

Grace Freedom News

Changing lives through the Gospel and Biblical truth

September 2013

"If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

Issue #12

Dear Partners and Friends,

It has been a very exciting year so far. God has used this ministry to impact the lives of many men and women incarcerated. Rarely is the true Gospel of Jesus presented in prisons and jails. We know this from the response we get from the inmates after they have heard of the grace and the unfailing love of God in providing salvation, and everything pertaining to life and godliness. They are so grateful for sound Bible teaching.

This past week at the Metro Detention Center here in Nashville there were a lot of questions from the audience concerning "The Eternal Security of the Believer". Some believed that once a person trusted Christ for salvation, and then turned back to sin that when he died he would go to hell. Because of this false thinking, many believers spend their lives in fear of losing their salvation, and have no assurance of being saved (1 John 5:11-13).

Satan loves to keep those who trusted Christ as their Savior concentrating on their failures. He doesn't want them to really enjoy their relationship with Jesus Christ. He also uses their failure to get them to try to change themselves in the flesh (with their human strength) because they fear that when they die they will still go to hell.

Some believers don't realize that sin is no longer an issue. Christ paid the price for all our sins at the cross (Eph. 1:7; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18-21). We should now in love present ourselves to God for the mercy shown to us through Christ (Rom. 12:1).

They learned that God's grace working through our faith is the source of salvation. We are not saved by our works but to do good works (Eph. 2:8,9; Titus 3:5) after salvation. Works result from being saved as we depend on the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, and learn, think, and apply the principles of God's word to life.

The believer does not lose his salvation when he fails but he loses his close fellowship with God, (Luke 15:11-32; John 15), and the enjoyment of his relationship with God. The believer out of fellowship with God through constant disobedience isn't productive in his spiritual life until restoration of fellow-



ship with God, changing his thinking, learning and applying the word of God to life.

He loses blessings in time and rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. In time the carnal believer, if he does not restore fellowship with God, will receive discipline and correction by God as a Father disciplines a rebellious child.

We believe that the greatest mission field in our time is the prisons and jails as we are watching our society falling apart for its rejection of Jesus Christ and His truth. Thank you all for your faithfulness in supporting our ministries.

We are very aware that our adversary Satan does not want this ministry to continue because GPM poses a threat to his program in keeping people in bondage to sin and self. It is through faithful believers who generously contribute to this ministry that we are able to continue to change lives with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Biblical truth.

Sadly, not many believers support us financially or our missions which is centered on carrying out the Great Commission. But God supports us through faithful mission minded Christ and other centered Individuals and we are grateful to God for their generosity.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20)

Our mission is to:

1. GO! MAKE DISCIPLES! **How?** Evangelism
2. TEACH THEM TO OBEY! **Goal?** Bring New Converts to Spiritual Maturity

Keithian L. Starling

In this issue...

Letters from the inside3	The Filling of the Holy Spirit . . . 5
Mission Statement2	Grace Prison Ministries at a Glance.10
Report from Volunteer at Indiana Jail2	Prayer Requests12

OUR MISSION

Grace Prison Ministries Mission Statement in fulfilling the twofold mission of the "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:19-20) is as follows:

1. **EVANGELISM** - This includes winning the unsaved that are incarcerated but not limited to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ through:

- a) The presentation of the simple gospel message of faith alone in Christ alone for salvation to those incarcerated and abroad.
- b) We will make the gospel as clear as possible, relying on the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit, and leaving the decision to believe or reject to the individual.
- c) We will use no gimmicks to win people to Christ.

2. **EDIFICATION** - Bring to spiritual maturity those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation through teaching them the word of God so that they too can function as part of the body of Christ in further evangelism and edification. We do this in the following manner:

- a) We provide Bibles as God provides to those who don't have one.
- b) We teach sound doctrine in the prisons, in a local church setting, and through prison conferences.
- c) We provide resources like Biblical books, recorded and written lessons.
- d) We direct the believer to a local church upon release from prison.

In conjunction with these two primary missions, we also have the following objectives:

EQUIPPING - Start Bible Institutes in prisons providing resources for training, so the serious students of the Word of God can be trained for local church service and missionary work abroad especially in the prisons.

Assisting the needy as God provides and directs us - This may include but is not limited to:

- a) Provision of food
- b) Provision of clothing

Grace Prison Ministries Weekly Prison Bible Studies:

Monday	1:00pm - 2:00pm	Correctional Development Center
Tuesday	7:30pm - 9:30pm	Hills Detention Center
Wednesday	6:30pm - 8:30pm	Metro Detention Center
Friday	8:30am - 10:30am	Criminal Justice Center
Sunday	6:30pm - 8:30pm	Criminal Justice Center

Report from Volunteer at Indiana Jail

Phil is a young man who in the first class he attended months ago had a fierce and angry look about him. Since that time he has been born again. He now enjoys hearing the teacher explain to him how to become free from the bondage of drugs, alcohol, crime, hatred, bitterness and unhappiness. From the desire to fight and the former growl to joy and laughter is life changing.

Phil's sister visited a local store to pay her bill and saw a lesson with her brother's name on it at the cash register. She asked the man why her brother's name was on that lesson sheet. The man explained that he was a volunteer for Grace Prison Ministries and that her brother Phil was one of his students in the jail.

She was very happy to hear of his taking correspondence lessons in Christianity. This sister who formerly could not stand talking with her brother now visits him on visitors' day at the jail. She told him that now his glistening eyes, his smile and the softness in his voice, and the things he talks about are all new, different. She is happy that he does not even resemble the brother that she knew and thought was hopelessly lost. Phil hopes that she too will begin taking the same written lessons as he takes in jail. We hope that now they will have much to enjoy together during the visiting days each week.

Brian, 19, missed his senior year in jail. He has excelled in over thirty written lessons and exams since he was born again in the jail. He wants to spend his life studying and teaching the Word of God. For him he knows jail has been a wonderful place to learn what he would never have learned on the outside such as salvation by grace through Jesus Christ and Bible Doctrine. His mother is now attending bible classes; not even heavy rain to and from classes stops her! This is all new for this family and things are looking up. Suffering has been changed to blessing by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His unending happiness for all time and for all eternity to those who believe.

Since there is no speedy trial in the justice system, Jesus Christ is taking up the slack and turning suffering to blessing for these men. The powerful, the wealthy, the well-to-do, the schools, the government buildings, the corporate buildings will not listen and will not allow these messages so Jesus Christ makes it possible for the lowliest and the hopeless to hear what others do not want. Those forcibly humbled are hearing and are obeying the call of God in Jesus Christ.



Letters from the Inside

Rev Starling,

First I want to say thank you! Hello my name is Mandy Bwins. I am currently at Tennessee Prison for women and you came as a speaker and I was very inspired by your own story and message. I left the chapel that day refreshed and renewed with a better understanding of a lot of things. Thank you so much!

Dear Grace Prison Ministries,

My name is Jontay and incarcerated at HDC where I attend Tuesday night Bible Study with Keithian Starling. I thank God for sending Brother Starling to teach His Truth of the Word of God. I love how Bro Starling takes the time to break the word down for the new coming babies in Christ. The Truth of the Word has really made a major difference in me giving me a new hope in God where I now draw my strength from. I now share the Word of God with people and thank the Lord for Grace Ministries

Grace Prison Ministries

The way this ministry has improved my life is by giving me a hunger to study more. I'm constantly reading and researching all the scriptures provided in the sermons and the literature provided. Learning about how all sin began with Adam in the Garden of Eden. Additionally, the translations from Greek to English enriches the teachings. Thank you, God bless this ministry.

Keithian

Thank you so much for the sermon. I really needed to hear that about love. I've been focusing my life around God for about a year now and I'm really trying to stay in the grace of God. I learned that without love and the love of God you have nothing. Also the love that he gives me I should be able to give it to the next man and be willing to forgive and accept what wrong mankind does to me because God forgave me. Marriage is something that I am stepping in to the day I get released. We're both into the word and love the Lord. So the trials that Jesus went through for me I'm willing to go through the same for the Lord Jesus Christ at any and all costs. I'm so Thankful for what God has done for me, and what he is about to do for me. Thanks I needed to hear that message tonight. I ask that you pray for me and my wife-to-be and our kids. Please pray that He strengthens my relationship with him. I'm 23 and I'm so ready to walk for God at all cost. Thanks.

Dear Grace Prisons Ministries,

I have learned so much of the gospel from Keithian L. Starling, some of the things he said I feel like he is talking to me. I think it is going to change my life, I know it is helping me to learn the bible, a lot of things I didn't know about the word of God. Thank you so much for the blessing of the teaching from Keithian L. Starling. I have a whole new outlook on life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. "WOW". I learned that from Keithian, keep up the good work and thank you again. Robert

Grace Prison Ministries,

The teaching at Bible study allows me to no longer be conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of my mind. I thank Keithian for helping me get closer to God.

Dear Grace Prison Ministries,

I am incarcerated at Hill Detention Center in Davidson County TN and have been being taught by Keithian Starling on Tuesday nights and his teaching and understanding of the word has helped me increase my knowledge and understanding of the word and is truly one of the examples I use in knowing that I can change for the better and that God can change the outcome of any situation. He is helping me along with other sources to increase my faith, believe the word of God, and work towards ultimately letting go and letting God lead me. I'm not there yet but I truly think I'm getting there. So first, I want to thank the Lord for allowing me to meet and hear this man. I want to thank him and also Grace Prison Ministries for allowing him to do what he does. Thanks!!!!!!

Dear Grace Prisons Ministries,

My name is Gregory. I'm incarcerated at H.D.C. Mr. Starling is the Bible teacher. I attend the Tuesday service at 7:30. From the time I have first came the teaching have had an impact on my daily walk with Christ. Mr. Starling helps me continue through my trials in jail although sometimes I want to give up or don't understand. God always put on his heart to tell me and bring me back to God's truth. I thank God for the works He did in Mr. Starling. I always think if God saved him then he can save me.

Dear Grace Prison Ministries,

My name is Jesse Roberts I'm incarcerated at Blackwood. I attend the 7:00 services on Tuesday nights. Keithian Starling and the truth have fulfilled a great impact on my life daily by putting on the full armor of God daily. Learning the truth from Keithian through the word of God and knowing that he has been through some trials and tribulations in his life he can

really convey how Jesus has changed his life dramatically by trusting in him and not leaning on his own understanding. The Lord has made the impossible possible through brother Keithian overturning a 20-year sentence and releasing him after 2 years. This shows God's grace and mercy if we just have faith of a mustard seed . I want to thank God for allowing him to become the CEO of Grace Prisons Ministries to help find lost sheep out there. I know the wisdom and knowledge I learn from the gospel will help me.

Dear Grace Prison Ministries,

My name is Raymond. I am incarcerated at HDC. This service has been a great impact on my life. My bible study teacher Keithian Starling has taught me a lot about the Bible, God's word, and about myself, when I stand in God's eyes. It has changed my life and the thinking of my lifestyle. I was living a life that made me stumble and be in this situation I am right now. Now I know what true love, happiness, and peace is by believing on our Lord Jesus Christ. So I thank you for your time coming here and showing me the truth.

Dear Grace Prison Ministries,

My name is Michael I'm incarcerated at Hill Detention Center in Nashville. I have been attending the Tuesday night class for

2 months now. It has really helped me with a lot of things I'm battling with myself due to the things going on that I can no longer control. It helps me get through each week by studying the word on the armor of God to help battle the things that go through in my mind. Without this bible class I doubt I would know about the armor of God and that knowledge has been vital to my everyday life. It helps me more than I realize and I am extremely thankful for it.

Dear Grace Prison Ministries,

Good afternoon, first we express sincere appreciation for the book we received. However, we enjoy your visits a lot. The words you bring are always inspiring. We would hope that the business of your life-touching ministry would give you a chance to worship with us more. Some of the guys in our group have read this book and so far I can tell you we will be having some great conversations about it. Recently there is also quite a bit of opposition in regards to this true word. Right now the harvest is very plenty. Please send us any additional material that you can in order to support our cause for believing in true bible doctrine. The brothers have been really interested in knowing more about the word so pray for us that God will increase our knowledge to answer whatever question the opposition may throw at us.

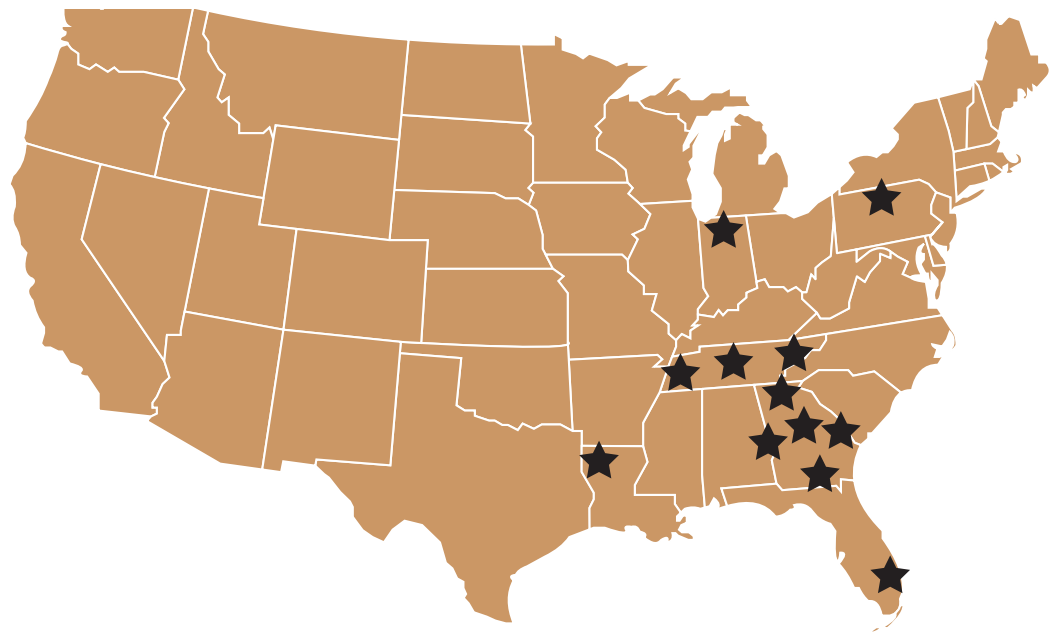
Our Presence



How Can I Be Saved?

by Keithian L. Starling

A simple and clear presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A tool for evangelism.



The Filling of the Holy Spirit: Living Life Wisely in Evil Times

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says,

"Awake, sleeper,

And arise from the dead,

And Christ will shine on you."

Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 5:11-18 NASB)

Paul in the previous verse (5:7) commanded the Ephesians not to be fellow participants with unbelievers whose lifestyle is characterized by sin, idolatry, and disobedience. They have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God, and receive God's judgment. (Eph. 5:6)

Paul knows that fellowship (close association) with them eventually leads to participating in their works. .

We must understand that unbelievers (those who have not trusted in Christ) are darkness, without the Holy Spirit, and slaves to sin, and do not have eternal life. We were slaves but were delivered at the moment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. We were placed in God's kingdom of light (Ephesians 5:8; Colossians 1:13), indwelt by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), freed from being dominated by the flesh (Romans 6:6-14), and have eternal life (John 3:16).

Believers who are of the light should hate the assembly of evil doers because their deeds are evil. We shouldn't hate the person but their deeds. Therefore, we don't closely associate with them.

King David was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22). He was devoted to God, and wanted to do God's will. He hated what God hated. (Psalm 26:4-5)

Listen to King David's words:

"I do not sit with deceitful men nor will I go with pretenders, I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked". Because of His love for Christ, His

word, and devotion to His will, David chose not to be closely associated with evil doers.

Warning for us all!!

- If we sit with them habitually
- We will participate in their works eventually

How many of you, after salvation, were ashamed of the things you used to do as an unbeliever? Scripture teaches us that those things lead to death (Rom.6:21). The man who loves God with his entire being (mind, will, emotions, and conscience) avoids any person or activity that causes him to deviate from obedience to God's word. God causes this individual to be productive as Ps. 1:1-2 tells us.

Paul understands this danger of close association so he gives another prohibition command:

"Do not participate with the unfruitful works of darkness

He introduces this prohibition with the negative **"Do Not"**. Here are two words that rebels hate. Why? Because rebels determine for themselves what is right or wrong. They like to function on their own will. They enjoy being their own god.

If the rebel is told to do something in his mind he says, "But I don't want to do that." If the rebel is told not to do something, he says, "But I want to do that."

The verb *participate* here is the present active imperative of the Greek verb *sugkoinoneo* meaning to be connected with. The present tense of the word here indicates that the obedience to the prohibition is to be habitually. The imperative mood which is the mood of command introduced with the negative "do not" gives a command to stop doing something one is continually doing. Paul is giving a negative command to the believers at Ephesus to not continue participating in an activity. **What activity? "The unfruitful works of darkness"**

Some of the Ephesians probably started associating closely with unbelievers. Before long they began to participate in their deeds. The deeds of the unbelievers were the deeds that used to characterize these believers' lives before they got saved. Some of them were in carnality.

What is carnality? It is when the believer is under the influence of His old sin-nature,

and living in sin. When a Christian sins he grieves the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30) and enters carnality, and begins to imitate the lifestyle of an unbeliever if he doesn't restore fellowship with God.

The unbelievers are slaves to their flesh, but the believer at times obeys the flesh instead of God. He loses the filling (influence) of the Holy Spirit in his life and reverts back to his old life.

Therefore the deeds that are prevalent amongst unbelievers become evident in the believers life. Such as:

- Sin
- Unbelief
- Rejection of authority
- Sexual immorality
- Idolatry

In his letter to the Corinthians Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit says believers are not even to closely associate with believers who are living a life of sin, immorality, and idolatry (1 Cor. 5:9-11).

Paul says unbelievers' works are unfruitful works of darkness. Here these unfruitful works are a contrast to the fruit of the light we saw and see in Eph. 5:9 which characterize children of the light. The lives of those born into God's family through faith in Jesus Christ, should be characterized by goodness, righteousness, and truth.

The Greek adjective *akarpos* translated into English unfruitful carries the idea of fruit that is useless or unproductive. The darkness is the source of these *unfruitful* works.

The believers once were in the darkness of Satan's domain (Eph. 2:1-3). In that state their lives were characterized by unbelief, sin, and disobedience. They are born again now of the Spirit, and are light in the Lord by faith in Jesus Christ.

Why should believers participate in the sins that come from the place from which they had previously been in bondage?

Please see Romans 6:1-23.

What must the believer do instead of participating in the unfruitful works of darkness? Believers are not to condone or excuse the works of darkness through participating in them.

"But instead expose them" They are to expose or bring to light those works. Here we see the conjunction *but* which introduces

a contrast. Instead of participating in the unfruitful works of darkness, believers are to expose them. The Greek verb translated *expose* is the present imperative of the verb *elegcho* meaning to bring to light, expose, or convict. The idea is that of confronting somebody or something with the aim of showing him or her to be at fault. We see this word in Matt. 18:15.

Our Lord Jesus Christ says that we are to go to our brother and show him his fault. Our Lord Jesus Christ also said people who do evil hate light (John 3:20). In Luke 3:19 Herod was reprimanded by John the Baptist because he was involved with his brother Philip's wife, and Herod had done a lot of other wicked things. Herod hated John for this exposure and eventually killed him.

Paul commanded the young Pastor Timothy to rebuke those who were continuing in sin. (1 Tim 5:20). Paul also told him in 2 Timothy 4:2 to be ready to rebuke. Paul told Titus to reprove with all authority those who don't follow doctrine (Titus 2:15). My friends and especially pastors: exposing and rebuking sin is biblical.

If we see believers breaking God's commandments as a way of life, and if we are in a place of leadership in the church, we are to convict and rebuke them in love through the example of our lives. If the church doesn't deal with sin in its midst it can ruin itself and its witness in the world.

Paul wrote the Corinthians about correcting and disciplining the sinning believer in the church (1 Cor. 5). We are not to rebuke the sinning believer in sinful anger, pride, or hatred but in humility, and love. We seek their restoration to fellowship with God for God's glory, their benefit, and for the benefit of others. Some people do not like to see their sins, and may reject correction. They may dislike you for rebuking them (see Prov. 9:7-8; Prov. 15:12; Prov. 13:18, Prov. 29:1). Should we be concerned about others hating us? No!

We are here to please the Lord. We are responsible to Him to expose the deeds of darkness through our lifestyle. We are to shake the dust off our feet and keep moving in prayer.

I am not saying go around telling everyone they are sinning, but to live in such a way around others that they will know themselves that they are sinning, and see their need to repent, and seek God.

Those in leadership at times must expose through rebuking. We can't do this if we are participating in the unfruitful works of

darkness ourselves. We are to point out the ways of error especially if the person is a believer in Jesus Christ.

Believers are to judge the other believers in the church (1 Cor. 5:12-13). We are to correct them and show them their error.

We are to live before unbelievers in a godly manner, and support the truth which will expose their sins. A believer's lifestyle should be a light to all those participating in the works of darkness.

The Corinthians failed to expose at first the sin of sexual immorality. They misunderstood Paul in his first letter. They thought he was speaking of no association with unbelievers. So they didn't rebuke the believer having sex with his father's mother. Living in the world we will always be around unbelievers but we don't need to be buddy-buddy with them.

Paul told them not to closely associate with a so-called brother [a believer] who is continuing in sin. (1 Cor. 5:9-13)

If he is:

- **Immoral** (committing sexual sins such as adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality)
- **Greedy** (never satisfied with what God has given him but always lust for more)
- **An Idolater** (putting people and things in the place of God)
- **A reviler** (antagonistic toward spiritual things)
- **A drunkard** (a person controlled by alcohol to the point his senses are dull and he engages in an immoral and undisciplined lifestyle)
- **A Swindler** (someone who tricks people out of their money and possessions for personal gain)

Paul says under the inspiration of God "Do not closely associate" with this person. Here is the church taking disciplinary action. The believer committing these sins has chosen to remain in carnality and sin. He is rejecting the teaching of the word of God. He is under God's discipline. Therefore we should not closely associate with him.

Why do you think Paul wanted the church to take this action and remove the sinning believer from their midst? The church is called to walk in holiness, and it is to take measures to maintain its holiness. (1 Peter 1:15). Those continuing in sin can distract the church from the standard of God's word and cause it-self to be defiled. We are to put that person out into Satan's domain, the world, and the consequence is a life of ruin

eventually leading to death if the believer doesn't repent.

What do we do when a believer repents of His sins? We are to forgive him and restore him to the fellowship of the brethren. We are to no longer treat him like an outcast. (See 2 Cor. 2:4-11; Luke 17:3-4; Matt. 18:21-35)

Why expose the unfruitful works of darkness? For the things done in secret by them are shameful even to mention. (Eph. 5:12)

For introduces the reason for exposing the unfruitful deeds of darkness. It could be translated because. The unfruitful works are done secretly. This also is evidence that Paul is dealing with the carnal believers.

Darkness hides things. Darkness hides sins that should be exposed by the light. Job tells us that everything is light to God. God sees even those things done in secret like adultery (Job. 24:13-12). The adulterer waits for the twilight, saying, "**no eye will see me**"; but God sees all things.

The Bible says unbelievers love the darkness because their deeds are evil (John 3:19-21). We see some of the works of darkness in Rom. 1:22-32.

Here in Eph. 5:12 we see a reference to believers who try to be secret about their sins. They try to be secret about their involvement in the unfruitful works of darkness. They know that these things are shameful for a believer to even be participating in. So they try to be secret about them.

"But everything that is exposed by light is made known (visible)!" (Eph. 5:13)

What believers do in secret is to be brought to the light through exposing (convicting), and rebuking.

What are believers taught when their sins get exposed by light?

I. The things they are participating in secret are shameful and ugly.

II. The importance of repentance, to restore close fellowship with God and other believers, and through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, produce the fruit of the light.

Paul's Conclusion of Eph. 5:3-14:

"Therefore it says; wake up, O sleeper and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon you." (Eph. 5:14).

The conjunction *therefore* is used by Paul to make a conclusion of what the paragraph and verses just discussed (v. 3-13).

Let's look at this phrase: "**Arise from the**

dead” Unbelievers who reside in Satan’s domain of darkness are spiritually dead and separated from God, doomed to spend eternity in the lake of fire forever if they die without Christ. (Matt. 25:41; Hebrew 9:27; Rev.20:11-15)

Believers through faith in Jesus Christ are delivered from Satan’s domain of darkness, forgiven of sins, and destined to spend eternity with God in heaven (Col. 1:13-14).

Some believers even though delivered from Satan’s domain at salvation are co-participants with the works of darkness.

What happens when a believer remains in carnality? He grieves (Eph. 4:30) and quenches the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19). He is temporarily dead or temporarily separated from God, and the spiritual life.

The believer needs to be restored to fellowship with God. He needs to make a decision to get off the path of darkness and death, and get on to the path of light and life. The path of light is characterized by goodness, righteousness, and truth. This is the path that pleases God.

Death in the Bible means separation from or inability to function in a particular realm.

There are different deaths in the Bible. Let’s look at them:

1) Spiritual death Spiritual death is the separation from God. As a result of the fall, all human beings are born physically alive, but spiritually dead, captives of “the domain of darkness.” (Gen. 2:17; Col. 1:13; Rom. 6:23)

2) Positional death Positional death is the separation from sin and the sin nature. Every believer is made spiritually alive and placed in union with Christ at salvation by the Holy Spirit. We now have the God-given ability to choose in every moment of our lives whether we will serve our old sin-nature, (which will not be taken away until we die physically or at the rapture of the church), or serve our new nature. (Rom. 6:1-4; 10-11; Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:12; 20, 3:3)

3) Temporal death Temporal death is carnality, separation from fellowship with God. Every time we sin, we enter temporal death (James 1:15, Rom. 8:2,6, 13; 1 Timothy 5:6; Eph. 5:14)

4) Operational death Operational death is separation of our profession of faith from the practice of that faith (James 2:26; 1 John 1:5-6)

5) Sexual death Sexual death is the inability to function sexually (Rom.4:19-20; Hebrew 11:11-12).

6) Physical death Physical death is separation of the soul and body--the

inability to function in the physical realm. (Heb. 9:27; Gen. 5:5)

7) The second death The second death is the judgment of unbelievers, eternal separation from God. (Rev. 19-20)

Here in our present study we see temporal death. When a believer sins he grieves the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30). He is temporarily dead or temporarily separated from fellowship with God, and separated from the spiritual life. (Please see The Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-24)

The believers who are continuing in sin are also in operational death. They have separated the profession of their faith from their practice. (1 John 1:5-6) If we say we believe that God is righteous our lifestyle should profess this truth.

Paul then says that Christ will shine on them with approval when they restore fellowship. (Eph. 5:14)

Application from Ephesians 5:11-14:

- It is not appropriate for believers to live like unbelievers in conduct and speech.
- The consequence for unbelief and rebellion is that unbelievers will receive God’s judgment.
- Believers living like unbelievers will be disciplined by God (Heb. 12:4-11)
- God’s purpose of disciplining the believers is to separate us from sin, so that we may be like Him.
- Since we see that there are consequences for living in rebellion, and we are of the light, we should not participate with unbelievers or their works.
- We are to stop participating with the works of darkness but expose them through our godly conduct and by rebuking those who continue committing sins in secret.
- Believers who are committing sins in secret need to restore fellowship with God to avoid discipline and receive blessing and rewards. May we represent our Savior in the midst of a dark world of immorality, greed, and idolatry.
- We are to be filled with the Spirit as a way of life.
- Learn, think, and through the Spirit’s help apply what we learn from God’s word to life.

Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5:15-18)

Paul begins these next verses with the conjunction therefore which connects the verses that follow with the verses before. He exhorts the Ephesians to conduct themselves cautiously or circumspectly (watchful), not as unwise or foolish men carrying out the deeds of the flesh (Eph. 2:3) which characterize their old unbelieving life. They are to make the most of every opportunity in these evil times pleasing the Lord (Eph. 5:15-16).

Instead of being unwise and foolish, they are to be wise men comprehending the will of the Lord (5:17). Please know that knowing God’s will is one thing but actually doing the will of God is another. We are not wise if we just know information about God’s will. We are wise when we apply that information to life and how we live our lives on planet earth.

The unwise don’t live according to God’s will revealed in His word. They are governed by their old sin-nature (the flesh) serving self, whereas the wise are governed by the will of the Lord and serve God.

The wise believer has acquired knowledge of the Lord’s will through studying the word of God related to salvation, and the spiritual life and lives accordingly. The wise believer allows the word of God to influence His thinking and actions.

The Holy Spirit is the one who gives insight into God’s plan (John 16:13) revealed in the word of God, and empowers one to do the will of the Lord. The Gentile unbeliever does not have the Holy Spirit, and rejects God’s revelation (His word). Therefore he is foolish and governed by his flesh.

The Ephesians should not to be like those who reject God and His plan for their lives and live according to the flesh.

Drunkenness (Eph 5:18)

Is it wise to get drunk with wine?

And do not get drunk with wine, in which there is dissipation (excess), but be filled by the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 5:18)

Here we have the definition of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Here the Apostle Paul tells the believer how wisdom is evident in the believer’s conduct.

Paul begins with a negative and follows with a positive as he did earlier in v. 15 and 17. The conjunction *and* gives detail to the statement previously said, contrasting foolishness and understanding. So Paul is further explaining that the preceding statement could be translated *namely, that*

is, and so.

The verb translated *drunk* is a present imperative of the Greek verb **methusko** meaning *to get drunk or to be intoxicated*. This verb is introduced by the negative *not*.

The negative *not* turns the command into a prohibition. Whenever you see a negative introducing a present imperative it suggests that the person giving the command is exhorting someone to stop doing something they were presently doing or prohibiting them from a course of action.

Paul is exhorting the Ephesians to stop doing something and they are to make it a habitual action. It can be rendered **"Stop!"** And make it a habit not to do it. Paul is giving a charge to believers not to allow this drunken behavior to become a habit in their lives because this would be unwise and foolish living.

Intoxication or drunkenness gives a person the inability to have self-control, and leads him to commit all kinds of distasteful acts and works of the flesh. People who are intoxicated are not in control of their mental faculties and therefore act very foolishly (See Noah in Gen. 9:20-21; 1 Cor. 11:21-34). A drunk person is unable to intelligently understand the will of the Lord. His senses are dull.

Paul after giving the prohibition against drunkenness turns to the means of drunkenness using the Greek **oinos** meaning *beverage made from fermented juice of the grape* translated **wine**.

Wine was common in that day in time. Paul is not prohibiting drinking wine but becoming intoxicated with it. We see another prohibition of drunkenness in Proverbs (Prov. 23:31-35).

Wisdom's warning here is to avoid the enticement of wine's beauty and taste. Wisdom says wine bites like a serpent and stings like a viper (a poisonous snake). Wisdom says when you give in to the temptation your eyes will see strange things and your mind will utter perverse things.

Wisdom illustration in Proverbs 23 (verse 34) is that of a drunken sailor who falls into the sea and drowns; or goes to sleep in a crow's nest. The drunkard will drown like a drunken sailor in the sea (Boy he's foolish). A drunk may be involved in a fight but in such a stupor that he does not feel the blows to his body.

Proverbs is a book that teaches a lot on living life wisely as Paul is exhorting the Ephesians to do in this present context.

Other passages mentioning drinking wine

are (John 2:3, Romans 14:21, 1 Tim. 3:13, 1 Timothy 3:8 –). From these verses we see that:

- Drinking wine is allowed but one should not drink it if it causes a brother to stumble.
- Being addicted to wine disqualified a person desiring to serve in the office of overseer or pastor in a local church.
- Being addicted to wine also disqualified a person from being a deacon in the local church.

"in which there is dissipation (excess)";

The word translated *dissipation* carries the idea of excess. Paul says drunkenness with wine is an excess. The Greek word **asotia** carries the idea of wastefulness.

Aristotle discusses the term *asotia* stating that people with this vice are prodigals who waste their substance and are in the path of ruination of their own lives. Most prodigals squander their money in debauchery (immoral, corrupt behavior as in orgies).

They have no high moral standard, and readily give in to the temptation of pleasure. They are like those who are wealthy and who know they only have a little time to spend their wealth and waste it on luxurious banquets. The word *luxurious* is used of in the sense of being wasteful or without restraint.

The drunkard lives a wild and undisciplined life, and could ruin their entire life. We see **asotia** three times in the New Testament:

1. **Titus 1:6** - where believers are told to select men whose children are believers who are not accused of *debauchery* or *dissipation* (immoral, corrupt, wasteful living)
2. **1 Peter 4:4** - mentions that those in the world are surprised that believers do not join them in their excesses of *dissipation* or *ruination*.
3. **Luke 15:13** - where it relates to the prodigal son squandering all of his money in *immoral living*. This was a story with spiritual meaning. It gives a portrait of a believer out of fellowship with God. He is pursuing a life of pleasure.

In our present context Paul deals with the disorderly life resulting from lack of self-control. It refers to people who waste their resources to gratify their fleshly desires.

They lack discipline that leads to excesses which leads them to ruin their own lives. The drunk person lacks understanding and control. Paul instructs believers not to be drunk with wine which causes unrestrained,

immoral living, leading only to ruin.

The Ephesians are children of light and are to not live their lives as natural men live their lives, that is wasteful and in ruin.

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

...But be filled by the Holy Spirit

Paul here gives a contrast to being drunk with wine.

- When a person is drunk he is controlled by alcohol and thinks and acts in ways that are not like his usual self.
- When a Christian is controlled or influenced by the Holy Spirit he thinks and acts in ways that is not natural to him. His life is governed by the Holy Spirit who lives in him, and is not controlled by his old sin-nature.

The verb *be filled* is the Greek present imperative of the verb *pleroo* meaning to be *continually filled*. Here Christians are commanded to be filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit continuously as a way of life.

There are three types of people in the world today (1 Cor. 2: 14 - 3: 1-3) :

1. The Unregenerate man

- He is of the flesh and dominated by the flesh. (Rom. 8:5-6)
- Without Christ
- Living in darkness
- Understands not the things of God

2. The Spiritual Man

- The Christian controlled by the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Eph. 5:18-20)
- Living in the light
- Advancing to Spiritual Maturity in Christ
- Understands the things of God

3. The Carnal Man

- The Christian controlled and influenced by the Flesh--or old sin-nature. (Gal. 5:21-22; 1 Cor. 3:1-3)
- Living in darkness
- Baby in Christ
- understands not the deep things of God

There is only one here who is spiritual and living the Christian life. It is the one with the Spirit and who is filled by the Holy Spirit.

Please know that we cannot live the Christian life in our own strength but the Holy Spirit can if we allow him. The Christian life is a life influenced by the indwelling Holy Spirit and the Word of God. We are missing it in this area as Christians. Many don't even understand that the Christian life is a spiritual life.

It is called the spiritual life because the Holy Spirit is to influence our lives. When we are controlled by the Holy Spirit we are living

continued on next page

the Spiritual life. When our thinking and life is governed by the Spirit and the Word whereby we will grow to spiritual maturity and Christ-likeness we are living the spiritual life.

The Apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gave us a command to be filled by the Holy Spirit:

Being filled or controlled by the Spirit isn't a one shot thing. We are always in need of continuous filling of the Spirit for spiritual victory in the Christian life.

The filling of the Spirit is different from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit happens at salvation and relates to our position in Christ. It only happens once and cannot be repeated.

The moment we trust Christ as savior we are placed in Christ and made part of the universal body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:13)

The filling of the Spirit relates to our Christian lives after salvation and happens more than once. Because of the indwelling sin-nature, and our giving in to temptation at times, there are always areas of our lives that need to be brought under the Spirit's control.

How can a believer be filled by the Spirit?

For us to understand how to be controlled by the Spirit we must understand what grieves the Holy spirit that lives in us? According to Ephesians 4:30 sin and disobedience to God's word grieves the Holy Spirit, and place us back under the influence of our old sin-nature.

When we are under the control of our sin-nature or in carnality we are not advancing in the plan of God, and not spiritual. We are on the my way high way. Without cleanse of sins committed we begin to imitate the life of the unbeliever and the deeds that are prevalent amongst those who reject God become evident in the believer's life:

- Sin
- disobedience
- Unbelief
- Rejection of authority
- Sexual immorality
- Greed
- Idolatry

Disobedience causes us to lose the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. So obedience maintains the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Instead of imitating the lifestyle of the unbeliever we begin to in the power of the Holy spirit imitate the life of Christ.

Some Scriptures that demands obedience from God's people:

Do not fear, For I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isa. 41:10)

Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you. (Deut. 20)

Do not enter the path of the wicked. (Proverb 4:14)

Do not weary yourself to gain wealth. (Prov. 23:4)

Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine (Prov. 23:20)

Do not associate with gossip (Pro. 20:19)

Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles. (Prov. 24:17)

Do not say, "I will repay evil", wait for the lord, and He will save you. (Prov. 20:22)

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth. (Matt 6:19)

Do not judge lest you be judged. (Matt. 7:1)

Do not allow a women to teach or exercise authority over a man. (1 Timothy 2:2:12)

Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. (Philippians 2:4)

Do not be bound together with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14)

Do not neglect doing good and sharing. (Hebrews 13:16)

Do not lie to one another since you laid aside the old self. (Col 3:9)

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved you. (Eph 5:25)

Wives be submissive to your own husband (1 Peter 3:11)

Children be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. (Col. 3:20)

The word of God is the spiritual food which causes us to grow to maturity as we obey the principles in the power of the Spirit. (Please see James 1:22-25, 1 Peter 2:2, John 6:63)

God's word has the power to:

- a) **Change us** (1 Thess. 2:13)
- b) **Keep us from sinning** (Ps. 119:9-11)
- c) **Give us standards by which all else is to be measured** (Ps. 119:89-91)
- d) **Guide us** (Ps. 119:105)
- e) **Instruct and encourages us** (Rom. 15:4)
- f) **Warn and caution us about the**

mistakes of others

g) **Cause us to know God better**

h) **Teach, correct, and train us in righteousness.** (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Rom. 12:2)

If we fail to study and apply God's word we are wasting our time. Head knowledge is not the goal of the Christian life but life change through application of the Word to life.

We build a firm foundation through obedience but will suffer ruin if we are not obeying (Matt. 7:24-27; James 1:22-25). God wants His children to be obedient and dedicated to His word. (Ezr. 7:10-11)

What do we do when we have grieved the Holy Spirit through disobedience?

Acknowledge our sins to God in prayer (1 John 1:9, Psalm 32) and continue to learn and apply the principles of God's word to life. When our thinking and decisions are governed by God's word we are living the Spiritual life. It is just that simple!

What is the evidence that I am living the Spiritual life?

- I. Christ-like character is developing (5:22-23)
- II. Attitude of gratitude (Eph. 5:19-20)
- III. We have a submissive attitude towards those in authority
- IV. When we view life from God's perspective
- V. When we follow God's ways and obey his word as a way of life.

If these are not evident in your life:

You need to get back in fellowship with God because you are not living the Spiritual life and risk being discipline by God.

God is looking for fruit in our life, and that fruit is impossible to blossom without being in constant fellowship with Him (**1 John 15**).

John gives us in His letter what it means to fellowship with God in 1 John 1:5-2:2.

We must understand that:

- God is righteous and Holy
- He cannot fellowship with sin
- God judges sin
- Sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:11)
- Confession of sins restores fellowship with God and the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives
- God forgives post-salvation sins on the basis of what Christ did on the cross over 2000 years ago.

Grace Prison Ministries At-A-Glance

Grace Prison Ministries Inc. is a Christian, grace-oriented, nonprofit organization incorporated in Tennessee which focuses on changing the lives of prisoners and their families through evangelism and sound Bible teaching.

GPM travels to jails, prisons, and youth detention centers throughout the United States; evangelizing individuals with the message of Jesus Christ at four to five institutions per month. This activity is important because the message of Jesus Christ brings hope, forgiveness, and change to those incarcerated. This way, those incarcerated can become law-abiding citizens and good role models in our society. Upon our visits we provide Bibles for those in need of Bibles. In conjunction with the above activities GPM has the following ministries which are designed to bring glory to Jesus Christ and edification to believers:



Discipleship by mail



Grace Prison Ministries

Discipleship through Mail

The Discipleship through Mail outreach is designed to equip new believers in the basic fundamental doctrines for living the normal Christian life. Bible lessons and resources are mailed to individual students in various prisons, jails, and youth detention centers, providing them an opportunity to learn and grow at their own pace. These lessons are reviewed and then mailed back to the students with comments that will provide a greater understanding of Bible truths. Upon completion of the basics, students are rewarded with a study Bible, which is hard for some to get in prison.

Operation Impact Lives

Operation Impact Lives is a group of believers partnering to impact the lives of prisoners. O.I.L. is comprised of pastors, evangelists, and church leaders. Periodically, conferences are held in prisons, jails and youth detention centers where pastors, evangelists and passionate believers join together to fulfill the great commission (presenting the Gospel and equipping the saints). We take the gospel, sound Bible teaching, and resources to them which gives prisoners hope, purpose, and a new way of thinking.



Operation Impact Lives

(cont.)

Grace Refuge Transition Facility

In an effort to assist recently released inmates, GPM offers temporary housing, food, clothing, and limited transportation.



Grace Refuge Transition Facility

Charis Bible Institute

Grace Prison Ministries partnering with Bible Training Centre for Pastors formed Charis Bible Institute in June 2011 which seeks to extend non-formal theological training free of charge by forming Bible institutes in prisons for those growing to maturity in Christ and have expressed interest in getting training for local church ministry and missionary work aboard. The best pastor, evangelist, and teacher is one who came from that culture and properly trained. We are now extending our service to churches



Charis Bible Institute

Spreading the Word

GPM welcomes any invitation to come spread God's word and to share what God is doing through GPM. Keithian and the GPM team are willing to travel to any state to disseminate His message to those who are lost and without hope and those interested in learning about this ministry. Every day that is given to us is an opportunity to share His word and make an impact in the lives of the others. Preaching and teaching opportunities are not limited to youth detention centers, jails and prisons. Keithian has also taught at churches, conferences, youth camps, schools, retirement homes and hospitals. We need your continued support both in prayers and financial contributions.

Thank you to all who have shared with this ministry in the dissemination of the word of God. This is a grace ministry. We trust God to meet our needs as they arise. Please learn more about our ministry on our website www.graceprisons.org.



Keithian at a Nashville Jail

Financial Policy: Grace Prison Ministries is a Christian non-denominational, mission minded, and Bible teaching non-profit tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (3). All contributions to this grace ministry are tax deductible. G.P.M. offers its services free of charge. We trust God to meet the needs of this ministry. We do not solicit funds but operate entirely on voluntary contributions. When understanding the need to reach lost souls with the good news and sound Bible teaching motivate you to contribute, you have the privilege of giving and sharing in the dissemination of the Word of God. This is a grace ministry.

Grace Prison Ministries, Inc.

P.O. Box 171052

Nashville, TN 37217

Urgent! Prayer Requests

- ❖ Believers to be revived all over the world
- ❖ More open doors for prison and jail ministry
- ❖ Open doors for sound Bible Training schools in prisons
- ❖ guidance as we seek to spread the gospel and truth
- ❖ More labors who are filled with love and passion for the lost
- ❖ Strength and health for Keithian and all who serve the Lord through Grace Prison Ministries
- ❖ More monthly support to continue our mission endeavors
- ❖ GPM weekly prison Bible studies
- ❖ Funds to support those serious believers transitioning from incarceration
- ❖ Doors to open for Jobs for those being released from prison and jail
- ❖ Safe travels as we take the gospel of Christ and truth around the country and where ever God opens the door
- ❖ Provisions to continue to provide Bibles for those we serve
- ❖ Protection for Keithian and Pakistan Mission Trip in November 25 - December 10, 2013

The Filling of the Holy Spirit *continued*

- Obedience is fellowship with God. Only through a life of obedience do we bear fruit because we are filled by the Holy Spirit and not the flesh.

Divine viewpoint vs. human viewpoint

God's thinking is called divine viewpoint. When the believer thinks like God thinks that is a sign of living the spiritual life.

Paul tells us that we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16) The mind of Christ is God's divine revelation, the word of God. The Bible is God's thinking on every matter.

The Bible promotes God's thoughts.

The world promotes Satan's thoughts.

Most movies, TV. shows, promote Satan's thoughts about life and how we should live our lives on planet earth. When our thoughts leave God's word out, we are thinking how Satan wants us to think. We are being worldly. Being worldly is when we adopt Satan's ideas, concepts, attitudes, and methods to live out our lives. We are told not to love the Kosmos (world) (1 John 2:12-15).

We are not to look at things from Satan's point of view as Eve did in the garden. (Gen 3:6)

He will present evil in a way that seems like the good, right, and proper thing to do.

We are to trust God's word to direct us. It is so easy to be deceived by Satan and adopt his worldly thinking. Listen to Jeremiah the Prophet in (Jeremiah 17:5-8):

Illustration:

When you as a believer are having marital issues where should you go for advice on how to deal with behavior problems in marriage? Do you seek Christian counseling or psychological counseling?

Answer: We should go to God and His word

But some have bought in to the thinking of the world that we should seek counseling instead of God. Some Christians have adopted another method of dealing with mental and behavior issues.

They turn to: -----

- **Psychological counseling**

or

- **Christian counseling**

Originally Satan was a beautiful Creature

and knows how to present evil as a beautiful thing.

Is the Christian life us living the life or Christ living the life through us?

The Christian life is Christ living his life through us through his Spirit and Word.

Our responsibility is to stay in fellowship with Him through obedience. Even our obedience is the work of the Holy Spirit. We just bring our will to the Lord.

We are changed as we contemplate Christ as Moses was changed as He spent time on mount Sinai (2 Cor. 3:17-18, Ex. 34:29-35)

What is the goal of the Christian Life?

Answer: Life change--or to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ in thought, character, conduct, and conversation, and therefore glorify God.

God uses all things to accomplish His will in our lives. (Rom. 8:28-29)

