Ephesians 5:9-14

I want to camp out on one single exhortation in this week's lesson… "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them." It is crucial that we not turn a blind eye to the machinations of the evil one. As we said a few weeks ago, a faithful Christian is one who boldly and clearly speaks about the depraved intentions and plans of our enemy.

1. The initial expectation
    a. Notice that Paul begins with an exhortation to personal holiness
    b. We are to "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness…"
        i. This means that we must concern ourselves, first, with personal holiness
        ii. Many people seem to think that their sin gives excuse to refuse the clear instruction of the rest of the verse
            1. I have heard numerous Christians mention their own sin and say "who am I to judge?"
            2. The truth is that this sentiment is so deadly because it is half right!
            3. We shouldn't be hypocrites but, by God's grace, we don't have to be!
            4. Paul's admonition here assumes that we actually can walk in the light and this assumption is grounded in the fact that we are saved and therefore being sanctified by the Spirit
    c. If you are indeed a new creation then you are indwelt by the power of God which means that you have at your disposal what you need to avoid the pursuits of darkness
        i. Will we occasionally stumble? Absolutely!
        ii. Does this mean that we should cease our labor to avoid sin? Absolutely not!
        iii. Instead, we should walk in the light and, whenever we swerve, immediately and completely repent
    d. Notice here that Paul assumes that Christians can do this! This means that we are not being faithful to our confession if we are unable to speak to the issues of the day because of unrepentant, lingering sin
2. The clear exhortation
    a. The call here is not simply to personal holiness
    b. Paul does not simply say "don't be like them!"
    c. Instead, the Apostle says that we are both to avoid walking in the sinful ways of the world AND expose the works of those who do
    d. The word expose means to bring to light (we see this in the rest of the context of our passage)
    e. How do we do such a thing?
        i. First, we speak the truth in the public square
            1. Notice here that this is not a text solely about life in the body

2. Instead, the Apostle expects that we would boldly speak the truth about God to those who do not know Him
3. Once again, this odd division that we have concocted between “private religion” and “public life” is foreign to the Bible

ii. Second, we speak in order to expose
1. Our goal is to show sin for what it is
2. This means that we speak about hidden objectives and the calamitous outcomes of sin
3. We do not tolerate nefarious figures who lurk in our culture in order to lampoon those who are unsuspecting, naïve or easily tempted

iii. Third, we speak as a product of love
1. Why do we cal out these things? The answer is that we believe that sin kills and, therefore, our love for our fellow man demands that we speak
2. If we really believe that the penalty of sin is death and that those who walk in darkness are walking in a path of both temporary and eternal misery, then we must speak