

Light Reproves Darkness

Written by Ben Winslett

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"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." - John 3

This past Saturday at Lexington PBC, I tried to speak on the subject of condemnation with three applications: eternity, time, and a man's conscience. After the message, a brother and I spoke about a text the message reminded him of in John 3, concerning the fact that Christ came not to condemn us, but to save us. This tied in very well with the verse I had shared from Romans 8, expressing that there is now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus.

Also within this text is a great principle for dealing with issues in your daily life. **Light reprov's darkness.**

My mother had a saying when I was growing up. She would often remind us that light is a natural disinfectant. What she meant, was if there was a grievous issue going on in private, one way to deal with it was to make it public. Let's say a man is being unfaithful to his wife. If that sort of thing is repeatedly covered up, he will likely continue. But if he is exposed, the shame

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and embarrassment he will experience is a strong encourager to cease his wicked behavior.

Think about it from a natural perspective. If you're in a dark room and turn on a flashlight, the darkness in the direct path of the light has no choice but to be eradicated. Darkness is the absence of light. Turn on a light, and darkness disappears.

Notice how Jesus uses this principle in Matthew 18. If someone has sinned against you, tell him his fault alone. Shine a little light on it. If he won't hear you, go with witnesses. Shine more light on it. If he is still obstinate, go to the church. This shines a lot of light on it, and exposes it to all within a local assembly. If he won't hear the church, he is to be excommunicated. Our problem is that we often drag things out in private, ignoring the Lord's plain command. To be clear, one should understand we are never to go about as "many masters" bringing up frivolous accusations against a brother. If you can't see someone being excluded from the church over an issue, you should just drop it and forgive him. To use a modern idiom, don't sweat the small stuff. Church discipline should be reserved for serious offenses.

Wicked things are often done in the cover of darkness or secrecy. An effective way to deal with it is simply to expose it publicly.