

Be Ye Separate

There are times where it might just be a little tougher than we might think to be a Christian and stand where the Bible stands on certain issues that, in and of themselves, seem to do no harm. But, sometimes it's the **subtle** things that we need to be aware of which will lead to bigger issues down the road.

Act 13:10 And (Paul) said (to Elymas the sorcerer), O full of all subtilty (*Gk.1388- to decoy; a trick [bait]*) and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert (*Gk.1294- to distort, that is, [figuratively] misinterpret*) the right ways of the Lord?

There are many "charitable" organizations in the world but when we look a little closer we may be surprised at how "anti-Christian" **most** of them really are.

2Co 6:14 Be ye not **unequally yoked together with unbelievers** (*when we fellowship with organizations that promote "charity", we essentially are stating that we agree with their other doctrines as well*): for what fellowship (*Gk.3352- participation*) hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion (*Gk.2842- partnership*) hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord (*Gk.4857- accordance. [Webster: conformity]*) hath Christ with Belial (*bel-ee'-al; after an ancient pagan god of Babylon named Bel or Belus [Dan 4:9- Daniel was renamed Belteshazzar {bale-tesh-ats-tsar'} by Nebuchadnezzar after the god he adored to show ownership of his Jewish captive; like naming a dog after a loved one]*)? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel (*Gk.571- without Christian faith*)? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for **ye are the temple of the living God**; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 17 Wherefore **come out from among them, and be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the **unclean thing**; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (*Emp. added*)

Things considered "unclean" that we are not to participate in/with, even though they may seem right, because of what we may have been taught as children that some of these organizations do "the most good" (*according to a Salvation Army advertisement*):

Buying "Easter" eggs made by local denominations, donating to or welcoming the Gideon's (*or any other denominational group*) to speak in the assembly, buying from or donating items to the Salvation Army or putting money in their kettles around the holidays or any other time of the year, etc., is just supporting the lie. (*Having once been a member of the S. A., I can attest to this.*) These funds go to the **promotion of false doctrine**. They should be put toward the promotion of truth if donated at all. Sometimes there are people who need a hand who live just up the road from us and maybe we should take care of them on a more personal level before giving to any organization where God wouldn't truly receive the glory. A member should not wait on the congregation or the eldership (*for those that have them*) to approve their personal, behind-the-scenes benevolence when there is nothing in the Bible where it says we are to wait on leadership to approve our own personal good works. And usually these are the works that attract people the most.

Supporting local private clubs or fraternity organizations such as the E.L.K.s, Eagles, Moose, VFW, American Legion, etc. even if they **are** collecting for certain charitable causes.

Doing any volunteer work for any organization (*like the American Cancer Society for instance*) that would keep a Christian away from worship on Sunday. (*Not saying there's anything wrong with supporting the A.C.S. either. That's not the point. As long as it's done other than on days when brethren get together for worship or Bible study. Our time together is so precious because it's spent in study and edification, which is very much needed where the god of this world has the upper hand. [2 Cor 4:4]*) There **was** a time when most organizations (such as Little League or even Boy Scouts) scheduled their functions **around** Christian activities on Sundays and Wednesdays because **most** people who supported these worthy institutions were in worship and/or Bible study on those occasions. Not anymore. **We** are expected to bow to **their** schedules without compromise. And if we have sons or daughters who are on teams that have sponsors do we just ignore the fact that our kids are playing for the Elks, Eagles or a local beer distributor or bar? Oh, but that's supposed to be okay?! "*We wouldn't want to make a big deal out of that now would we? Come on. You'll just make a big spectacle out of the church.*" (*We asked about which team our grandson was to be on considering the sponsor. We were relieved to hear his sponsor was a local dentist but if it had been one of the local clubs or other drinking establishments we would have protested and were assured we would have our way.*)

What about supporting any charitable organization that supports sin, such as the United Way, which is sympathetic to homosexual causes?

A Christian should have nothing to do with Planned Parenthood which promotes abortion. If **anything** we, **as individuals**, should support Crisis Pregnancy. But not as a congregation because of the association that would be perceived. **We are to be about the Lord's business first and foremost, which is to seek and save the lost.** Individual Christians can get involved in certain organizations as a way to obtain contacts. But prison or nursing home ministries that have "gag rules", where we are asked to compromise the message according to truth, are to be avoided **unless** there are ways to have lessons that could possibly lead to contacts for Bible studies.

Sometimes popularity is sacrificed in being separate.

Joh 9:18 But the Jews did not believe concerning Him (*Jesus -v.17*), that he (*the cured blind man*) had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. 19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? 20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: 21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or Who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. 22 These *words* spake his parents, because **they feared the Jews**: for the Jews **had agreed already**, that **if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue**. 23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. (*Emp. added*)

Mat 5:11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. 13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle (*Gk.3088- portable lamp*), and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick (*Gk.3087- lamp stand*); and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 **Let your light so shine**

before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (*Emp. added*)

So what about Meals On Wheels, Boy Scouts, or signing certain petitions along with the denominations to keep such things as bars or porn shops from coming into the area or certain anti-Christian, ungodly movies from being shown at the local theatre (*The Last Temptation of Christ*)? We can and should participate (*1 Cor 5:9) but are still to “come out from among them” and are to be known as “separate” (2 Cor 6:17) and “pre (*before*) -denominational” in our beliefs (*1 Cor 1:10). Sometimes all it takes is to be the squeaky wheel and the louder the squeak the better the chance of being greased to keep such sinful institutions and/or filth out of the area.

*1Co 5:9 *I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet **not altogether** with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; **for then must ye needs go out of the world.*** (*Emp. added*)

*1Co 1:10 *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye **all speak the same thing**, and that there **be no divisions among you**; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* (*Emp. added*)

But that's as far as it should go. Just because we are **in** the world doesn't mean we are to be **of** the world! Once asked “How in the world are you?” my response was “**In** it but not **of** it!”. Being in the world we need to seek out those of the lost to retrieve them from Satan by bringing them to the Lord. But not through bake sales or car washes where the money would come from outside the church and we would be just emulating the denominations. Many times it takes humbling ourselves as servants, but not by compromising our own souls to do so.

1Co 9:19 For though I be free from all *men*, yet have I **made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.** 20 And unto the Jews (*by birth*) I became **as** (*Gk.5613- in that manner*) a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the Law (*proselytes*), **as** under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law; 21 To them that are without law (*Gentiles*), **as** without law, (**being not without law to God, but under the Law to Christ,**) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made **all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.** (*Emp. added*)

Some purposes in being separate...

Taught the angels.

Eph 3:10 To the intent (*purpose*) that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly (*Gk.2032- above the sky: -celestial, [in] heaven [-ly], high.*) places **might be known by the church** the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him (*the Gospel*). (*Emp. added*)

1Pe 1:12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; **which things the angels desire to look into.** (*Emp. added*)

1Co 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the **hidden wisdom**, which God ordained **before the world unto our glory**: 8 Which none of the princes **of this world knew: for had they known it**, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (*Emp. added*)

The church's actions are what taught the angels of Heaven God's plan of salvation for mankind. If Satan would have known beforehand what God had planned, as a fallen angel he wouldn't have influenced the rulers of the Jews to have Jesus crucified, understanding that it is Christ's shed blood alone that saves us (*had they understood that Jesus truly was the prophesied Messiah they wouldn't have done it either*). But there were some incidents in which the church's actions have even offended the angels of Heaven.

1Co 11:10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head **because of the angels**. (*Emp. added*)

Lipscomb/Shepherd: "...angels observe the work and worship of the church...(and) were aware of gender abuses in the Corinth church...and were offended by it."

Makes us examples in the church by our actions.

1Th 1:2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; 3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; 4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. 5 For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as **ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake**. 6 **And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord**, having **received the word in much affliction**, with joy of the Holy Ghost: 7 So that **ye were ensamples to all that believe** in Macedonia and Achaia. 8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place **your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing**. 9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how **ye turned to God from idols** (*separation*) to serve the living and true God; 10 And to wait for His Son from Heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. (*Emp. added*)

Just as the Thessalonians turned from their idols, separating themselves from them, our actions speak volumes about who we really are when we separate ourselves from our modern day idols (*things that would put distance between us and Christ*). We thus become examples to the brethren (*other congregations of the Lord's church*) by our actions.

1Jn 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but **in deed and in truth**. (*Emp. added*)

Col 3:17 And whatsoever ye **do in word or deed**, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. (*Emp. added*)

Grows the church.

Act 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his (*Steven's*) death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all **scattered**

abroad (*separated*) throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him. 3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. 4 Therefore **they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.** (*Emp. added*)

We cannot remain in our comfort zones! Sometimes we need to separate ourselves from our comfort zones in order to grow the church through evangelism. Do we really need to be persecuted to do that?

Enlightens us from our darkness (*ignorance*).

1Pe 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar (*Gk.4047- purchased, possession*) people (*you can't make purchases without paying something for the merchandise!*); that ye should shew forth the praises of Him Who hath called you **out of** (*thus separating us from*) darkness into His marvellous light: 10 Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as **strangers** (*Gk.3941- foreigner or sojourner on the earth [Webster: sojourn- live somewhere temporarily, a brief stay; visit]*) **and pilgrims** (*Gk.3927- an alien alongside, that is, resident foreigner [Thayer: one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives]*), abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation (*Gk.391- behavior*) honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, **they may by your good works, which they shall behold**, glorify God in the day of visitation. (*Emp. added*)

How can the world know we belong to God if we cannot prove it by praising Him in the works that we do and/or the behavior we exude? **By being separate!** We can only be separated from the world when we understand the **temporal nature** of our existence here and the need to bring others into the understanding of the Gospel of our salvation (*His marvelous light*). It truly is a matter of faith in the power of the Gospel. It's God's way or the **highway!**

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and **broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction**, and many there be which go in there at: (*Emp. added*)

Jas 4:14 Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even **a vapour**, that **appeareth for a little time**, and **then vanisheth away.** (*Emp. added*)

So...

2Co 6:17 ...come out from among them, and **be ye separate**, saith the Lord, ... 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (*Emp. added*)

If you want to be separated and become part of His marvelous light that leads to the narrow way...

Hear: Romans 10:17 ..."faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Believe: Heb 11:6 ..."for he that commeth to God must believe that He is"...

Repent: Lk 13:3 ..."except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Confess: Mat 10:32 "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in Heaven."

Be baptized: Acts 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Remain faithful: Rom 6:4 ..."even so we also should walk in newness of life."

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