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Luke

Chapter 12 - An Unforeseen Disclosure
The Erroneous Supposition (vs. 49-53)

Luke 12:49-53: “I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished! Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

2 Corinthians 4 says that the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving. In many respects, that's what this chapter's about. Because we have the Light of the world coming in and exposing the darkness. And

when that begins to happen, of course, fireworks begin to happen. Jesus does this right at the very beginning of His ministry as He goes into His own hometown, and He begins to proclaim the truth and reveal the hearts of men. And as He does this, they take Him to the cliff and want to kill Him, in His own hometown, Nazareth. It will be the theme in many respects of the gospel as Christ begins to unveil and reveal things. One of the reasons why Jesus is so hated, and He turns to His disciples and He says in John 15, "They hated Me and they're going to hate you because you're going to say the things that I tell you to say." Our perception is we have the gospel, the good news, and that people will just embrace it. But it's extremely divisive. And Jesus will clarify this. In fact, His ministry is about a delineation. His ministry is really about defining the boundaries. And that's exactly what He does as Light comes into the world of darkness, and He begins to expose things. I mean, light's a wonderful thing as you begin to understand that light clarifies and light brings hope, and it brings comfort. But it also exposes darkness, and it reveals things that are hidden. And it's one of the great statements that Jesus makes at the beginning of this

chapter, "There's nothing hidden that won't be revealed." As Christ comes on the scene, He comes in as Light. And as the New Testament ends, we have the book of "*apokaluptó*," which means "unveiling". So, ultimately, all things will be unveiled, and Christ will unveil that at His coming. But He is unveiling things now. And His word is doing that even now as He begins to speak.

Jesus is speaking in Luke 12 in a setting that is full of people that are self-preservationists, people that are full of a sense of self-aggrandizement. He is around those that are full of selfish ambition. And we know that because they're stepping on one another to get to Him. There is a sense of perhaps hope like never before, and quite frankly at this particular stage of the game, Jesus is more popular than He's ever been. However, you wouldn't think that as He begins to speak to this great mass of humanity, that He would begin to say things like, "You know what the greatest problem is? Hypocrisy." And He begins to expose. And it's almost as if God's saying, "Did you know this? Did you know this? Did you know that most of humanity has a problem with hiding things? They're not

real; they're not genuine; they're a bunch of fakes." I mean, can you imagine talking to a crowd in which they're there to see you; they want to touch you, and you begin immediately exposing the crime in which has infiltrated them? Christ as He opens up begins to say, "And this actually is rooted in your concern for men rather than your concern for God. You're afraid of men; you're not afraid of God. "What's wrong? You're not thinking right. And because you're afraid, you begin to hide things because you're afraid that somebody might see you for what you are." Why is it that man doesn't confess his sin? He's afraid of what somebody else is going to think. So, he suppresses his sin and he just gets sick, according to Psalm 32. That's all he does. He gets sick and miserable because he suppresses his sin. And when that begins to happen, he finds no peace. The wicked are like the tossing sea. They can't find any peace, right? Jesus says, "You have a problem. You're afraid of man. You're not afraid of God. This is a huge problem. And you're trying to find some sort of significance in your life. You're trying to find some sort of worth by virtue of the things that you own. You think that by having more possessions that you're a

greater person and the only thing that you can do up to this point, but you get to a certain point you don't need anymore. So, what do you do? You start stockpiling. You start hoarding. You tear down your barns, and you build bigger barns." Jesus says, "Beware of all kinds of greed because you're trying to figure out that life consists of the possessions that you have and it's just going to make you miserable." In fact, Jesus then turns to them, and He goes, "And you know why you're so anxious? Because you're worried about all this stuff. You're worried about the clothes that you put on. You're worried about the things that you eat. You're worried about the roof over your head. You're worried about finances. You think about this all the time. That's why you're so anxious. You shouldn't be anxious about all these things." I mean, His whole message to this mass of humanity is exposing their problems and the things that they're doing. He then turns to them in a very clear and concise way, and He says, "And let me tell you this, by virtue of you investing in the wrong things, you're going to be grossly disappointed when your Master comes because the stuff that you have wasn't given so that you might stockpile and it wasn't

given so that you might in some way pleasure yourself with all the things that you want. It is for the purpose of stewardship, and I just want to let you know that it's going to be required of you, the things that you have. You have misappropriated, misused, and abused in many respects that which God has given you. And God is going to require this from you because you are stewards of God."

We were talking about this earlier this morning, but in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, Paul declares,

(1 Corinthians 4:1) "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

(1 Corinthians 4:2) In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy."

You have a requirement, and the requirement is that you use the things that God has given you for His purpose.

The way that it's put in verse 7 is,

(1 Corinthians 4:7) "For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did

receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?"

In other words, you were given this by God. What do you think? It's given to you for the purpose of just enjoying it for yourself? God wants you to enjoy it, but He's given you a stewardship. And we're not just talking about monetary stuff. We're talking about your ability. We're talking about your time. We're talking about everything that you have that God has given to you. God is going to require of you. And it's almost as if Christ is going, "Did you know that you're going to be required of this stuff? Do you know the time is coming, that your master's going to come and he's going to wonder, 'What did you do with this?'"

And so, He gives that wonderful parable in verse 45, 46, 47.

(Luke 12:45) "But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master will be a long time in coming,' and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk;

(Luke 12:46) the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him..."

Did you know He's coming? Do you know He's going to require it of you? Do you know that you've been investing in the wrong stuff; that you've been doing the wrong things with what you have? Stop investing in what doesn't satisfy.

There's an interesting passage in Isaiah 55. I oftentimes think about this where God says, "I can give you stuff that's going to last. Why are you investing in stuff that doesn't?"

It reads in Isaiah 55:1,

"Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat.

Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.

(Isaiah 55:2) Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance."

In other words, you're investing in all this stuff that doesn't satisfy, that doesn't bring any kind of fulfillment, and yet you keep pouring yourself into this; your time and your effort. And He says, "Stop investing in things that aren't of lasting value, have no significance in them." Your perception is that they're safe and secure, but there is a thief that is coming, and He's going to rob you of all those things that you invested. It is God who is the thief because this day will come in which all these things as 2 Peter 3 so aptly puts it, will burn up. Actually, just "burn up". You go, "I was robbed." And He goes, "I know, because you invested in all the things that were temporal. And now what do you have?"

We now come into a passage that piggybacks on all of this, "Not only have you been hiding things, and I'm going to reveal it; not only have you been miscalculating and investing in the wrong things and spending your life in the wrong things, but quite frankly, you think wrong and your perception of Me is wrong." When we think of Christ, everybody has their own perception, and they feel like they can just put God in a box however fits them and

allows them to do what they want to do. And the perception is that God is ecumenical, that God is syncretistic, that is to say that God somehow joins all beliefs together by virtue of just making us feel good. We all hold hands, and this is how He's going to bring peace. Because quite frankly, Isaiah 9 says He is the Prince of Peace, right? So, the way that you bring peace according to the world is you become tolerant of sin and you affirm everybody whatever they want to do and you just get this big tent and accept everybody. No, that's not Christianity, that's politics. And so, when we talk about what Christ has come to do, it's going to surprise you because within this particular passage, He's going to say, "You thought I came to bring peace to everybody, but I came to divide." Now, this is what makes this whole text so revealing to us, because once again, it's revealing the way that we think and how erroneous that is, as well as it's revealing what God is really like. And it's a wonderful passage.

So, as we come to the passage, Luke 12, Jesus begins to set the stage in which He reminds us that things are not as you think.

He says in verse 49,

(Luke 12:49) "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!"

There is a fervency within this phrase and a desire to see something happen. You can feel it as He begins to speak.

He then says in verse 50,

(Luke 12:50) "But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!"

That baptism of death for sin, we want to make Jesus so generic that we make Him accepting of sin. But as 1 John would so clearly put it, don't you understand why He came? He came for the purpose of destroying and eradicating sin. That's the whole reason He came. You didn't know that?

Turn with me to 1 John 3. 1 John 3 is just going to establish a foundational belief in understanding and doctrine here in verse 4.

(1 John 3:4) "Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness."

Now, the reason why he conjoins the two at this juncture is to convey very strongly that when in fact you sin, you are rebelling against God. He wants to clarify that because we want to really soft-sell sin. It's not a big deal. It's something that we do. Nobody's perfect. You know, we have all those kinds of wonderful phrases.

And then he states this in verse 5,

(1 John 3:5) "You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin."

(1 John 3:6) No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him."

In other words, in sin you can't know God because God is known in righteousness. He is not known in sin. Our perception is that God is just so accepting of all. Oh yes, He's a friend of sinners. Confess your sins and He'll save you. But don't embrace your sin and embrace Christ and think it's going to be okay. There's a clarity here that he's bringing, and it really is the clarity of 2 Corinthians 6 that we've oftentimes quoted. I mean, you just couldn't be more simple when he simply says, "Did you think that light and darkness could have fellowship?" Just think

through this. I mean, is it possible that the righteous and the lawless could be partners? Believers and unbelievers in some way would have a common bond that the Creator and the destroyer would somehow live in harmony together? Did you think in your wildest imagination that the temple of God had any agreement at all with idols? Well, then you've misunderstood God.

And so, Jesus says so wonderfully and clearly, as He is light within the passage,

(Luke 12:49) "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!"

Verse 50 is the baptism that He has to undergo in the sense of His sacrifice for us. And once again, our flippant attitude, our cavalier attitude towards sin.

Do you understand, according to 1 Peter 2:24, that He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross that we might die to sin? The whole reason why is that you would die to sin, not that you would continue to embrace it. And that we should live to righteousness.

Isaiah 53:11 puts it this way,

"As a result of the anguish of His soul...My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities."

To think in any way that God perceives sin as something that is wonderful or something that He would tolerate would be clearly erroneous.

Hebrews 2:3 would say this,

"How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? ..."

This light cannot be hidden. This light cannot be suppressed. This light cannot be avoided. It is exposing that you are a sinner. Now, what we'd like to do is we'd like to put on a mask and say, "No, I'm not. I'm really not." And Jesus says, "That's the big problem. You're afraid of what everybody else is thinking. That's why you won't confess your sins. That's why you won't come to a Savior."

So, he states in verse 51, which really is the hub of this particular passage,

(Luke 12:51) "Do you suppose..."

"What are you thinking? Why do you think I came to earth? Why do you think I came here? Do you think it was

to grant peace to everybody?" Oh no. That's not what light does. Light separates. Light divides. It distinguishes. It delineates. It clarifies what is right and what is wrong. You look on that cross; you can't say that sin's okay. You're looking at God dying for you and you're saying sin's okay? As you watch Him bleed, as you watch the anguish of His soul, that my sin is fine, I can continue doing this, that we should sin, that grace may abound?

"Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? ..."

Now once again, you look at Isaiah 9:6, and He is declared the Prince of Peace.

Yet His statement in John 14:27 is, as He turns to His disciples,

"... My peace I give to you..."

Now, the clarification is this, "My peace," which is, as He goes on to say, "is not like the world." Now, the world has an idea of peace, and their idea of peace is tolerance. And Jesus' idea of peace is eradication of sin.

Because fundamentally, Isaiah 57:20-21 says,

(Isaiah 57:20) "But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud.

(Isaiah 57:21) "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

So, you want peace? How do you find peace? You get rid of the wicked, or you get rid of your sin. And it is in getting rid of the sin that you find peace. Scripture talks about the peaceful fruit of righteousness in Hebrews. People say, "I'd like Jesus to give me peace as I continue in my sin." And it's not going to happen.

So, the clarity of this is,

(Luke 12:51) "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division."

I mean, we weren't expecting that. I mean, He's the great unifier, isn't He? Yes, in **righteousness**, but not in compromise.

He then goes into what would be some of the closest relationships that you could maybe perceive in your mind that there would never be a division in this realm. And He talks about the households.

He says in verse 52,

(Luke 12:52) "For from now on five members in one household will be divided..."

"Five" is an interesting number because it kind of expresses a dissonance, a mismatch, a clashing of views that is not even, it's not like three against three, it's three against two.

"For from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three.

(Luke 12:53) They will be divided, father against son..."

How would that even happen?

"... and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

It goes into the realm of marriages. And you go, "How could that happen?" I mean, you wouldn't expect that at all.

Well, John kind of warned us of this at the very beginning, didn't he? John the Baptist. Look with me in Luke 3, as he

warns of those that are coming. And here again, this is John in the midst of a mass of humanity that are coming to him to be baptized. So, at the peak of popularity, these guys seem to be trying to squelch it. People were coming up to Jesus, and they were wanting Him to hang around. And it says at the end of John 2, Jesus wasn't entrusting Himself to men because He knew the hearts of all men. What do you mean He knew the hearts of men? He knew that they were hypocrites. He knew that they were disingenuous. He knew that they were just out to get something. John 6 says that they tried to make Him a king. But then Jesus tells the multitudes, "The only reason you came to Me is you got something to eat. Do you know the reason you want Me to be king? It's because I give you free stuff." Politics again.

But in Luke 3, as you look at John the Baptist, the people were in a state of expectation. It states in verse 15 that they were excited. "Wow, this is the time; strike while the iron's hot, right?" When everybody's excited, you keep the excitement going, hit the band, you know? Get everybody going.

(Luke 3:15) "Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ,

(Luke 3:16) John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you..."

Yeah, you're in for a treat.

"... with the Holy Spirit and fire."

He's going to get you.

He goes on and says in verse 17,

(Luke 3:17) "His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Chaff is a part of wheat. You've got to get rid of the chaff in order to eat the wheat. Wheat's not productive until you get out the chaff, right? And that chaff has to burn up. Chaff is really basically worthless. They say if you try to eat it, it tastes like sawdust. So, it'll ruin your meal. And

though, maybe an animal could eat it, a human can't because they say that humans cannot digest chaff. So, it's got to burn. Because it would actually cause upset. It's that which destroys the value of the productivity.

The psalmist will say this in Psalm 1:4,

"The wicked are not so,

But they are like chaff which the wind drives away."

And then, Isaiah 5:24, it will be devoured by the flame of fire.

So, Jeremiah touches upon this in Jeremiah 23, if you turn there with me, as he begins to share in much the same vein. But I think at times our misunderstanding is, what is this fire that God is going to ignite and what is this longing that He has that it would be kindled? I mean, isn't that what He said? "My desire is to see this fire going." In Jeremiah 23, God says, "I've heard what everybody else is saying. You have a bunch of false prophets; we'll call them hypocrites; people that are lying to you; telling you what you want to hear, whatever." And unfortunately, as Jeremiah will say earlier, the people love it. They don't

care if you're lying to them; they just like to hear what they want to hear.

But verse 25 reads,

(Jeremiah 23:25) "I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy falsely in My name, saying, 'I had a dream, I had a dream!'"

(Jeremiah 23:26) How long? Is there anything in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy falsehood, even these prophets of the deception of their own heart,

(Jeremiah 23:27) who intend to make My people forget My name by their dreams..."

You know, we just get people thinking about how we perceive things or maybe tell them what they want to hear. As Paul will warn Timothy, "The time is coming where people want to have their ears tickled, accumulating for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires." So, people go into churches specifically to hear, "Tell me I'm a good person," fundamentally. And that's not the gospel. It's not the gospel. I mean, people are sitting in the pews. They know

that even when they're hearing the message, "You're a good person, you're a good person." Something inside of them says, "No, I'm not. No, I'm not. No, I'm not."

(Jeremiah 23:28) "The prophet who has a dream may relate his dream, but let him who has My word speak My word in truth. What does straw have in common with grain?" declares the LORD."

You could put in there "chaff," by the way.

(Jeremiah 23:29) "Is not My word like fire?" declares the LORD, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock?"

(Jeremiah 23:30) Therefore behold, I am against the prophets, ..."

"I'm against what they're saying because their words have no meaning. They have no validity to them. There's no truth in what they say. But My word, it is true." And I would say this is the fire that Christ is going to ignite. When He goes on the cross, you're going to see the fervency of God. Scripture will tell us in John 2 that zeal for His Father's house consumed Him.

The word "zeal" actually comes from this picture of being red and inflamed. And it is a picture of someone with an ardent desire to accomplish something. It's a fire that ignites within us. It is a lamp, as it were, that is lit. And why Jesus says, "You're like a lamp that is lit." You should be a fire for the purpose of shining light, of directing people. You're a lamp unto their feet, right? So, they might know the way to go. You direct them into the way of righteousness. There are rocks and there are holes in the pathway. There are things that are serpents and thorns, and the job of the lamp is to light the way. And so, that's what we do.

God is talking about in the passage that we are to be ignited by something. What? Well, Scripture says, by the Holy Spirit. Have you ever wondered in Acts 2, when you see the church and then at the day of Pentecost, they began to speak with tongues of different languages as they speak with all the languages of the people that are there, and they're hearing the good news of God, why they have tongues of fire over their heads? God was revealing to them that they are the light of the world. Just

like Matthew 5 says, "You're like a city that's going to be set up on a hill and you're the light to them. I'm going to light you. I'm going to breathe a fire in your bones." And as Jeremiah would come and breathe a fire; in fact, one of his statements is, as you go through the Book of Jeremiah, as Jeremiah says, "Your words are like a fire that consume me. They grab my heart. My heart becomes like a burning fire." (Jeremiah 20:9) And all the way through, you begin to see that his heart begins to burn.

When Jesus was talking to the two on the road to Emmaus, you remember Luke 24, in which as they began to walk down this road of Emmaus, which interesting enough, the word seems to mean "hot springs". So, they're heading towards hot springs and God's going to ignite a fire. But they were walking back and as Jesus revealed Himself, they said this, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking on the road?" He was igniting a fire. Where does He ignite it? On the cross. When you and I see the power of His love, it ignites something. It takes out the complacency; it takes out the apathy; it takes out the lethargy. And we begin to go,

"You know what? This must be real." There's something about this that's real. There's something about God's love for us that goes beyond mere history. It goes into the realm of change. And the Spirit of God begins to move in your heart. And for some reason, you begin to get emboldened. You speak the word of God unashamedly. No longer are you wanting to take the light and put it under a bushel. That's not the reason you lit it. It was to shine. And you shine because the word of God is just moving in your heart with that zeal and that ardor, that same one that Christ had. So, it's a lamp that is lit and our hearts begin to burn. Jesus begins to state in this wonderful passage, "Didn't you know that their words have no effect? But My words are like fire. They ignite people's hearts." It's the thing that makes it all different. That's the reason why we proclaim the word of God, because we believe that the word of God is the very thing that changes lives. That's what ignites the heart. Other than that, you just have maybe a pep rally on a given moment. And maybe people get excited because the music or something like this, but it's not sustainable as far as the zeal. But if you have the Holy Spirit within you,

you're not going to stop. It's going to be a fire that that will come to the end and you go, "Where is the analogy beyond that?" The analogy beyond that is the day is coming when everything is going to be destroyed by fire. What does that mean? The zeal of the Lord will perform it. What does that mean? That God is so zealous that we love Him that He's going to take everything out of the way that will hinder that. It's the zeal of the Lord that would just eradicate all. And why is it that He wants sin out of your life? Because those are the very things that are keeping you from having a personal relationship with Him that is zealous. Why are we not on fire for God? Why are we afraid to say anything? Why are we looking around before we share the gospel to see if anybody else might be maybe showing faces? Why are we living in a world of masks? Why are we hiding the Light? And Jesus says, "My whole purpose for coming is to set you on fire." And when that happens, guess what's going to happen? There are going to be people that aren't set on fire. Nowhere is Jesus really saying, "Go and start attacking people." We're not talking about crusades here within the passage. What we're talking about here is being unashamed to share

what we know is true; what burns within our hearts. Jeremiah will say, "I tried to suppress this, and when I did, the burning became so intense that I had to let it out." And that's the Spirit of God within us. I mean, there have been times that I'm saying, "I don't know if I can say anything." And then I just feel the Spirit of God going, "You have to say it." You're not even really sure why you blurted it out, but you did. Because the Spirit of God just won't let you be quiet. And let me tell you something, it's going to set on fire some things. I mean, it's going to hurt. You're going to share truth. You're going to share the word of God. You're going to share stuff like, "We're all sinners," and people are going to go, "Whoa, you just burned me." And we're going to say, "Yeah, we did. But we can't help it." Because the same fire that's burning you is the same fire that's saving you. Because it's taken away everything in your life that is keeping you from turning to God. It's hindering all these things. And yes, it's going to cause division. And you know, Jesus is warning ahead of time, "Look, this is going to hit family first and hardest." You're going to be dealing with family members that are

going to buck this because, I mean, nobody likes the heat in the kitchen, right?

And everybody's going to be feeling it. Now, if in fact your tendency is to cover it, does the Spirit of God rest within you? I mean, is the Spirit of God more powerful than your fears? I truly believe that when the Spirit of God begins to move, that we begin to speak boldly and unapologetically the word of God. And here again, why are we preaching the word of God? Well, because of God's love. The world hates God's love. That's so bizarre, isn't it? And they're so offended over the fact, because of the fact that they're so busy covering themselves that they hate anytime you try to expose them.

The passage that we oftentimes read, if you look with me in Ephesians, once again, just give the clarity and the delineation, the division of why we're here as believers and what we should be doing.

Of course, chapter 5 starts off with this wonderful text,

(Ephesians 5:1) "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children."

What does that mean? That means we have the Spirit of God's Son within us. What is that? That's the love of Christ. What does that look like? Well, some people will say that looks accommodating. That looks like you tolerate sin. But that's not true. That's not the love of Christ. The love of Christ won't stand for things that destroy people's lives. If you really love somebody, you won't let them be destroyed by things in their lives. You will care for them, right? I mean, if you know somebody is drunk, will you hand them the keys to your car? You'd do everything you can to keep them from doing that because you love them. Now, they're going to look at you and say, "You're not tolerant." They're going to hate you because you don't give them what they want at that particular time. So what? Do you love them or do you hate them? If you hate them, you won't take a stand, and you'll let them do whatever they want to do, and you'll let them pursue whatever they want to go. You won't warn them. The passage reads,

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;
(Ephesians 5:2) and walk in love, just as Christ also loved
you..."

In other words, don't let the world define love. Let Christ define love. You say, "Well, Christ defines love by sacrificing." Yes, but did you just read it in Luke, "Don't think that I came to bring peace on the earth but division"? That's love.

It goes on and says this,

(Ephesians 5:3) "But immorality or any impurity or greed
must not even be named among you, as is proper among
saints;

(Ephesians 5:4) and there must be no filthiness and silly
talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather
giving of thanks."

In other words, you're not going to put up with that kind of stuff.

(Ephesians 5:5) "For this you know with certainty, that no
immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an

idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

(Ephesians 5:6) Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

(Ephesians 5:7) Therefore do not be partakers with them;

(Ephesians 5:8) for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

(Ephesians 5:9) (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

(Ephesians 5:10) trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

(Ephesians 5:11) Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them."

Now, we know why they're mad. Because light exposes. That's what it does. And you can't hide it. You can't say we're sort of Light. Light comes in; it's just light. And darkness goes, "Whoa, I can't be here." Why is it that family members are going to be against you? It's not

because you're obnoxious, I hope. It's because you're Light.

We've got to end with a famous passage, John 3. As John 3 probably clarifies it better than any other passage. As Jesus Himself will relate, "I didn't come to judge you for your sins." And you go, "How come I feel judged?" He's going to go, "Because I'm Light."

The way that it reads is this, and we love this one familiar verse,

(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

(John 3:17) For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

(John 3:18) He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

In other words, he hasn't embraced Light.

(John 3:19) "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world..."

I just want to emphasize something. What does the word "judgment" mean? Well, we actually, in our own vernacular, in our own English language, in the justice system, have a term which refers to truth. And that is when we get together, and we try to decide on a particular case; we come up with what is called a "verdict". "Verdict" is where we get the word "truth". Veracity, verdict, truth. So, what we're looking for is, what? Truth. In order to get truth, what you have to do is you have to separate lies. So, judgment itself actually refers to a separation. What brings the separation? Well, what are you separating? Truth from the lie; right from wrong; good from evil. So, good judgment is always separating. Christ came into the world to what? Separate.

The passage reads this way,

"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil."

(John 3:20) For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed."

Now, quite frankly, the only thing God has called us to do is shine. But you can't shine without offending people because it's revealing things that they don't want to deal with. Everybody's a cover-up artist. Beware of hypocrisy, which is like that stuff that permeates everything.

(John 3:21) "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

God is working in his life because he is drawn to truth. The gospel, we're just simply asking people to believe the truth. Fasten your seatbelt. It's going to be divisive. And Christ is calling upon His disciples to speak the truth. And He's telling them, "You're going to be hated, and you're going to be hated by family members." We've got this idea that everybody has to get along and that's the message of Jesus. It's not the message of Jesus. The message of Jesus is clarification of what is right and what is wrong, what is truth and what is a lie. And the purpose

that Jesus came was to separate. Because there's a whole lot of gray out there. And the reason why there's a whole lot of gray is because there's a whole lot of cover-up artists. Nobody sees the truth, nobody wants to admit the truth, and nobody wants to deal with the truth. But Jesus comes and He proclaims it. May we walk in the Light, and may we follow Christ and may we not fall into the whole path of, "Jesus is all about accepting sin and accepting the way of life that you're living." He's not accepting anything of sorts. He's saving you from it. (And He'll accept you as a sinner.) But don't believe it for one moment. The whole reason He came was to die for that.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we ask You to change our hearts as we have oftentimes soft-sold You to those around us. And our perception is, "If we just get along with everybody and just agree with everybody, that somehow, they're going to come to Jesus," but that's not what You're about at all. And so, Lord, we ask Your forgiveness and we ask for Your empowering that will

ignite a flame within us that cannot be put out as we baptize in the power of Christ with fire.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. What we're asking you to do is come to the reality of what you believe and even examining yourself of the Spirit that's within you. Is the zeal there? Is the fervent ardor there that would not compromise? We're not talking about hateful speech towards people or even condemning them, but proclaiming clearly that sin is horrific and it's what crucified our Lord and Savior. And we are on fire for our love for Him. Are you expressing that?