

# **Biblical Separation**

*Study Pack*

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# STUDY PACK 1

## INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL SEPARATION

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“Someone has noted that for the sinner the great doctrine of the Bible is salvation and for the saint the great doctrine of the Bible is \_\_\_\_\_.” ~ Paul Fedina ~

### I. BALANCE IN SEPARATION

When considering the Doctrine of Separation, it is imperative that we strike the balance that Christ would want in our life. Getting out of balance on these issues will either make us a legalist, on one side, or an antinomian, on the other. The issue that we will be struggling with is, “\_\_\_\_\_” This is very well expressed in Hebrews 12:1, “*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us...*” (KJV)

Separation deals both with weights and with sins. The word for weight in this text implies a burden or a hindrance in the race. As we sharpen our senses \_\_\_\_\_ (Hebrews 5:14), we will begin to apply principles that cut across all times and cultures that will enable us to be separated unto our Savior.

### II. POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE

Separation must be looked at as much as a positive as a negative. When a man marries, he separates himself unto his wife. As a believer, we can choose to separate from the world and unto the Lord. So, we are considering somewhat of the depth of the commitment that a person is willing to make in their faith in Christ.

Romans 12:1-2 deal with this exact principle: “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*”

When we conformed to this world, we are not allowing the Spirit of God to transform us into the image of Christ. Based upon what He has done for us, our love to Him should motivate us to deny our own lusts and desires to serve and love Him completely. Further proof of this aspect of separation can be found in Colossians 3. In the first two verses we are told that we are to seek those things that are above and to set our affection on those things. All of this is positive. Then Paul begins to give us some negatives, mortify your members, put off some things, and lie not one to another.

### III. DEFINITION OF SEPARATION

A proper definition of separation is essential to an effective lesson plan. Separation is \_\_\_\_\_ based upon what the Bible teaches about cleaving unto the Lord and leaving or ignoring anything that would \_\_\_\_\_.

The text in Hebrews 12 gives emphasis to “us.” The Greek word used here is used as an emphatic pronoun. The word for “lay aside” means to cast away or to put off. This is what Christ expects from us. Consider this text, *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD....”* Psalm 1:1, 2a, or this text; *“Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them...meddle not with them that are given to change.”* Proverbs 24:1, 21b.

Separation will include \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in the eyes of the Lord. Properly exercised, it will enable us to choose between good and \_\_\_\_\_ best.

### IV. TYPES OF SEPARATION

It is possible to define separation by its types. Most conservatives would hold to at least two types of separation: personal and ecclesiastical. The former, personal, would include the realm of our job, our public, and our private life. The Word of God sets a standard for what kind of jobs a Christian can hold without giving offence to the Lord. (Note, the Church Covenant on the wall of the average Baptist church, “abstain from the sale and use of alcohol as an intoxicating beverage.” This is an issue of separation as to the job and an issue of doctrine as to the drinking.)

It has not been that long ago that dancing was such a taboo to the Baptists as to be an object of ridicule by the community. We would do well to remember the reasons that such activities were considered “off limits.”

### V. FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES

A. Ecclesiastical Separation deals with the fellowship of one church with another. There are good reasons to avoid \_\_\_\_\_ that is so typical of denominational America today.

First, the Bible indicates that the local assemblies were to be run independent of each other. You will note that the epistles of Paul were \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, not to associations or some hierarchy. The only exception is in the Book of Galatians where Paul addresses the “churches of Galatia...” Even here an emphasis is evident on their distinction one from another. In the Book of Revelation, John addresses the seven churches of Asia Minor individually not as a group.

Second, I can find no historical evidence for a hierarchy among the early church. It was not until the fourth century that the hierarchy of bishops over groups of pastors began to develop. The spiritual heritage that you and I enjoy denies the authority of men over the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Third, the tendency of denominational control has been negative.

B. Independence.

The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Neo-Evangelicals and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Liberals is enough to cause us to be Independent. (A word of warning is necessary here. We must not become the judge and jury of all other churches. The very essence of the Independent Movement is that each church is individually responsible to the Lord for their doctrine and their activities. Just because we do not agree with someone else does not give us the right to condemn him or her as apostates. We must be very careful not to develop an \_\_\_\_\_. Avoid unnecessary sectarianism. Baptists are not the only people going to heaven.)

The testimony of the local church is at stake through denominational ties. What happens at the headquarters will echo through the local churches. The battles that we have seen in the last few years over ordaining women and sodomites, same-sex marriages, the Bible ordered home, support for America’s enemies during the Vietnam War, and even prayer in school make it imperative the local church sound forth a clear battle cry that cannot be confused by some denominational spokesperson.

There are two basic reasons to separate from another local church in this matter of fellowship: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The former is easily recognized, but it is not so easy with the latter. The Bible does not endorse one style of worship over another; i.e., emotional or non-emotional. So, when we find that a body of professed believers is worshipping in a style that we do not have common ground with, then we must separate for conscience sake.

## VI. MAJOR ISSUES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Separation defines some of the major issues of our Christian life. These would cover three areas: convictions, standards, and preferences.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_, are those unchangeable positions that we have a “thus saith the Lord” to support. These are things that we would die before we would change.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_, these are based upon our convictions, but we do not have a direct reference or doctrine that addresses the issue. (A good example would be smoking. Though we have many texts about honoring the Lord and taking care of our body, there is no text that says, “Thou shalt not smoke!” Our church has consistently held that those who use tobacco must not hold elected office in the church.)
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ are desires for godly living predicated upon our standards and convictions. These are things that we feel strongly about, but can only show some implied reference to in the Word of God. They may vary greatly among believers and must not be used to judge another’s spirituality or lack thereof.

## VII. TO GOD

Separation is to be to God. While we are doing His commands, we are automatically \_\_\_\_\_ . Consider these verses:

*Joshua 22:5 “But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.”*

*Joshua 23:5-8 “5 And the LORD your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God hath promised unto you. 6 Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside there from to the right hand or to the left; 7 That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: 8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.”*