

General Topics :: Reproving The Works of Darkness in a Democratic Society**Reproving The Works of Darkness in a Democratic Society - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/10/21 9:19****REPROVING THE WORKS OF DARKNESS**

By Robert Wurtz II

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. (Ephesians 5:11)

In this study I propose to show:

- I. Those who have no fellowship with darkness are inclined to reprove them.
- II. The mouth of the wicked overthrows the city.
- III. When the righteous rule sin is restrained.
- IV. Measures to be employed in reproving darkness not given in scripture.

- I. Those who have no fellowship with darkness are inclined to reprove them.

Here the apostle is not setting forth some new and strange doctrine, but is affirming to believers a maxim of scripture: *they that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.* (Proverbs 28:4) The truly godly not only keep God's law, but "contend with them" who do not, and 'plead for truth' (Isaiah 59:4). When *judgment is turned away backward, justice standeth afar off, truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter;* those that do indeed make conscience of the law of God themselves will, where they meet it and when afforded opportunity, will vigorously oppose sin, and expound their testimony against it. They will 'reprove' the works of darkness, that is, to expose and suppress it.

They will reprove the works of darkness through the light of truth. They will not keep silence, but as keepers of the law of God will contend with them. Speaking the Truth in love, they will expose the folly and excuses which careless sinners fortify themselves in against their God. They will expose the danger of taking hold of the innocent before God and illuminate them in their wickedness. They will pour the light of their lives and the truth of their counsel upon the darkened conscience to 'stir up' the workers of iniquity from their careless, slumbering state.

- II. The city is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked. (Proverbs 11:11) Is such not the case in our lands? The land of revivals has *mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.* (Psalm 106:35-39) Shall not these works be reprov'd? Did not a generation of Christians in our land hand over the institutions of learning to the mouth of the wicked, that the children of this land had learned foolery when it had once been learned the fear of God? Have not our cities been overthrown by the instruction of fallen heads once Christians esteemed themselves too pious for the common marketplace of ideas and forfeited their influence upon the impressionable minds of our children? And through their voluntary humility surrendered the minds of whole generations of children to the wiles of the Devil as sheep to a slaughter as if they deserved praise of the Lord?

- III. When the righteous rule sin is restrained.

And for a pretense of standing for Truth, they surrendered the whole of our once God fearing society to Satan's wiles. Beginning in the institutions of learning it was immediate that the philosophies in the fallen classrooms of the one-generation became the philosophy of government in the next. And whilst it was known of them that the battlefield is the mind *and that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;* Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; those believers have given place to the enemy; who has gained an advantage and fl

ooded the minds of our people with reasonings against the knowledge of God and constructed fortresses of strongholds in the minds.

Meanwhile the enemy mocks us to scorn as those who propagated such passiveness reveled in their piety as if abandoning their post of duty were a virtue. The truth is they had strengthened the hand of the Devil to draw his snare and left whole generations gagged and bound with lies and helpless to recover themselves. The Devil hath trained up generations in the way he should have them go and indeed the masses have not departed from it.

Matthew Henry said that, "The advancement of the wicked is the eclipsing of the beauty of a nation: When the wicked rise and get head they make head against all that is sacred, and then a man is hidden, a good man is thrust into obscurity, is necessitated to abscond for his own safety; corruptions prevail so generally that, as in Elijah's time, there seem to be no good men left, the wicked walk so thickly on every side. The people will have cause to rejoice or mourn according as their rulers are righteous or wicked; for, if the righteous be in authority, sin will be punished and restrained, religion and virtue will be supported and kept in reputation; but, if the wicked get power in their hands, wickedness will abound, religion and religious people will be persecuted, and so the ends of government will be perverted." (Proverbs 28, 29)

IV. Measures to be employed in reproving darkness not given in scripture.

We are told to reprove the works of darkness, just as we are told to preach the Gospel. In neither case is there a definitive framework given for *measures* to be used in accomplishing that end. We have no canon of measures with which to judge *our* measures as the scriptures are silent leaving it to the prerogative of the Holy Spirit and providence of God to establish those measures custom to each generation and situation. Church buildings, tracts, radio ministry, TV ministry, tent meetings, prayer meetings, Internet web sites, Sunday School, and many other things are 'measures' not specifically ordered in scripture. They are imperfect measures; but useful. In like manor, are there any measures "out of bounds" to accomplish the end of "reproving the works of darkness"? What measures for the propagation of the word of our testimony are legitimate? (Revelation 12:11)

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. (Ephesians 5:11) Here our Greek word is *elenchomenoi*. The word, which is variously rendered in the King James Version "tell a fault, reprove, rebuke, convince," while it carries the idea of "rebuke," implies also a rebuke which produces a "conviction" of the error or sin. (Vincent) It is used to describe the action of John Baptist who reproved Herod for Herodias and all the evils (plural) that he had done. It is used in Titus I: *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.* It is translated in the AV generally as rebuke, convince, or reprove. Just as dangerous to the Church were the gainsayers of Paul's day are the endoctrinators of our public school systems. This Greek word is not indicative of a passive stance towards darkness. It is an outspokenness against them.

So what measures are available to us with which we might 'reprove' the works of darkness? What 'media' might we use or 'measures' to expound the word of our testimony? Certainly we all have access to the 'Herod's' of our day on a Federal, State, County, City and Community level through the pen? Yet we have a privilege unlike any generation in that we can both pray for and petition directly the governments of our land. We don't have to lie down and allow the enemy to take over our government. We can prayerfully consider whom God would have us vote for. We can write the powers that be 'prayerfully' to compel them to rule righteously. It is our liberty and obligation in Christ to use the measures God has provided and ordained. This is but one aspect of many aspects of our Christian duty.