

Be Ye Separate.

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Be Ye Separate.

Being a few words addressed to
all Christians.

Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate,
saith the Lord.—2 *Cor.* vi. 17.

EVERY Christian realises that a Christian's life is to be separate from all that is evil, but few enter into the full meaning of separation.

The above Scripture is addressed to the Corinthian saints that they as believers, should be separate from unbelievers, from all unrighteousness, darkness, infidels,

etc., and that God would receive them. So we see on the one side the world and its composition, and on the other side, GOD. To be separated *unto* God means to be separated *from* the world. Sin is the cause of the separation from God, and ever since sin came into the world, the course of the world has been in separation from God.

Death has reigned throughout, but Christ having come, and overcome death and him that had the power of death, and brought in life and liberty, those who put their trust in Him have passed from death into life. They are placed in a separate path, and whereas the world walks in the

path of sin and death, they are called to walk in a path of life and holiness. They are dead to the world and alive to God. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3). We are viewed before God as those who once walked according to the course of this world, and dead in trespasses and sins, but now quickened together with Christ and seated with him in the heavenly places (Eph. ii.). There can be no fellowship between the two positions. We are called unto the fellowship of His Son (1 Cor. i. 9), and a Christian's fellowship is with all those who have the same calling as himself.

Christ has been rejected and crucified by the world, and now has no more to do with the world, and to be with Christ we must share His place of rejection, and be separate from the world.

We see throughout Scripture the same principle. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. When the evil had reached such a state that God repented that He had made man, Noah alone found grace with God, and for 120 years he was a marked man in separation, building the ark, and showing the only way of escape from coming judgment. Then later on, when evil was still abounding, Abram is

called to separate himself from his country and from his father's house, and to be in a place of God's appointing, and it was in the place of separation that he received the promises. Then the child of promise was separated from the child of the bondwoman, and later on the bride for Isaac is called to separate from her kindred, and to share Isaac's place.

These are full of typical teaching. Enoch was a marked man in separation from the world in its natural course, but Noah saw the world under condemnation, and was a testimony for God. Then after the flood the whole world was of one language and one speech, but

through sinning against God, their language was mixed, and they were divided and scattered. From the midst of this confusion, Abram is called to a greater test than Noah in going forth from all that were dear to him naturally, and standing alone on the promises of God in a new country. It was to be in separation from all the languages and divisions consequent on the building of Babel, and to be with God, and that through him there should be a people separated unto God, and called by His name.

As this position was by promise, the child of bondage could not share it with the child of promise.

The teaching of the epistle to the Galatians shows the meaning of this fully in regard to the Law and Grace. Then Rebecca (the Church) is called out and led by the servant (the Holy Spirit) unto the Bridegroom (Christ).

Afterwards we find the seed of Abraham in bondage, but God delivers them and separates them from Egypt, and leads them to the land of promise, there to be His own peculiar treasure, a people separated unto His name for His delight. God tells them it was not because they were better than any other nation, but because it pleased Him to love them and to delight in them. It

was all sovereign grace, and though they were slow to enter into all the blessings God had prepared for them, and tried God time after time, yet God continued to lead them on. They were His own people. Likewise the Church is being called out of the world to be the bride of Christ, His treasure and delight, and it is His one Church, His body, and though she has been slow to enter into all her privileges, and has got entangled with the world, yet it still remains His Church.

God only views the two classes, the Church and the world; the saved and the unsaved; believers and unbelievers. God is not con-

verting the world, or making it better, but we read that God did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name (Acts xv. 14), so every believer is drawn from the world. The Lord says, "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me; they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xvii. 9 and 16). They walk in a different course, and the Lord's prayer was that they should all be one, and for a while they were manifestly one, but they failed to maintain a separate place and got mixed with the world.

When of old the enemies came

to the Israelites with Ezra, and said, "Let us build the house of God with you, for we seek your God, even as ye do," they were told to depart, for they had no portion with them, but when the world came to the Church, after doing all that it could to kill her by persecutions, and said, "We will be with you, and you shall be our state religion," the Church failed under the alluring temptation, and since then has lost her manifest oneness. She has got mingled with all the various names and minds of men, and has become known as the Church of Rome, England, Greece, etc.; as Methodism, Presbyterianism, and

all kinds of "isms," which are all called branches of the Christian Church. Outwardly it is all broken up into over a thousand different sects, but before God there is still the one Church.

Is it possible that Christ recognises all the different sects as parts of His body? No! He sees His own chosen ones mixed up with man's religion, owning any other name than His, and trying to mix His name with the systems of the world. It is easy to see the fact that the sects are not parts of His body, for being a member of any church or "ism" is no guarantee of being members of Christ's body. So the Church of Christ is com-

posed of every believer, though they are nearly all scattered here and there in sectarianism, and God speaks to His own to be true to Him. He appeals to them to stand in separation. He has nothing to say to the denominations and sects. They all belong to the world, but God says to His own, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate; touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." All man's righteousness, even his best, are before God as filthy rags.

Nothing will do for God except that righteousness which is of Himself. So to be true to God and to Christ, and to give all

the honour due to the name of Christ, is to stand separate from all sects, systems, and "isms," and be identified with the name of Christ only. His name is sufficient for us. The only ground on which all believers can meet is as Christians, owning each other as brethren in Christ. It is the only ground *broad* enough to take in every believer, and it is the only ground *narrow* enough to exclude every other name. The Lord speaks to each believer individually to take the stand with Him outside. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will

come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me (Rev. iii. 20). Let us go outside the camp *unto Him*, bearing His reproach (Heb. xiii. 10).

We should desire to be with Him, and to share His rejection and reproach. Though every Christian does not realise his privilege, or have faith to quit old associations, this should not prevent others. When the children of Israel refused to enter the land, because of the spies' report, two men had faith in the purposes of God, and stood fast for God. They were not afraid to stand firm even though all the thousands of Israel were against them; and

God honoured them. So if any take the stand, they will find many other Christians oppose them, as setting themselves to be better than others, and to making additional sects, but Christ has told us it is a place of reproach, yet it is in His company, and that more than compensates. He is our strength, and we can bear all things through Him. It is the desire to be true to Him, and to walk in the full light of all Scripture, that the step of separation is taken. It is not joining any sect or company of Christians, but just taking our place with Christ as an individual, to stand alone with Christ if needs be, or to walk with

others whom the Lord has called out. No Christian can join the Church, for, being a Christian, he is a full member of it, but he needs to take his place and his privileges.

So the fellowship we are called unto is with all those gathered out to the Lord's name, and it is the fellowship for every Christian, but only apart from every sect and system of man. It would be denying the position of separation if any Christian desires to have fellowship with those in separation from sects, etc., and yet goes amongst the sects, to receive such on that ground. That would only make a multiplication of sects. So the difference between "inter-

denominational" and "*undenominational*" is that one goes amongst any denomination and the other goes outside them all, and has nothing to do with them. One remains inside the camp, and the other goes outside the camp. Separation means therefore standing apart from the world and its religion, from man, and from everything unclean and unholy. If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin (1 John i. 7). The light is connected with holiness, and it is a fellowship of holiness. It is not

that we are better than others, but we follow after holiness. There is no good in ourselves, and what we are we are by the grace of God; and by looking to Jesus we cease to be confused with the sects of Christendom; we cease to look for perfection in man; and we cease to be occupied with ourselves. We get full deliverance in Christ, full perfection, full satisfaction in Him, and in Him alone. He is our great High Priest, the Bishop of our souls, our Lord, our Head, our all-sufficiency, our joy and pleasure, our Guide and Pilot, our hope and glory.

What can the world offer in all

its pleasures, concerts, parties, etc., that can in any way nearly equal even the smallest fraction of the enjoyment and peace to be found in Christ? Oh that every Christian would find in Him their all in all, to be true to Him, and to stand with Him outside, to be crucified to the world and the world crucified to them, to boast in the cross of Christ their Lord, to watch and wait in prayer, showing forth His death every Lord's day, the first day of the week, in the Lord's appointed way, showing forth His death in this world until that moment when the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a

shout, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 16 and 17).



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