3. John 8:12; 9:4-5 – JC is the light of the world doing the "works of the Father" in the world
    - 4. John 12:44ff – pt. v46; JC came into the world as Light so that those who believe in Him will not remain in darkness
  - iii. Believers as Light in Christ:
    - 1. John 12:35-36 – you will become "sons of light" if you believe in the Light" which is JC
    - 2. Matt 5:14ff – you are the light of the world, linked to good works that glorify the Father and the ways to walk in light (Matt 5) in 48, "be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect"
- c. approving, discerning what is pleasing to the Lord
  - i. As Christ is Light, so we walk in line with Him
  - ii. What pleases the Lord is the Light (what is inline with the character of God), so walk according to His revealed Word
    - 1. Goodness

2. Righteousness
3. Truth
4. ALL revealed by the Word of God – in Jesus Christ’s gospel

#### 4. Do not have fellowship with the darkness

- a. sharing with, *koinonia*, typically used of close fellowship
  - i. This is speaking to believers, not to unbelievers
  - ii. It is a participation and sharing together as fellow participant/owners
- b. "unfruitful deeds of the darkness"
  - i. contrasted to the fruit of the Light
  - ii. the deeds of the darkness are unfruitful
  - iii. producing nothing good, honorable, or pleasing to the Lord
  - iv. We are told not to share with the deeds themselves, believers are the ones addressed, not unbelievers

#### 5. Expose the unfruitfulness of the deeds of the darkness for what they are:

- a. Light exposes the reality which the darkness conceals
  - i. “expose” means to expose and convict, or to reprove and rebuke.
    1. It is commonly used to translate the Hebrew word for “to decide or judge” (Gen 31:42; Job 32:12; Ps 50:21) and the word “to reprove, expose” (Job 22:4; Ps 105:14)
    2. Again, this “exposing and rebuking” is for those within the church, not without the church. The NT never reprimands the world for living like the world, only the church for living like the world
      - a. Paul exposes, rebukes, and disciplines those within the church, not without the church (1 Cor 5:12-13; Matt 18:15-17)
  - ii. The gospel reveals the Truth behind the deceptive lie of the false promises of idolatry (those things which promise fulfillment and joy which are not God)
  - iii. In the gospel we acknowledge the deception as the Lie, repent of our dependence (faith) in our idols, and turn to the Light, who is Christ, as our salvation and joy
- b. That which is:
  - i. unpleasing to the Lord,
  - ii. opposed to the Light,
  - iii. incompatible with Christ (Light and Darkness do not mix)
- c. This is walking in the Light
  - i. Parallel construction:
    1. Don’t share    Walk as light
    2. Don’t share    Expose
  - ii. Walking in the Light of the LORD exposes sin for what it is, opposed to God and unfitting the children of God
    1. This is not a fearful exposition, but rather a hopeful one
    2. “Wake up...and Christ will shine on you!” HOPE
      - a. Strong allusion to Numbers 6:25/Ps 80:19
      - b. The “face of the Lord” is the face of Christ, showing the deity of Christ.

Walking in love means walking as children of Light. True godly love does not share or participate or even empathize in the deeds of darkness, but rather exposes them for what they are: that which brings the wrath of God and that for

which Christ came to die to redeem us from. This does not mean that we do not humbly repent and empathize with the plight of sin, of which we are all too fully aware within our own souls, but rather that we do not empathize *merely* with the plight of our former depravity without rejoicing in the hope of the gospel of our redemption through Jesus' blood. True love works to bring about the best for the other, and the best is always the repentant dependence upon Jesus Christ and the souls glad appreciation for His atoning sacrifice in our place, His righteousness given to us by His wondrous grace.

Can we work for this goal in the lives of others? Can we reach out into this world without embracing this world, drawing the hard lines that correspond with reality, what God has revealed in His Word? Do we love people enough to confront them with the TRUTH, GOODNESS, and RIGHTEOUSNESS and call them to come to Jesus in repentant faith? Anything less than this is not truly loving in a godly love.

Walking as children of Light means that our hearts, too, are constantly facing the Source of Light. The light does not originate from within our own souls, contrary to what is popular thought in the world. The Light, rather, is sourced in the wondrous glory of Christ, and our lives are simply mirrors of His greatness due to His wonderful Spirit within us. There is no power to produce light within a mirror. A mirror only reflects light from another source. And not only that, it only reflects the Light *as it faces toward the Light*. If we are not facing into Jesus, we will not be reflecting His Light toward others, exposing sin by producing fruit of goodness, righteousness, and truth. It is only as we face into Jesus, beholding the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor 3:18) that we reflect His glory to the world.

So, turn today, and tomorrow, to face Jesus. Gaze into the glorious beauty of the gospel of the Son of God, letting every opportunity come to be transformed by the gospel of Jesus! How do I love with a godly love? Look at Jesus' love for the Father and His love for us. Ponder it, meditate on it, read it again, ask for His Light to produce the wondrous fruit of holiness in you and through you. His Spirit is powerful to transform you as you behold His glory. As you are overwhelmed with the beauty of Christ, your life will expose the deeds of darkness for what they are and shine the glory of Christ upon them. In this you glorify Christ, calling others toward the glad appreciation of Jesus through repentant faith in His gracious atoning sacrifice. Here you pronounce hope, not mere empathy! Here is the gospel powerful to transform as it is proclaimed into the darkness by the humble children of the Light and it is here where true admonition occurs as we face into Jesus Christ, the completely sufficient sacrifice for all the children of Light. His righteousness is now ours, His death is now ours, His life is now ours to the praise of His glorious grace.