

Ashdod - cont.

Some Christians will use euphemisms like: darn - a euphemism for damn; doggone - a euphemism for "G.D."; gee - a euphemism for Jesus; golly or gosh - a euphemism for God; and, heck - a euphemism for hell.

The Social Language of Ashdod

Some Christians speak what I would call the "social language of Ashdod". They use culture terms to downplay their sin or the sin of others.

Some Christians speak of an "alternative lifestyle" instead of saying "homosexuality" (Romans 1:26-27). Some say "pro-choice" instead of abortion (Romans 13:9). Some say "I'm only human" instead of admitting they are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Some say "an affair ... make love" instead of calling it fornication or adultery (1 Corinthians 13:5). Some talk about "No fault divorce" instead of remaining married for life (Matthew 19:6).

The Language of Ashdod Then and Now

What was the problem in Nehemiah's day? The problem was that God's

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people lived on the border of sin. They mixed with the world and they did not guard their marriages and families from worldly language (1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14ff; 1 John 2:15-17)

What was the solution? The solution practiced by Nehemiah was vigorous correction (Nehemiah 13:25-27). May we always learn to speak the language of God's truth (1 Peter 4:11) and never get so close to the world that we begin to speak the language of Ashdod. - *Chris Reeves*

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

In those days also saw I the Jews that had married women of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people - Nehemiah 13:23-24 -

Around 432 B.C., when Nehemiah returned to his people in Jerusalem after being away in Persia for awhile, he witnessed some disturbing activity. There was fellowship with the enemy, failure to pay the tithes, and Sabbath-breaking. There was also another problem. Some of the Jewish men had married foreign women and their children spoke half in the language of Ashdod and could not speak in the Jews' language (Nehemiah 13:23-27).

This inability on the part of the children to speak as a Jew showed the result of God's people mixing with the world. Their speaking in the language of Ashdod (the language of their mother) showed that they had been influenced by outsiders. In the same way today, Christians speak the "language of Ashdod" when they talk like the world around them.

The Religious Language of Ashdod

Some Christians speak what I would call the "religious language of Ashdod". They use religious terms like the denominations around them.

Some Christians talk about being a "born-again Christian" (compare with 1 Pet. 4:16). They call the preacher a "Pastor" (compare with Ephesians 4:11; Acts 20:17,28; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Acts 14:23) or "Reverend" (compare with (Psalm 111:9). They speak of the Lord's supper as a "sacrament" (compare with 1 Corinthians 11:24). They say "my church" or "our church" (Acts 20:28). They say "I'm church of Christ" (compare with Romans 16:16; Acts 11:26). They speak of Sunday as the "Christian Sabbath" (compare with Luke 23:56-24:1; Exodus 20:8-11). They tell others to "join the church of your choice" (compare with Matthew 16:18). They give their "witness" (compare with Acts 1:8). They say "Accept Jesus as personal Savior" (compare with Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38). They talk about their at the church building "fellowship hall" (compare with 1 John 1:3, 7).

The Moral Language of Ashdod

Some Christians speak what I would call the "moral language of Ashdod". They speak bad words like the world and it neg-

atively effects their morality and influence with others.

Some Christians use profanity and corrupt speech in violation of passages like Romans 2:24 and Ephesians 4:29 (see also Exodus 20:7). Other Christians speak blasphemy. This is "impious and reproachful speech injurious to the divine majesty" (Thayer, 362). "When applied to God, it means to speak of him unjustly, to ascribe to him acts and attributes which he does not possess, or to speak impiously or profanely" (Albert Barnes' comment on Matthew 9:3).

Other Christians use profanity and corrupt speech. Corrupt speech is speech "of poor quality, bad, unfit for use, worthless" (Thayer, 640). "Then it is used in a moral sense, as our word 'corrupt' is, to denote that which is depraved, evil, contaminating, and may denote here anything that is obscene, offensive, or that tends to corrupt others" (Barnes).

Some Christians use euphemisms. A euphemism is "the use of a word or phrase that is less expressive or direct but considered less distasteful, less offensive, etc. than another" (Webster, 630).
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