

## SEPARATION AND WITHDRAWAL

- I. Separation from acquaintances whose conversation or doctrine opposes Scripture is not optional.
  - A. There is a moral aspect to this. **1PE 4:1-4.**
  - B. There is a doctrinal/theological aspect to this.  
**ROM 16:17; 2TH 3:6, 14-15; 1TI 6:3-5; 2TI 3:5.**
  
- II. The gospel calls God's people from diverse errors to singularity of purpose and unity of belief. **MAR 1:15; ACT 17:30; 2CO 10:3-5.**
  - A. No project or program accomplishes much where there are internal opposing forces at work. **AMO 3:3; MAT 12:25.**
  - B. Contradictory doctrine in a church creates division, which is to be avoided.  
**ROM 15:5-6; 1CO 1:10; 11:18-19; PHIL 1:27; 2:2.**
  - C. A responsible minister will not knowingly tolerate divisive doctrine in the church. **GAL 2:4-5; 1TI 1:3.**
  - D. It is folly for a child of God against better knowledge to wilfully align with a church where heresy is promoted under guise of some "greater purpose." Such an individual invites judgment. **JAM 4:17; 2TH 2:10-12; REV 18:4.**
    1. Preferred or prolonged fellowship with unbelievers has a corrupting effect. **1CO 15:33; 2PE 2:6-8; PRO 19:27.**
    2. How can "Be ye NOT unequally yoked together with unbelievers..." (**2CO 6:14**) possibly mean, "It's OK to be unequally yoked with unbelievers?"
  
- III. There is no middle ground, neutrality or fence-sitting when it comes to the gospel of Jesus Christ. A person either enlists with Christ and His camp or opposes Him. **MAT 12:30.**
  - A. It is not enough to only separate from error. God called His people OUT OF Egypt and TO Canaan.
  - B. His people are commanded to identify with Him by being joined to His body, a local church, through baptism. **1CO 12:13, 27 c/w ACT 2:38-47.**
  - C. The house of God is central to the acceptable service of His people. THERE are the sacrifices and praises of His people to be offered. It is THERE that He puts His glory and communes with them.
    1. Consider the significance of the house of God during the patriarchal age. **GEN 28:10-22 c/w GEN 35:1.**
    2. Consider the significance of God's tabernacle/house in the days of Moses. **EXO 25:22; 40:33-34 c/w LEV 17:3-4; DEU 12:5-8; 16:5-6.**
    3. The temple was similarly endorsed. **2CH 7:1-2.**

4. In time, the prophets started speaking about a shift in venue and order in worshipping God. **MAL 1:11; JOH 4:21-24.**
5. But the concept of identifying with God in His house would still be central to serving Him.
  - a. Like the tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon, God filled the N.T. church which is now the house of God. **ACT 2:1-2; 1TI 3:15.**
  - b. Here is where His people are to draw near Him today. **HEB 10:19-25.**
  - c. To have fellowship with the Head, one must be in the body.

IV. The heirs of promise are said to be blessed with the faith of Abraham.

**ROM 4:12; GAL 3:7.**

- A. When God called Abram to end his affiliation with Ur of the Chaldees, he promptly left. **ACT 7:3-4.**
- B. Abraham wasn't sure where he was going to end up but he knew where he wasn't staying (**HEB 11:8**). The first step is separation FROM error.
  1. The "how and where" of God's future leading need not deter one's present submission.
  2. If His sheep obey the truth they now know, they may trust the Good Shepherd to take care of the rest. **PRO 4:18; PSA 23:1-3; PRO 3:5-6.**
- C. Abraham was ultimately looking for a heavenly city but was satisfied to dwell in an earthly Canaan. **HEB 11:9-16.**
  1. His long-term reward did not excuse his immediate duty.
  2. His immediate duty was the evidence of his long-term reward. **ROM 2:6-7.**
  3. This cannot be said of those who profess to know God but in works deny Him. **LUK 6:46 c/w MAT 7:21-27.**

V. Carnal reasoning devises all manner of excuses to not break affiliation with people in error and to align with the righteous.

- A. "I've invested a lot of time and effort in this church. I've got status and influence here. Must I leave that?" Ans. **PHIL 3:4-8.**
- B. "There are a lot of good things in this church. How many points of known doctrinal error can be tolerated before I have to withdraw?" Ans. NONE!
  1. There is only ONE faith and it is indivisible. You either take it all or none of it. **EPH 4:5; JUDE 1:3.**
  2. Disorder is disorder! **2TH 3:6.**
  3. Disorder: "Absence or undoing of order or regular arrangement;

confusion; confused state or condition."

C. "I know they're in error, but can't I just overlook some things in the interests of furthering the gospel? Isn't an imperfect alliance better than none at all?"

Ans. What gospel is going to be furthered - God's or their's? Affinity with the disobedient opposes God's design to magnify Himself with the righteous. **2CH 18:1; 19:2.**

1. There are some situations where a person is better off with less.

**PRO 15:16; 17:1; PSA 84:10.**

2. True faith sometimes finds the godly in lonely straits.

**LUK 4:25-26; JER 15:16-17.**

D. "Shouldn't I stay and try to convert others?" Ans. Yes, if it is a true church. But if they remain unrepentant after sufficient instruction, you must withdraw. **TIT 3:10-11; MAT 10:14; ACT 13:45-51.**

E. "But what kind of program do you have for the children?" Ans. The gospel of Jesus Christ which tells them of God's holiness, His justice, His grace, mercy and love for sinners, and the duty of parents to instill godly values in children and so bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, not the traditions and playpens of men's designs.

F. "But what if one of my family members isn't ready to obey Christ fully?"

1. God called Abram ALONE. **ISA 51:2.**

2. Concern yourself with what God requires of you, not others.

**JOH 21:21-22.**

G. "But I'll look like a fool if I join something so universally scorned."

1. Bearing Christ's reproach (**HEB 13:13**) includes being reproached for aligning with reproached believers. **HEB 10:33; 11:25-26.**

2. Be a happy fool for Christ's sake. **1CO 4:10 c/w 1PE 4:14.**

VI. "...How long halt ye between two opinions...." (**1KI 18:21**).

VIII. "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (**ACT 22:16**).