

# Essential Truth about Separation

Stark Road Summer Series 2002

## I. Essential Principles-Separation

**A. Definition-(*aphorizo*)** to mark off by bounds.

**B. Separation Found Throughout the Bible** Genesis-Revelation (Creation, life of Abraham, nation of Israel, life of Christ, life of believer, new testament assembly)

- II Tim 2:19 *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*
- Vitally important.

## C. Separation has Positive and Negative Side

### 1. Positive Truth-Separation unto God

- Psalm 4:3 Know ye that the Lord has set apart him that is godly for himself.
- Acts 15:14 God...did visit Gentiles to take out of the people for his name.
- Romans 6:11 Reckon yourselves dead to sin, alive to God
- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light and from power of Satan to God.
- II Tim. 2:21 If a man therefore purge himself from these he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and acceptable for the master's use and prepared unto every good work.
- Devote, dedicate, sanctify, present, consecrate

### 2. Negative Truth-Separation from Sin

- II Tim. 2:22 Flee youthful lusts
- II Cor. 7:1 Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.
- II Tim. 2:16 But shun profane and vain babblings(false teachings) for they will increase into more ungodliness.
- Shun, avoid, put off, remove, come out, cleanse.

## D. Expectation of True Believer

1. II Cor. 6:1 Grace of God effectively received should bring conscience under light and authority of Word of God.
2. Word of God- (Corinthian epistle) discusses separation principles which exhort them to cleanse themselves from defilement and perfect holiness in sight of God.
3. Therefore, Divine Order-separate yourself from things contrary to God and sanctification (setting apart) to God occurs.

## E. Enlargement Principle- II Cor. 6:13...*be enlarged*.

1. Separated man is enlarged.
2. In God's estimation to be separate from all that is contrary to his mind and will is secret of enlarging our sphere of influence for God.

## F. Four Principles of Separation based on truth in Word of God (John 17:17) Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.

### 1. Presence of God Enjoins Separation

- II Cor. 6:16 I will dwell in them and walk in them.
- Ex. 25:8 God's desire to dwell with the believer.
- Ex. 29: 45-46 God's design in saving was to dwell with the believer.
- Ex. 33:3 God's departure when unjudged sin is present.
- Ex. 33:15-16 God's presence is evidence of grace and power for separation.

### 2. Precepts(commands) of God Enforce Separation II Cor. 6:14-18

- Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers
- Come out from among them.
- Be ye separate.
- Touch not the unclean thing.

### 3. Promises of God Encourage Separation II Cor. 6:16-7:1

- a. Seven promises given-saith the Lord God Almighty
- b. Given to encourage believer who is prepared to walk in obedience to the Word of God.
  - *I will dwell among them-vs.16*
  - *I will walk in them-vs.16*
  - *I will be their God-vs 16.*

- *They shall be my people*-vs. 16.
- *I will receive you*-vs.17
- *I will be a Father unto you*-vs.18.
- *Ye shall be my sons and daughters*-vs.18.
- c. We can only claim promises as we obey precepts.
- 4. The Power of God Enables Separation II Cor. 6:18
  - a. Saith the Lord God Almighty-the Lord of Hosts himself will strengthen the fearful, compromising Corinthians to totally separate from heathen temple.
  - b. El Shaddai-all sufficient one.
  - c. Abraham, Corinthians, and NT believers all may depend on God for every emergency we will meet in our separated path.

#### **G. True Separation (II Tim 2)**

1. Separation to Person of Christ (v. 4)
  - “That he may please Him who hath chosen him”
2. Separation to the Word (v. 5)
  - Athlete who strives for crown must follow rules (lawfully)
  - Word of God is guide for Christian
3. Separation to His Work(v. 6)
  - He is to look for a harvest patiently remembering God is at work
  - In work
    - Deal honestly with scripture
    - Shun false teaching and purge himself from false teachers
4. Separated to Pattern
  - Servant of Lord must not strive (Matt 12:19)
  - Do not resist the truth
  - Pattern of NT clear
  - Follow them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart

#### **H. What Servant Separates From**

1. False object of Worship (Ex 32:26)
  - Family of Levi chose to be on Lord’s side and rewarded for decision
2. False system (Num 16:26)
  - Rebellion of Korah – was a Levite not satisfied with his position to serve under High Priest
  - Wanted priesthood position. God gave to Moses and Aaron
  - Cleresy System which exalts a man who is only a servant into position of preeminence that God has given to His son
3. False Center (I Kings 13: 8,16)
  - Jeroboam made new place of worship, God chose Jerusalem
  - Turned people away from God-given center, place where Lord chosen to place His name
  - He made priests and feast days. False object, center, priests and feasts.
  - God sent messenger to warn him, would not eat or drink (have fellowship with false center) only deliver message in and against place
  - Today, many false centers perpetually cause divisions in body of Christ contrary to scripture
  - Let us stay clear of that which dishonors the Lord

## **II. Abraham’s Calling and Separation are a Pattern for All Believers (Rom. 4:11-12)**

### **A. Four Truths about Abraham’s Separation**

1. Power of His Separation
  - God of glory appeared to Abraham (Acts 7:2)
  - *He looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God* (Heb. 11:10)
2. Character of His Separation. God separated Abraham through:
  - Precept:
    - Gen 12:1 *God said get thee out*
    - Acts 7:3 *Come into the land which I shall show thee*
  - Power:
    - Gen. 15:7 *God brought me out*
    - Gen 24:7 *God took me out*
    - God enabled Abraham to walk separated path
  - Promise:
    - Gen 12:2 *I will make of thee a great nation.*

- Therefore, Abraham had precepts, power, and promise from God to assure him he was in right path
3. Conflicts of Separation
    - Gen 12:10 Famine – a period of testing calculated to cast believer on the Lord
      - Abraham's failure – failure to separate may lead to more grievous failure (Egypt, Hagar, Ishmael)
    - Strife : Lot and Abraham
  4. Compensation for Separation
    - God revealed Himself to Abraham, increased knowledge of God
    - God made him a blessing to his family (Gen 18:19)
    - God made him a blessing to Lot= backslidden brother (Gen 14:16)
    - God made him a blessing to Abimelech
      - Gen 20:17 Prayer for others
      - Gen 21:22 His life spoke to others (Abimelech, God is with thee)
      - Gen 21:25 Able to reprove others

## **B. Threefold Separation**

1. Leave Country - Political separation
  - Do not build up what God has doomed (political parties, etc)
  - Christian patriot (Phil 3:9)
2. Leave thy Kindred - Social separation
  - World's ways, fashions
  - Unequal yoke in business relationships
    - Joint business/partnerships with unsaved constitute an unequal yoke
    - Business issues that impact our devotion/commitment to God
    - Stock and mutual fund investing require discernment
  - Unequal yoke in social relationship
    - Implications of joining teams, organizations, associations – What/who am I linked to?
    - School events (dances, parties) – Will these promote godliness or unrighteousness?
    - The Christian is not to marry an unsaved partner (I Cor 7:39)
3. Leave Thy Father's House – Ecclesiastical separation
  - Idols in Father's house- Joshua 24:4 (example Laban's idols- Gen 31:32)
  - Separated worshiper must separate from all religious systems to have liberty to worship in accordance with pattern of NT

## **C. Separation as the Distinction of The New Testament Church**

1. The assembly is a fellowship based on the apostles' doctrine and has certain features, which insure that it is separate from all other denominations/sects.
  - An assembly is gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 18:20)
  - It is a fellowship based on the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42)
  - Elders are responsible for preventing the teaching of false doctrine (II Tim 2:23)
  - An assembly is required to maintain moral cleanness (I Cor. 5)
  - Assembly has distinct boundaries-with and without; letters of commendation (Rom 16:1)

## **III. Believer's Walk Should be Pure – Separated from Evil and False Doctrine**

### **A. In Relation to Flesh**

- II Tim 2:19 *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*
  - Rom 8:13 *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead.*
  - Col 3:8-9 *But now ye also put off all of these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing you have put off the old man with his deeds.*
  - Gal. 5:24 *They that are Christ's have crucified flesh.*
1. Abraham's Circumcision – Seal of faith, righteousness
    - 8<sup>th</sup> day – sign of new beginning and typifies resurrection (new life)
  2. Our Circumcision – Col 2:11 *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by circumcision of Christ*
    - Spiritual experience with physical ramifications
    - Circumcision of Christ – Lord Jesus was cut off out of the land of the living. Therefore, believer died to flesh in Him. (Our position now-dead to flesh)
    - Three marks of spiritual circumcision
      - Worship through Spirit of God

- Rejoice in Lord Jesus Christ
  - Have no confidence in flesh, the believer reckons as fact that flesh is dead “make no provision for flesh”
3. What to Mortify – Col 3:5 *Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry.* (Col 3:8,9 see above)
  4. Saul and Amalekites (picture of flesh in OT)
    - Saul commanded to destroy Amalekites and partially obeys as he spares their king and choice animals
    - Compromise leads to disastrous results
      - Saul slain by an Amalekite ( I Sam 1:10)
      - Haman descendent of Agag (Amalekite) sought to exterminate God’s people
      - Sin tolerated and trifled with soon becomes master
  5. David and Amalekite – Correct way to deal with flesh
    - David sees through hypocrisy of Amalekite who slew Saul and obeys God’s command to revere the Lord’s anointed. As result, puts Amalekite to death.
  6. Believer not called to mortify body physically
    - Asceticism or monastic severity wrong (Col 2:23) *Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh.*
    - Cannot control carnal appetites by ill treating the body; Done through yielding to Holy Spirit and Word of God.
- B. In Relation to World**
- John 15:19 *I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*
  - John 17:14 *Ye are not of the world.*
  - Gal 6:14 *The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.*
  - James 4:4 *Friendship with the world is enmity with God.*
  - I John 2: 15-17 *Love not the world.*
1. Definition of World (per Dr. Scofield) “The order or arrangement under which Satan has organized unbelieving mankind upon his cosmic principle of force, greed, selfishness, ambition, and pleasure”
  2. I John 2:16 *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world.*
    - Be careful of worldly pleasures, amusements, associations, and friendships as the world lieth in the hand of the wicked one.
    - World rejects your Savior (eg. Social gatherings, government, commercial, school activities, religious systems)
  3. Lot – an example of worldly believer
    - Forsook fellowship of godly man over ambition for worldly possessions
    - Result: those ambitions controlled his life, ruined his testimony and his family
    - Lot left pilgrim tent for Sodom’s dwellings, lost his pilgrim character (tent), and ended up in darkness (cave).
  4. Believer’s Response To The World
    - The Bible (John 17:15) does not support the idea of withdrawal from society- no basis for monastic societies.
    - Christians are to witness to the unsaved around them(I Peter 3:15)
    - Believers have an obligation to help others and to meet the needs(physical, financial, emotional) of the unsaved(Gal. 6:10)
    - Lord Jesus was “separate(morally) from sinners” (Heb. 7:26) yet he was known as “the friend of publicans and sinners” (Matt. 11:19)
- C. In Relation to Other Christians**
- I Cor 5:11 *If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or idolater, or a slanderer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one do not eat.*
  - II Thess 3:14 *And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.*
  - II Tim 3:5 *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*
  - Titus 1:16 *They profess (false professor) that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate.*
1. Associating with sin, even with believers, is a defiling influence. True believers should avoid: carnality, insubordination to word of God, lifeless form of godliness, false professors
  2. Jehoshaphat – A Picture of Compromising (big tent) Christian

- a. II Chron 18:1 Unholy alliance with Ahab, King of Israel, war against Syria.
- b. End purpose would justify associating himself with a man who refused to worship according to God's pattern
- c. Compromise is nearly disastrous (II Chron 19:2)
  - almost killed
  - wrath of God upon his nation
- d. Seemed right but acting contrary to mind of God
- e. By participation with Ahab, he is guilty of perpetuating division among God's people (Ahab and Israel forsook true pattern)
- f. II Chron 21:6 Jehoshaphat's son led astray
  - His son married Ahab's daughter and he walked in the ways of Ahab.
  - Walking the path of compromise versus separation may have sad results for family.

**IV. Believer's Service – Spread gospel and Make Disciples of All Men- *A true witness delivereth souls. (Pro. 14:25)***

- A. Every true believer should run in the way of God's commands, principles, and doctrine to see souls saved and be a joy to the Lord.**
- B. Separation to God's truth and away from false teaching prepares a Christian for God's service.**
  1. *Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Deut 22:10*
    - Ass is unclean – unredeemed animal
    - Must not serve with unsaved or those who teach false doctrine or deny pattern
  2. *Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard be defiled. Deut 22:9*
    - Sow/sower – believer spreading gospel
    - Vineyard – assembly
    - No mixture of doctrine preached concerning salvation or pattern
    - Fellowship with a man means fellowship with what he teaches
  3. Avoid these doctrines:
    - Doctrine of Balaam (mixing, intermingling truth, intermarriage) Rev 2:14
    - Doctrine of Nicolaitines (one man leadership) Rev 2:15
    - Doctrine of Jezebel (worship Baal: idol worship) Rev. 2:20
  4. Shun vain babblings (false teaching) II Tim 2:15-21
    - Evil doctrine works insidiously and saps vitality out of testimony
    - Consequences of mingling I Cor 15:33 *Evil communications corrupts good manners.*
- C. Separated believer is honorable vessel: vessel holds throne water (whole truth of God)**
  - I Tim 2:21 *If a man therefore purge himself from these (false teachers), he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the masters use and prepared unto every good work.*
  - II Cor 4:7 *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*
    1. Separation prepares believer to be useful
    2. Paul, example – vessel unto honor and God used him to:
      - See souls saved
      - Write most of the NT
      - Plant assemblies
      - Build up church
      - He learned to preach, teach in association with local assembly, not school/seminary
    3. What believer should do II Tim 3:16
      - Study to show thyself approved, rightly divide word of God, deal honestly with scripture, set forth truth without perversion or distortion of word of God

**V. Believer's Worship**

- A. Separated worship of believer in relation to Lord's supper (breaking of bread meeting)**
  1. Peace offering picture of Lord's supper
    - Lord gave 2 instructions for priest who would partake of peace offering:
    - Eat in clean place (Lev 10:14) Keeping clean from moral evil and doctrinal error – suggests assembly-pillar and ground of truth
    - Only the clean should eat( Num 18:11) Only those cleansed from sin by blood who will maintain doctrinal purity at table should partake.

**B. Separation of believer from heathen worship** (I Cor 10:16-22 and II Cor 6:14-18 speak of partaking of cup and table of demons)

1. Fivefold appeal to believers to separate
  - What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? Nothing. Diametrically opposed principles.
  - What communion hath light with darkness? Mutually exclusive elements, Gen 1 God separated light from darkness and it was good. Diametrically opposed elements.
  - What concord hath Christ with Belial? Satan tries to imitate God, another gospel to deceive into eternal ruin. Diametrically opposed persons. Concord- agreement in sound and voice.
  - What part does believer have with infidel? An infidel denies existence of personal God as God is everything and everything is god.  
Problem: No common object of worship to have proper fellowship. Diametrically opposed faiths.
  - What agreement has the temple of God with idols? Diametrically opposed systems. (religious)
2. Appeal to believer-II Cor. 6:17 *Come out from them and be ye separate saith the Lord God Almighty.*
3. Are we exercised not to be unequally yoked?
  - Mingling – Are we satisfied to mingle with those in fellowships which have departed from the whole gospel (those associated with Belial, children of wrath)
  - Dangerous – True believer who has had personal dealing with God regarding their sins who continues to have part with those who have not dealt with sin
  - Clear Message – *Come out and be ye separate and I will receive you* (II Cor. 6:17)

**VI. Things that Should Not Cause Separation**

**A. Earthly Possessions/ Financial Gain**

- Lot's ambition (Gen. 13:14)

**B. Believer that is Out of Touch With His Brethren**

- Heber (Judges 4:11)

**C. Earthly Traditions/Fear of man**

- Peter separated himself out of fear of Jewish Christians (Gal. 2:12)

**D. Earthly Relationships**

- Paul and Barnabas separated over John Mark-Barnabas' nephew (Acts 15:39)

**VII. Principles To Govern Our Actions**

**A. Is the message I am going to hear based on the apostles' doctrine?**

**B. Is the gospel I am exposing my children to the same as the NT evangelists presented?**

- A danger of Christian schools and Christian camps

**C. Does the teaching uphold the positive pattern of the NT assembly?**

- Beware of teaching which promotes ecumenical movements.

**D. Does the teacher believe or promote false doctrines?**

- Person of Christ, authority of scripture, assembly truths

**E. Will I be identifying myself with something other than the name of Jesus Christ?**

**F. What are my friendships accomplishing?**

- Further separation to Christ or to the world.

*Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:29-30)*