

Ephesians 14-09-14b

Let's resume our study now, we're in Ephesians chapter 5, and the first session is pretty sobering, it is a challenge, it is not necessarily the uplifting field of morning glories that sometimes we encounter in scripture. It can be a dose of correction or rebuke or certainly time for a gut check to be sure that we're doing what we're supposed to. And I think particularly those of you listening to the sound of my voice have already got a reasonably good handle on this.

You would not have listened as long and studied as long and gotten this far if you didn't have some inkling that these things are so. But this is what the scripture presents to us and here's the thing, having said all of that, we want to be defined by our calling and by our choosing. Make your calling and election sure, be imitators of God, do what you've seen God doing, do what you've seen Jesus Christ doing, walk in love, but make a separation.

Isn't that the summary of these first few verses? We want to walk in love, sacrificial toward self, beneficial toward others, first and foremost offering ourselves as a sacrifice to God, secondly putting the interests of others ahead of our own. Philippians 2, mind of Christ, joy that set before Him, endured the cross, despised the shame, took on the form of a servant, came in likeness of men, walk like Christ walked. We've got that, right? Here's my question, and maybe this is your question as well.

It says, these bad things, don't let them even be named among you. Well, how bad does it have to be before I separate? What is my threshold of tolerance? Does this seem like a fair question? You know, Paul said, look, if you try to get away from everybody that's serving anything bad, you'd have to go out of the world and you'd have to get out of your own skin. I wouldn't even be able to tolerate myself.

So if there is a grounds for separation, if there is a grounds for disassociation, you know, there's groups that shun and disfellowship and excommunicate and so on based on various criteria. Well, is that what Paul is talking about here? When he says, let it not be named among you, when he talks about purging out the old leaven and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness and so on, what does that mean in practical terms? You and I have a circle of acquaintance, whether it comes from work or school or family or just whatever, you bump into people hither and yon, you end up rubbing elbows or shoulders or whatever with people, and they're not all God-fearing, narrow-road, straight-gate believers. So what is the nature of our walk in love when it comes to those people? I'm assuming, of course, that we've already done the cleansing and purging of ourselves.

Before we get to looking around at who we should fellowship and not fellowship with, we need to be sure that we are somebody that has any business even making that call by purging out our own leaven, making sure that our walk is sanctified. That's what Paul spent the first four chapters here talking about. Remember who you are and remember why you're here.

Get your heart in order, get your soul squared away. Now, with that done, he's moving on. Put away the deception.

Make sure your mindset and your viewpoint is sound, is built on the rock. That's what you need to do. Now that you've done that, you've got to look around and make sure that your walk, which defines you, which will be examined in detail at the judgment seat of Christ, we've got to make sure it stands up to scrutiny, that we're not compromising in places we shouldn't compromise, that we are not slack where we should not be slack, that we are not over-tolerant.

This isn't an issue of not being tolerant enough. Paul doesn't say you're too legalistic, your standard of righteousness is too high and you're discouraging a lot of believers and you're throwing water on the spirit's fire. That's not the problem here.

When he writes to these believers in Laodicea, you know what their problem is? They're too tolerant. They're not willing to draw a line. They're not willing to set a distance.

And Paul says, look, you're deceiving yourself and you are perpetrating a deception by your tolerance. How are people going to know where the lines are if you don't respect them yourself? What about a parent raising a child? And well, you know, there are rules like don't play with electrical appliances, don't put your peanut butter sandwich in the VCR or some other piece of, you know, don't put your fruit jelly on the CD tray and push the button to insert it in the computer and see if it can read it. Don't open the refrigerator and leave the door open.

Don't put the cat in the microwave. I mean, there are these in the dryer. You know, I wanted her to be fluffy.

You don't, we have rules, right? Now, what if a parent is over-tolerant? Oh, Johnny, we've got to get another cat. You know, look what you've done. Parents learn quickly by experience, if they have any sense at all, that you must set boundaries and then you must enforce them.

This teaches your child life skills that they are going to need when they encounter reality outside the soundproof, germ-free environments you establish in your own home. Well, this is the question now. This is the question that this passage is going to answer.

You and I have associations with people who fall under the pornaya, coarse jesting, akatharsia, these six things that Paul has named here. Pornaya, akatharsia, the covetousness which is idolatry, meaning this is where I have my security. This is what I depend on for my happiness.

This is what defines me is my culture, my ethnicity, my job, my wardrobe, my vocabulary, my tastes in entertainment. This is what defines me. It's idolatry.

For you and me, if anything other than Jesus Christ defines us, we're idolaters. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. No cultural gods, no job gods, no education gods, no entertainment

gods, no friend gods, no romance gods.

It's a pretty tall order. God demands respect. He's earned it.

He deserves it. And within his own family, he is not going to tolerate disrespect. God won't tolerate it.

We belong to him. We have been purchased. We have been adopted as his children.

He is our father. And there's no ifs, ands, and buts. You either acknowledge and respect him as the father or his wrath is going to come down.

And guess what? You will be disinherited. It's just that simple. We are in line for inheritance.

We are in line for service. We are in line for constructive association and fellowship. We are in line for things that are beyond imagination in terms of blessing and reward and opportunity.

But if we spit in the face of the God who is giving us these things, if we challenge his authority, if we say, well, yeah, but you're not all that. I've got other priorities. God is not going to take that lightly.

I learned as a very small child almost as soon as I could talk not to sass my parents. You can't believe the things that children say to their parents now. I hear it walking up and down the aisles of the store.

I hear it sitting in the parking lot waiting for somebody to come out. Here's a mother and daughter talking to each other. I hear it in entertainment.

It's a given now that, well, you don't want to crush little Johnny's self-esteem by saying he shouldn't say what he says. And so they treat their parents like they treat their friends. If they hear something they don't like, they insult.

They use sarcasm. They are dismissive. Who is running this household? These little imps of darkness are running the household.

Well, God doesn't stand for that. And Paul points it out here. These things which are not appropriate in verse four, rather giving of thanks.

The gut check is how thankful are you? And praise God. If you look at yourself and say, you know, every morning when I wake up, my instinctive reaction is to say, thank you, Lord, for giving me another day. Thank you for not taking me home yet.

You've given me the grace. You've given me the time. You've given me the opportunity to learn and to grow.

Thank you for your provision. Thank you for your protection. Thank you for the Lord Jesus.

If you wake up every morning and you are thankful for who you are and why you're here, then you can take a measure of comfort that this area of rebuke in this portion of God's word is a caution rather than a big sledgehammer. If it doesn't occur to us to be thankful, if it doesn't occur to us to appreciate, if any time our thoughts turn heavenward, we're not instantly overwhelmed with gratitude for the Lord Jesus and for the things that God the Father has done in adopting us as His child. If that's not our first reaction, wake up and pay attention closely to this passage.

We run the risk, even those of us who are thankful, we run the risk of being so happy and so thankful and so grateful that we're kind of relaxed about enforcing the lines, watching the standard and not being drawn away by deception. We can be deceived into thinking, today this is the age of toleration. They pound it into the heads of every grade school child.

You are not to think badly about anybody for any reason. Don't think badly about anybody for any reason. Sounds semi-good, well I don't want somebody to feel bad.

If they're a little juvenile delinquent and they're willfully destroying property and injuring people, they need to be thought badly of. If they aren't studying and are cheating to get their grades, they need to be thought badly of. If they are irresponsible and undisciplined and are not performing to the standard that is expected as they go through their education or as they go through their family life at home, they need to be ill thought of.

This is something to be pointed out, to be rebuked and to be corrected. Unlimited toleration is evil. Hath God not said, you may eat of every tree in the garden? How dare you make a distinction between trees? Are you disrespecting this one tree and saying it's a different tree than the others? You should treat all trees alike.

Hath God not said, you may eat of every tree in the garden? What does every mean? It means them all, doesn't it? Tolerate all trees, eat from all trees. Don't make a distinction. Don't have a bad feeling about this one tree.

Hath God not said? It's a corruption, it's a perversion, it's a distortion of the truth to say that Christians should be tolerant. Oh, we're the tolerant religion. Look at those mean old Muslims, they've got their extremists and they chop off heads and they do this and that.

That's a bad... We're the tolerant religion. We are not the tolerant religion. We leave the punishment to God.

But personally, we have lines that are clear and sharply drawn and that God demands that we respect. And if you do not observe and enforce those lines, you will forfeit your inheritance. Can that be any clearer? If you are over-tolerant of evil in your life, you will forfeit your inheritance.

You will be far from God. You will not have peace. You will partake with the wicked.

What are the wicked like? The wicked are like, say it with me, the troubled sea when it cannot rest whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no shalom, saith my God, to the wicked. So what does Paul say here? Look at verse 7. Therefore do not be partakers with them.

Do not be partakers with them. Look at verse 6. Let no one deceive you with empty words. Don't be deceived.

Put away the lie. How many times has Paul pointed out here there is a distinction between truth and error, between what is true and what is false, what is good and what is evil? Excessive toleration is evil. So our question, this is my question and I think it's probably your question, well, where's the line? Should I, when I walk into Potbelly's down here and every person working behind the counter making sandwiches is a flaming lesbian, should I buy a sandwich there or not? Recent personal experience of mine.

One of those Potbelly restaurants. I mean these gals aren't just suspected of being lesbians. They're wearing the t-shirts.

This is my partner and we're all lesbians. Welcome to the sandwich shop. Well, do I patronize that establishment or not? Who do I eat with? Who do I work with? Who do I spend time with? At what point do I say, this far but no farther? We can't go out of the world.

So where's the line? Paul is telling us here, where is the line? He starts in verse 3 and we've seen this, the pornia and the akatharsia and the covetousness, those things, that pleonexia is our third Greek word there. Let it not be named among you, in your midst. If a professing, t-shirt wearing, evil lifestyle person comes into our midst, what do we do? What if we had a hand-holding, same-gendered couple walk into our church and sit down for Bible class? What do we do? Excuse me, hand-holding, same-gendered couple, but you need to leave.

I would not ask them to leave, not on the first visit. Why are they here? I don't know why they're here. I need to establish that.

If they are interested, if they want to learn the Word of God, fine. Sit and listen. It is not the episode, it is the pattern.

Over time, the Word of God either will or won't make a difference for somebody. Did Jesus turn away prostitutes? Did He turn away tax collectors? He didn't say they were former prostitutes and He didn't say they were former tax collectors or former sinners. They came to the Lord Jesus and what did He do? Anybody that wanted to sit in on Bible class could come.

He was roundly condemned for that by the Pharisees. Do what you have seen Jesus doing. So, it's not as easy as saying, well, I see some evil in your life so I'm cutting all ties with you.

Not that easy, is it? Be imitators of God as dear children. Walk in love as Christ loved us. Were we former sinners when Jesus loved us and died for us? No.

Listen, anybody can come. Anybody who looks like they have a spark of interest is not under this get the hints idea. If there is interest, if there is, and this is a discernment you have to make.

Why did God give us the Holy Spirit? You will know in that hour what you should say. As you're talking with people in a periphery, maybe they have some overt or covert problem in their lives, we don't immediately, oh, excuse me, you're somebody that sprays shaving cream on their hair for, you know, beautification. Sorry, I can't have fellowship with you.

You know, whatever the criteria might be. No. The criteria is not what they do.

The criteria is what do they think. What is the pattern of their thought? Behavior changes based on thought. What is the pattern of thought? Are they open? Are they inquiring? Are they looking for the truth? This is the determination that we have to make.

Fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, let it not be named among you as is proper for saints, plural, a fellowship of saints. This means that the determination is going to be made relatively soon. Let it not be named among you.

When would it be named among you? This is like having a reputation, right? If I shoot a basketball from half court and make it, that doesn't give me a reputation as a great basketball player. If I do that every time I shoot, now I'm a great basketball player. It's what I do over time.

That establishes what I am named for, what I am known for, right? The investment of my time and my resources as a pattern, that is what defines me. What defines the group? Are we, hey, come any way you want to, doing anything you want to, say anything you want to, be anything you want to. We have no lines.

Come as you are, wear your t-shirt and your flicks, play your boom box music in the middle of the service. We just don't care. All comers, all are welcome.

Jesus did not do that. What was Jesus' criteria for allowing people into Bible class? Are you interested? And you can determine this fairly quickly. Somebody comes once, somebody comes twice.

Are they coming back and are they asking questions? Can you tell that they're engaging with the truth, wrestling with it perhaps, interested in knowing more of it, trying to make some personal decisions based on it? You can establish this in pretty short order. And if that is not the characteristic, if someone is not a truth seeker, let it not be named among you. If you're not trying to go the direction I'm going, you and I can't walk together.

You know this to be true. If you're walking and someone else is walking, if you're together, you've

got to be going to the same place. I can't be walking north and you're walking south and we're walking together.

Can't happen, right? So if we meet in the road and we have a conversation, pretty soon this person has to say, you know, I'd really like to travel north with you for a while and see where this goes, right? That's the criteria. Let it not be named among you. You can stop and talk.

You can go down the road and somebody can accompany you. They're either going to continue in the same direction or they're going to peel off and go in a different direction. That's going to happen pretty quickly.

It's not months. It's not years. It's pretty quickly.

They're either an inquirer or they're not. If they're an inquirer, I don't care if they're a mass murderer on death row. If they're asking and seeking, looking for a reason for the hope that is in you, that's a conversation that you will have and must have and should have.

That is your witness for Christ. You witness in dark places. Let your light shine before men.

You shine like lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. But when somebody, it becomes clear, you know, they're just talking. They just like a debate for the debate's sake.

They enjoy, you know, poking the Christian to see what comes out. And they don't have an interest. They're not personally interested in following Jesus Christ.

They're not personally interested in a relationship with God the Father through Him. They're not personally interested in knowing what is and isn't proper and appropriate for someone who loves God and who claims to have a relationship with Him. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works, works, unfruitful works of darkness.

And very quickly, this is a walk. What direction are you walking? If you continue association with somebody that doesn't have an interest in the things of God, guess which direction you're walking? Not on the narrow road and not through the straight gate and you will not forfeit your inheritance. You will forfeit peace and blessing now and you will forfeit everything that's important in the eternal future.

You're going to be in the darkness which is outside, cut in two, hoping for the weekly trip out the gates and the basket of leaves from the tree of life. Pathetic. There's no excuse for it.

There's no reason for it. Filthiness, foolish talking and coarse jesting. This is moronic conversations, endless debate that doesn't go anywhere, that doesn't accomplish anything, that doesn't answer questions and help someone establish new goals and values and priorities in and for Christ, in Him, in Him.

If you're walking in a direction with somebody that's not in Him, how long are you going to still be in Him? Not long. These things which are not appropriate, rather thanksgiving, thanksgiving. People who discover the truth, you remember when you first came to the truth of Jesus Christ, you first began to learn and grow in grace, began to see the things that God unfolds in the Scriptures, began to see the glory of God revealed in the Word of God.

Doesn't it just put you on your knees thanking God? What a great age we live in that these things are revealed and unfolded. This you know, verse 5, no fornicator, no unclean person, no covetous man. This is the same three things we saw in verse 3. Nobody who is defined by those things.

It says, the fornicator. He didn't just fornicate once, he is a fornicator. This is sort of a lifestyle choice.

This is a pornaya person. I'm unclean, I'm unconventional. I rub the lines out.

If it feels good, I do it. I'm the Pepsi generation. It's the me.

Nobody knows what that is anymore except old people like me. They were buying into the 60's and early 70's people who were all obsessed with themselves. It's all about me and my journey and finding myself.

Tripping out and exploring the weird dark spider infested caverns of my own mind. No fornicator. No unclean person.

No one who constantly contacts defilement. That which defiles. Do you know what defiles? Yes you do.

Constant contact with it. You have no inheritance. No unclean person.

No covetous person. Nobody who sets some other goal, some other value, some other priority than a grateful, thankful, dedication response to answering the call of God. If you're not that person, you are not an inheritor.

Nobody in those categories has any inheritance. Doesn't say it's a smaller inheritance. Well you don't get the extra wing on your mansion.

You've only got 7 bathrooms instead of 8. No. Has any inheritance. The whole thing is gone.

There is a wall in the New Jerusalem. You either live inside the wall or outside the wall. It's a fact.

Those walls are as real, more real than these walls. Study physics. This is like a hologram.

Little points of light. Matter is energy. Energy is matter.

It's all the mind of God in this construct. We are like little characters in a video game here. This isn't reality.

Reality exists in the dimensions that surround us. And there is a real New Jerusalem that is going to come down out of heaven. There's going to be a new heaven and a new earth.

And you are going to live somewhere. Where are you going to live? It's either in or out. You're either a citizen or you're in the darkness which is outside.

No fornicator. No pornaya person. No unclean person.

No covetous man who is an idolater. That means you put something ahead of your priority of God first. Has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

It's not like well maybe there is some part of the kingdom. No. The kingdom of Christ and God.

What other kingdom is there? There is no kingdom that is not defined by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lamb who is the light. And God the Father sitting on the throne.

Out from under the throne comes the river of life. Beside the river of life grow the trees. In the new Jerusalem.

That's inheritance. You have no inheritance. There is not any inheritance.

Paul is emphasizing to us this is serious stuff. You've got to know where the line of toleration is because if you draw it in the wrong place and you become an unclean person by association you say well I don't do those things. If you contact it the priest doesn't have to be dead to be defiled by death does he? He touches something dead and he is defiled.

If you touch something defiling you are unclean. No unclean person. Now what happens if you get defiled? If you are a priest or an Israelite in the Old Testament as goes the nation so goes the believer now.

What did they do if they touched something? Two things. First, hear me closely now. What's the first thing they did? They stopped touching it.

Make sense? I'm a priest. I'm not going to go carry a dead body down to the ritual for cleansing and sling it over my shoulder and start trying to get cleansed. I've got to break contact with that which defiled me before I can even begin to get cleansed.

Remember they tie the albatross around the sailor's neck because he killed it and brought a curse on the ship. A dog that would attack chickens out in the country. If you had a dog that had a problem killing your chickens you'd tie the dead chicken around the dog's neck and he would get so sick of the smell of rotting chicken flesh that he would stop attacking chickens.

Well the dog is defiled. You want to invite that dog in, put him up in your lap and watch TV when he's got a dead chicken around his neck? No. If you want to cleanse the dog, the first thing you've got to do is disassociate that which defiles.

Then you can avail yourself of God's remedy for defilement. Spiritually speaking, we must first break contact with that which defiles us. Then it's Psalm 51.

Then it's 1 John 1.7 and 1 John 1.9. Then it is acknowledgment and looking to get back on the narrow road and head back for the straight gate. But you've got to break contact with that which defiles. If you don't, you are an unclean person.

It's just what the Bible says. If you don't know where the line of toleration is, when should you break contact with that which defiles? When it becomes clear that there is no prospect of turning and growth. Turn ye at my reproof, why will ye die, O house of Israel? When did the house of Israel die? When they did not turn at God's reproof.

That's what we're seeing in Kings. God is doing every kind of illustration possible, miracles, proclamations, incursions, every way shape and form. He's communicating graphically with the people in Israel and they are not turning.

He does it at a high level. He does it at the basest, lowest level. Dogs licking skulls in the courtyard.

I mean God can't get any clearer than that. Do you see what happens to people that disregard me? Their skulls are getting licked by the dogs in the courtyard. Hello, this is the God of your covenant.

No unclean person, no pornia associated person, no person who puts something ahead of God first has any inheritance. Let no one deceive you with empty words. Put away the deception.

Chapter 4, verse 25, putting away the deception. Let no one deceive you. Notice that to be deceived, you have to let them deceive you.

Satan wasn't just such a magnificent liar that Eve had no chance in the garden. She conspired with him. She was complicit.

That's why guilt fell on the human race. If it's not your fault, you're not guilty. It was her fault and it was Adam's fault.

She let herself be deceived. She chose to believe the lie. Don't let yourself be deceived.

Don't believe the lie. Empty words. There are rationalizations.

It doesn't say don't let anyone deceive you with a kabuki dance. Don't let anybody deceive you with a harlequin mask. Don't let anybody deceive you with some device.

It's words. It is rationales. It is arguments that deceive.

Don't be distracted, deflected, defeated, deceived by words. These are the words of truth. This is what the Bible says.

There is a time of contact. There is a time of interaction. Speaking the truth in love, letting the light of Jesus shine in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, that's fine.

As soon as you find out somebody is involved in evil or has got a pattern that they're having trouble breaking, you don't have to break off contact. However, it will become clear because you have the presence of the Holy Spirit in your soul. He is the Spirit that is convicting them.

He is the Spirit that is guiding you. He's at both ends of this conversation. He knows what's in their heart and He knows what's in your heart.

And at the point that this person clearly isn't interested in the truth, that is the time to separate. Touch not the unclean thing. Jesus ate meals with tax collectors, prostitutes, and sinners, all stripes of social outcasts and everything else.

They came to Him. And as long as they listened, and as soon as they listened, they began to change their minds. Look at Zacchaeus.

If I've defrauded anybody, I'll pay back four times the loss. Woman, you've been caught in adultery. Go and sin no more.

He didn't say, well, I accept everybody, and I know you've got to make a living, and maybe you've got an unwed child there you've got to support. So, you know, sometime if you can kind of work your way out of that, it'd be great. It's not what Jesus said.

Assuming that pericope is valid, go and sin no more. Right? Go show yourself to the priest. Offer the sacrifice that Moses commands, O former leper.

Because of these things, because of pormia, because of akatharsia, because of pleonexia, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Who is obligated to obey? Let's take the law of Moses. Who has an obligation to obey the law of Moses? Hittites? Amorites? Hivites? Are they obligated to obey the law of Moses? Are they in trouble if their ox gores somebody? Who has an obligation for obedience? Children of the covenant.

The people of God. Those who have a relationship with God have an obligation to obey. Right? I have rules in my house.

Somebody else has kids. Those kids don't have to obey my rules. They've got their own household.

They're accountable to their own parents. My children are accountable to obey me when they are children. Right? So if someone is a son of disobedience, who are they disobeying? They are people of God.

They are children of God and they are disobedient sons. The wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. This is a word play here.

They are defined by their disobedience. A son of Belial is defined by a Belial attitude. A son of disobedience is defined by disobedience.

But there are also sons of God who are disobedient. He says walk as dear children. Don't be disobedient sons.

Sons of disobedience. Disobedient sons. It's a beautiful word play.

And yes, both things are true. Therefore now, do not be partakers with them. Do not be partakers with them.

For you were once darkness, but now, notice you are *is in italics*. You were once darkness, but now light in the Lord. Past darkness, now light, where? In Him.

Darkness which is outside. The way you live your life now, you're either in Him or you are partaking in darkness. That's what's going to happen in the eternal future.

You will either be in Him, in the new Jerusalem, in the place of inheritance, blessing, opportunity, peace, reflection of His glory, or you will be in the darkness which is outside. The darkness you chose in this life. You get what you choose.

God is gracious. You want darkness? You get darkness. You want light? You get light.

Who in their right mind would choose darkness? Walk as children of light. What defines you? What defines you? It's your walk. Walk in the light as He is in the light.

There's fellowship. And the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing us. If you do not walk as a child of light, you're not going to have the fruit of the Spirit.

You're not going to have the benefits. You're not going to have the opportunities. You will not have the peace.

We willfully choose that which destroys us. We willfully choose. You think about the Israelites.

Why did they choose the goofy things that caused them to drop in the wilderness? Why didn't they choose the things that would take them to the land of promise? It is the perversity of the human heart. We've got to identify it in ourselves and purge it out. We've got to identify it in others.

And people who are perverse, people who aren't interested in coming to the light, that is the line of separation. That is the line of intolerance. Is our faith intolerant? Yes, it is intolerant of willful evil.

Intolerant. God is intolerant. What you have seen God do? Do that.

If God is intolerant of willful evil, you and I should be intolerant of willful evil. No ifs, ands, buts. It's black and white.

We're going to see next time when we get down to verse 11, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose. Notice them is in italics. That word expose is a sermon unto itself.

That's what we'll look at next time. What should we do when we have identified these things? He says, have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose. Okay? We realize that there is light and darkness.

We have figured out where the line is, where there is no repentance, there is no tolerance. Right? No repentance, no tolerance. That's it in a nutshell.

If there's repentance or opportunity, signs of repentance, and you'll find this out pretty quick, people are going to show their cards pretty quickly. Pray. Ask God for discernment, because you don't want to overstay the contact if it's going to defile you and cause you to forfeit everything.

You want to know this. Do I continue or do I stop? Ask God. God is craving somebody to come to Him and ask that question so that He can reveal it.

You'll find out in the very next conversation. Somebody will say a thing or do a thing that will let you know unequivocally, well, you know, it wasn't that nice knowing you and we're not talking anymore. Adios, Kemosabe.

I'll pray for you. What does it mean to expose? Once we've seen where that line is and we're doing our best to purge that out, what does it mean? How do we treat it now? Okay, I've identified it. I'm not supposed to fellowship with it.

Well, how harsh am I going to be? How negative? Do I go on the attack? Do I swing the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, just start slaying, blood gushing? What do I do? It's all in this word, expose. Have no fellowship. That's the withdrawing.

And rather, expose. Well, it doesn't mean expose. And we'll see what it does mean next time.

Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. Thank You for the clear, bright illumination that it sheds on our path. Thank You that You have not left us in a state of confusion, without any direction, without any instruction, without any clear guidance.

Your Word is so clear. It is pure. It is light.

It defines for us what love actually means. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts, help us to see clearly so that we can walk in the light as You are in the light, and we can maintain our fellowship and our beneficial association with You, being blessed, offering ourselves as sacrifices in Your service and for Your purposes. We pray that in all these things the Lord Jesus Christ will be reflected and be glorified in our lives.

We ask it in His name. Amen.