

THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS

By Brother Mike Sutherland

Let us open up our study on holiness in *2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1* where it says:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 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. 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. *2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1*

The Bible says in *Romans 12:1-2*:

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. 2 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. *Romans 12:1-2*

1 Peter 1:13-16 says:

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. *1 Peter 1:13-16*

We are going to talk about sanctification, holiness, and separation. Holiness, sanctification, and separation are all about keeping Biblical standards. God has set standards of conduct and appearance in the Bible. Christians are to be separated from worldliness, false teaching, and non-repentant disobedient Christians. There are at least four reasons why separation is required. First, separation maintains the purity of the local church (*Ephesians 5:24-27*, *1 Corinthians 5* and *11*). Second, separation is good for the spiritual well being of non-repentant brothers and sisters in Christ (*2 Thessalonians 3:6*). Third, separation is also required for those who desire a full reward (*2 John 8*). Fourth, separation is essential to protect against apostasy.

Many times when we teach or preach on separation and holiness we are accused of practicing

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legalism or of being legalistic. Legalism is adding works to the gospel of the saving grace of the LORD Jesus Christ. Legalism is not holy living. Legalism is not asking women to wear modest feminine apparel. Legalism is not asking men to maintain a neat, masculine appearance. Legalism is not preaching and teaching against the wickedness of Hollywood movies, television, and most of the internet. Legalism is not asking that Christians listen to Godly music that uplifts, honors, and glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. Consider this. Any music that you listen to you are putting before the Lord Jesus Christ who indwells you through God the Holy Ghost. Does Jesus want to listen to what you are listening to? Does Jesus want to see what you are putting before his eyes?

The words that relate to personal holiness, the holiness of God, and holy places occupy a prominent place in Scripture. Words that relate to these three are used in the Bible a minimum of 1,076 times in 996 verses. Hence, God places a great deal of importance on holiness because He is holy. Holiness is the magnet that draws the power of the Holy Ghost into our hearts. With as much weight as is on holiness in the Bible, it is truly a strange thing that we do not stress the importance of holiness in our personal lives and in our modern day churches in our teaching and preaching. That is why most of our modern day churches are dead as door nails. Holiness is an outward indication, or manifestation, of the indwelling and infilling of the Holy Ghost. Without this presence of the Holy Ghost there can be no heart felt worshiping and praising of God. Without holiness there is no presence of the sweet Spirit of God. A lack of holiness hinders our worship. The Bible says in:

Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. *1 Chronicles 16:29*

Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. *Psalms 29:2*

O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. *Psalms 96:9*

You cannot give the glory due unto the name of the Lord, or worship the Lord, if you do not do it in the beauty of holiness. If we are to worship the Lord, we must worship Him in truth and in Spirit. Worship is abiding in, joying in, and rejoicing in God because He is worthy of our undivided attention and praise!! Without the presence of the Spirit of God we cannot worship God. It is the sweet Spirit of God that gives us the joy of our (His) salvation. Holiness is all about obedience to the Word of God. The Bible says in *1 Samuel 15:22*:

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams. *1 Samuel 15:22*

For the Spirit filled Christian, it is not grievous, but is rather a joy to live a holy life. The Bible says in *1 John 5:2-3*:

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2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 1 *John 5:2-3*

If we love God, it will not be a burden (grievous) to keep His commandments, but rather a joy. The Bible says in *John 15:10-11*:

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full. *John 15:10-11*

Are you miserable today or are you full of joy? Are you filled with the Holy Ghost? Are you led of the Spirit?

Many times, we have the indwelling of the Spirit (Holy Ghost), but we do not have the infilling of the Spirit. The indwelling of the Spirit is that permanent presence of the Spirit that comes immediately upon salvation. There is **only one** indwelling of the Spirit. There are many infillings of the Spirit. The infillings of the Spirit are to give us the power to live a victorious Christian life. God empowers us through the Spirit to exercise our gifts in a manner that brings honor and glory to Him; in a manner that achieves His purpose for our lives.

Being filled with the Spirit is not evidenced by rolling in the aisles, "holy" laughter, or falling out (slain in the Spirit). Being filled with the Spirit is not some emotional "experience" that expresses itself in some confused or irrational form. We know that God is not the author of confusion from *1 Corinthians 14:33*: "For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints".

So, if it seems to be confused, then it is not of God, but is instead of Satan. It is well put in *Ephesians 5:18*: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;"

We cannot be effective soul winners without the power of the Holy Ghost. Though we can grieve and quench the Spirit, many times we are not filled with the Spirit simply because we do not ask to be. Pray for it! *Luke 11:13* says:

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Once we have a fresh infilling of the Spirit, we must yield to it. Robert Sargent said: "Remember - the question is not *How much do I have of Him?*, but *how much does He have of me?*." What he is saying is that it is all about commitment. The question is: Are you committed to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Sanctification comes to the Christian in three different stages. These stages are past sanctification, future sanctification, and present sanctification.

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Past sanctification is that which took place at the cross when Christ died for our sins. At the cross the believer was set apart from the unbeliever. The believer claims for themselves past sanctification when they are saved by God. Past sanctification says that we are sanctified in Christ (*1 Corinthians 1:2, 1:30 and 6:11*). Past sanctification deals more with the relationship, or position of the believer, rather than with fellowship between the believer and God .

Future sanctification is that everlasting sanctification that the believer will be able to claim after the resurrection (*Revelation 21:27*). Future sanctification comes when we are delivered from the presence of sin. There will exist a state of sinless perfection **after** the resurrection.

Present sanctification is the **process** of being set apart whereas holiness is the **state** of being set apart. Sanctification provides the path to holiness. Holiness is not a state of sinless perfection . We will never reach a state of sinless perfection as long as we are in these fleshly bodies. Present sanctification is a never ending battle for the Christian. This battle is very vividly described by Paul in Romans 7:14-25:

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. *John 15:10-11*

So, you thought you had a tough battle with Satan. If you are not having a battle with Satan, I would get real worried. As we grow in the grace of God through sanctification, one would think that we are less tempted by Satan, but that is not the case.

Sanctification is a process of growth for the Christian. Paul saw it as a turning from a life that is controlled by the lusts of the flesh to one that is controlled by holiness in *Romans 6:19-22*:

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things *is* death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. *Romans 6:19-22*

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Paul tells us that we should seek to possess our bodies in sanctification and honor in *1 Thessalonians 4:1-4*:

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more. 2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. 3 For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; *1 Thessalonians 4:1-4*

The believer is commanded to take control of their lusts and to be holy in *1 Peter 1:13-16*:

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. *1 Peter 1:13-16*

Sanctification is also the means whereby we maintain **fellowship** with God. As it is written in *Isaiah 59:1-2*:

Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear. *Isaiah 59:1-2*

Happiness and peace of mind is having continuing fellowship with the Lord. Our relationship with the Lord (salvation) is based upon the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our fellowship with the Lord is based totally upon our actions, or lack thereof. Through the process of sanctification we learn to be more and more frequently in obedience to the commandments of the Lord. Through obedience to the commandments of the Lord we receive a two fold blessing of joy. The Lord Jesus Christ said in *John 15:10-11*:

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full. *John 15:10-11*

If you want to restore the joy of His salvation, which is fellowship with the Lord, you must repent of your sin and confess it to God. King David understood the necessity of repentance in restoring fellowship with the Lord for he said in *Psalms 51:1-17*:

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly

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from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me. 4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest. 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice. 9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. 12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit. 13 *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. 15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. 16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.
Psalm 51:1-17

A necessary part of sanctification (Christian growth) is a willingness to say, “Yes, Lord I have done wrong and am willing to do whatever it takes to make it right between me and Thee”. This simply means to repent. Repentance brings joy.

BIBLICAL SEPARATION

“Biblical separation is the state of being separated from sin and error unto truth and righteousness” (Way Of Life Encyclopedia). Many will not take a stand for Biblical separation because they are afraid of being accused of being unloving, of being judgmental, or of being a Pharisee. Many are afraid of contention, but you must contend for the faith whether you want to or not. It is a bible commandment. Our Bible says in *Jude 3*:

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. *Jude 3*

Many will not take a stand for separation, or will compromise doctrine, because they think that to do so will enable them to build bridges to the lost. The philosophy is: “Compromise doctrines and standards that we might be able to draw a crowd”. Now, that’s depending on the Holy Ghost and exercising faith! John Cereghin also said: “We must never compromise a Biblical position so we may ‘build bridges.’ God will bomb our bridges if love toward ‘the brethren’ is more important to us than our love toward God”.

We are to be separated from this world in our minds, our fellowship, our dress and appearance, our

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music, our television viewing, our movie going, our internet activities, and our entertainment activities. We are not to be friends with the world. *James 4:4* says: “know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”. There are three different types of separation. These are moral, doctrinal, and practical. Moral separation is separating from sin and worldliness. Doctrinal separation (*Romans 16:16-17, Revelation 18:4*) is separating from false teaching and practices that are contrary to the Bible. Practical separation (*Matthew 18:15-18, 1 Corinthians 5:11*) is the breaking of fellowship with those brothers or sisters who are involved in open sin that they will not repent of.

MORAL SEPARATION

Once again, moral separation is separating from sin and worldliness unto godliness. As I said earlier, we are to be separated from this world in our minds, our fellowship, our dress and appearance, our music, our television viewing, our movie going, our internet activities.

The battle for holiness takes place in our minds. If we are Christians we have the upper hand because we have the mind of Christ. *1 Corinthians 2:16* says: “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ”. If we have the mind of Christ, then why do we not act like it. Our problem is that we let our flesh dictate to our minds who we will serve. The Bible says in *Romans 8:5-7*:

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. *Romans 8:5-7*

It is our carnal habit to walk in the flesh from birth. Most of the time we are so focused on earthly things that we are no heavenly good. We must make a conscious, disciplined effort to walk after the spirit in the power of the Spirit. The Bible says in *Galatians 5:16-17*:

16 *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. *Galatians 5:16-17*

The reason that we walk in the flesh rather than the spirit is that we are not willing to crucify our flesh. According to *Romans 12:1-2*, it is not unreasonable that God would ask us to live holy lives. Again, God says in *Romans 12:1-2*:

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. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,

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that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:1-2

Are you having trouble determining what the perfect will of God is for your life? Think on that. God says that we are to be renewed in our minds. The only way that can happen is that we first of all be permanently indwelt by the Holy Ghost through salvation. Then we must yield to the leading of the Holy Ghost. We should ask for a daily infilling of the Holy Ghost. If we will allow the Holy Ghost to renew our minds on a daily basis, then we will not walk after the vain ways of those dead in their trespasses and sins. According to *Ephesians 4:17-24*, when we walk after the flesh in our minds we lose our spiritual discernment because our understanding is darkened. The Bible says in *Ephesians 4:17-24*:

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. *Ephesians 4:17-24*

As Christians, we will never have peace of mind if we do not turn our minds over to the Holy Ghost that He might make us holy. If we will discipline our minds to be stayed upon Christ, God will give us perfect peace. Our Bible says in *Isaiah 26:3*: “Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee”. Are you stayed upon Jehovah?

When we become Christians we should have a limited fellowship. The Bible says in *2 Corinthians 6:14-15*:

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? *2 Corinthians 6:14-15*

Therefore, there will be some old friends that we will have to part company with. That also means that we cannot marry unbelievers. That is not to say that we cannot witness to our lost loved ones, lost friends and lost acquaintances, but that the focus of our fellowship is to be brothers and sisters in Christ. The Bible also says in *Ephesians 5:11*: “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*”. According to the Lord Jesus Christ, our salvation many times will put us at variance and/or separate us from our own family members. Christ said in Luke 12:51-53:

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51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: 52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. 53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. *2 Corinthians 6:14-15*

Christ also stated in *Matthew 10:34-36*:

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household. *Matthew 10:34-36*

Your lost friends will lead you astray by putting temptation before you. You will hear some things that will offend the Spirit that dwells within you. If you do not choose Christian friends after you are saved you will vex your righteous soul with the deeds of the wicked. If you do not break fellowship with your lost friends after you are saved you will vex your righteous soul with the deeds of the wicked. The Bible says in *2 Peter 2:7-9*:

7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;) 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: *2 Peter 2:7-9*

You cannot choose your family, but you can choose your spouse and friends. Pick your friends and spouse with a godly desire.

What I am about to say is not very popular in “Christian” circles, but it is Godly and Biblical. Christian appearance and dress are some of the most important outward signs of an inward Spirit filled salvation and holiness. It matters how God’s people dress. We are not to dress like the world. We are to look like Christians. We are not to dress in a manner that is “flashy fleshy”. We are not to dress in a manner that is sexually revealing. Neither should men and women look like they have been poured into their clothes. Men should not dress like gigolos. Women should not dress like harlots.

Also, Christian men and women do not belong on the beaches or at public swimming pools and swimming holes where men and women are not properly dressed. Remember what the Bible says in *Psalms 101:3*: “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; *it shall not cleave to me*”. The Bible also says in *1 Thessalonians 5:22*: “Abstain from all appearance of evil”.

Another very important area of Biblical separation is that of music. The music that Christians listen

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to should not sound like the worlds music. If the music sounds like it came out of a rock concert, then it did. If the music sounds like it came out of a country and western bar, then it did. Rock and music and Christian music are two mutually exclusive terms. Rap music and Christian music are two mutually exclusive terms. Heavy metal music cannot be Christian. A lot of Southern gospel music is not fit to listen to either because it sounds like it came out of a bar room. Practically all Contemporary Christian is unfit for Christians to listen to. Other than the doctrinal issues contained in the lyrics (words) of most “Christian” music produced today, there is the issue of the music (the instruments) itself. Contrary to what most folks think music is not neutral. Many times the music (instruments) present a much stronger message than the lyrics (words). You cannot take Christian lyrics and set them to any type of music and expect the message to remain the same. The music must match the message. The problem with most Christian music today is that the emphasis is on rhythm rather than melody and harmony. Rhythm speaks to the flesh. Melody and harmony speak to the soul and spirit. The Bible gives the requirements for Christian music in *Ephesians 5:19* and *Colossians 3:16* which read:

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; *Ephesians 5:19*

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. *Colossians 3:16*

Using the qualifications of melody and harmony we could throw out most of the music that is sung in the churches of apostate Christianity. Most of the music in apostate Christianity is written to work up the flesh through rhythm, the pounding of drums, and the praise of men. Drums do not belong in Christian music; especially music sung in a worship service. It is hard to play carnal rhythms and sing spiritually. All Christian music ought to honor and glorify God and uplift and exalt our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In our music, we want to play and sing the songs that the Lord Jesus wants to hear. After all, it is the Lord Jesus Christ that we are suppose to be worshipping and not man. Does the music you listen to honor and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ?? Of the 56 times the word “sing” is used in the Psalms, 51 of them are direct references to singing unto the Lord. The Bible speaks of the mountains, rivers, hills and trees singing unto the Lord. Please note the following Scriptures from our King James Bibles:

9 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works. 33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth. *1 Chronicles 16:9,33*

4 Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. *Psalms 30:4*

2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery *and* an instrument of

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ten strings. 3 Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. *Psalm 33:2-3*

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. *Psalm 95:2*

2 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works. *Psalm 105:2*

23 Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done *it*: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. *Isaiah 44:23*

3 For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and **the voice of melody**. *Isaiah 51:3*

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. *1 Corinthians 14:15*

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; *Ephesians 5:19*

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. *Colossians 3:16*

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. *James 5:13*

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. *Hebrews 2:12*

If you think music is neutral, ponder these statements prayerfully. You will find that it is not just the message that matters, but it is also the music that matters. Many times the music has a much stronger message than the words themselves. Consider this. I can hear a song played, anticipate the next note, hum the melody and not even remember most of the words. Selah!

Now, what about television and movie viewing and the internet? There is not one whit of anything coming out of Hollywood today that is fit for a Christian to watch. Most of the programming that comes through the airwaves and cable to our televisions is unfit for Christian viewing. The television and movie theaters are being used to destroy the testimony and spiritual power of

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Christians who feed themselves a constant diet of them. The television and movie theaters are being used by the devil to spiritually dumb down Christians. These dark devices are being used to destroy the spiritual discernment of Christians because they are being desensitized by a constant barrage of moral depravity including sexual perversion from the sodomites, violence, filthy language, fornication and adultery, abortion, murder, etc. There is a never ending stream of God hating, Christian bashing, and Christ rejecting propaganda and lies spewing forth from these cesspools of iniquity. Even the so called “news” shows take every opportunity they can to put nakedness, filth, and sodomy before our eyes. God help us. Most Christians would be better off if they tossed the television out the front door. Perhaps the greatest evil of television and movies is that they take away from the time that belongs to God and family. When Christians ought to be studying the Bible together, praying together, and working and worshipping together through the church of the living God, they are plopped down in front of a television or movie ingesting spiritual cyanide. These things keep the Christian from redeeming the time (*Ephesians 5:16*) One of the greatest evils for the American male is the television sports show. One of the greatest evils for the American woman is the television soap opera. The internet has run rampant with sodomy and pornography. Marriages have been and continue to be destroyed through X rated chat rooms. The internet is being used to promote false religions and doctrine. The Christian must be very careful what internet “Christian” sites they visit. There are some very powerful tools on the internet for Christians, but the key to their use is spiritual discernment. Most Christians would be much better off if they did not even have a computer.

The first indication of the importance of separation is given in *Genesis 13* where we see the story of Lot and Abraham. Abraham separated himself from Lot and from the temptations of Sodom where we see that Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom and Abraham built an altar unto the Lord in Hebron on the plain of Mamre. Abraham’s action was one that honored God. Lot’s action honored the world. Lot paid a price for his involvement in the snares of this world. We learn in *2 Peter 2:7-8*:

7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;) *2 Peter 2:7-8*

I was really surprised to learn in *2 Peter* that Lot was a righteous man. All information given in *Genesis* would lead most to believe that he was lost. Lot is a type of the worldly believer. Just as Lot vexed his righteous soul, Christians that will not practice separation are not going to have any peace of mind as long as the Holy Ghost is in the ministry of conviction. The source of all the misery of the nation of Israel was their failure to obey the commandment of the Lord not to mix with the heathen of the lands that they were going into. This commandment and admonishment was often repeated. We see it repeated in *Exodus 34:10-17*, *Deuteronomy 12:29-32*, and *2 Kings 17:9-23*. God’s children are to remain separated from this world.

We are told why we should remain separated as a people in *1 Peter 2:9-12*:

9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of

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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 and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation 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. *1 Peter 2:9-12*

DOCTRINAL SEPARATION

Doctrinal separation is that separation that comes about based upon parting company with those that teach false doctrine. Might I also say that which Bible version is used is the strongest doctrinal separation issue. The King James Bible is the Bible that God has ordained for English speaking peoples. All other versions are perversions. The Bible version issue is a topic unto itself that we will discuss later.

The word “doctrine” is mentioned 51 times in our Bible. The word “doctrines” is mentioned 5 times in our Bible. Doctrine is connected to Biblical unity in *Ephesians 4:11-15* where we have:

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: *Ephesians 4:11-15*

The basis of doctrinal separation must be the Bible and not church tradition. For the Christian who is obedient to the word of God, there is no unity in diversity. True Biblical unity can only exist in Biblical truth. Biblical truth defines and sets the boundaries of pure doctrine. Biblical truth sets the bounds for fellowship and separation. We, as Bible believing Baptists, cannot fellowship with, or conduct joint ventures with, Mormons, Reformed Churches, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Pentecostals, Churches of Christ, Jehovah Witnesses, unitarians, Roman Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists, Episcopalians, Anglicans, Mennonites, Christian Churches, Holiness Churches, Eastern Orthodox Churches, Christian Science, Masons, and etc. All these groups hold to false doctrines that are contrary to what the Bible teaches.

A partial list of the false doctrines held by these groups would include: infant baptism, baptismal regeneration, baptism by sprinkling, transubstantiation (Catholics), consubstantiation (Lutherans and Anglicans), Calvinism, Arminianism (can lose salvation), universal salvation, soul sleep, investigative judgement, Sabbath keeping required, sinless perfection, tongues abuses, women preachers, prayers to and for the dead, purgatory, no eternally burning hell, prayers to the saints, prayers to Mary, Mary worship, Mary as co-redeemer and co-intercessor, the immaculate conception,

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the assumption of Mary, priesthood (celibate, non-celibate, Melchizedek, Aaronic), veneration of relics, use of icons (idols), sacramental salvation, Pope is Vicar of Christ, Holy Spirit is not God, Jesus is not God, Lucifer is the brother of the Lord Jesus Christ, ordaining of sodomites, salvation is by grace plus works, indulgences, penance, modern Bible perversions, holy laughter, holy ghost glue, blood of Christ cannot atone for certain sins, wives will be given and taken in heaven, all will be saved, etc., and etc. All of these false doctrines are heresy. Our King James Bible says in *Titus 3:10-11*:

10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; 11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. *Titus 3:10-11*

Our Bible says in *Ephesians 5:11-12*:

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. *Ephesians 5:11-12*

Among all these apostate denominations are individuals who do not believe in the virgin birth, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the truth of the first five books of the Bible, the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, etc.

The sad fact is that the majority of “Baptist” churches are apostate. They hold to doctrines that are blatantly opposed to sound Biblical doctrine. Their teachers and preachers will not make a stand against sin and worldliness. They will not preach repentance or hell. Easy believeism has run amok. They are opposed to Biblical separation because it would not be “seeker friendly”. Their music reeks of the filthiness of the flesh and the world. Most Baptist churches hold to any Bible but the King James Bible. These “Baptists” are being spiritually dumbed down by their modern Bible perversions and their worldly music programs. Folks, the selection of Bible versions and music applies to the doctrine of separation. Come dressed they way you are is the order of the day. “Baptist” churches are ordaining women pastors, women deacons, and sodomites. Most Baptists are in severe need of an otologist to treat the sores that have come up on their ears because of itching ears. They will not endure sound doctrine. Our Bible says in *2 Timothy 4:3-4*:

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. *2 Timothy 4:3-4*

The Baptist byword for today is **COMPROMISE** and has been for a very long time. The example that I am about to quote is from 2004, but we are in 2026 now. It is much worse now. For example, I quote the following from the Friday Church News Notes (David Cloud):

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“Speaking at the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in June 2004, SBC President Morris Chapman warned against "separatism." In his message "The Fundamentals of Cooperating Conservatives," he said: "There's a road wrongly taken by many on our left, the road of liberalism. But there is also a road wrongly taken by many others on our right side. It may not be as treacherous as the road of liberalism, but it is just as disabling to the Convention. What is this road? It is the road of separatism – an ecclesiastical methodology that devalues cooperation in favor of hyper independence. In the past, we have avoided this road as fervently as the road on the left. If Southern Baptists steer too sharply toward the right, we will end up on the road of separatism. Southern Baptists have never embraced the methodologies of separatism.”

Here we have the leader of one of the largest denominational churches in America denying one of the major doctrines of the faith. Separation is a Biblical commandment that is as old as God's orders to Israel not to mix with the inhabitants of the Promised Land lest they should become a partaker of their idolatry and other wicked deeds.

M. H. Reynolds said:

Some of the disturbing changes which are taking place in the lives and ministries of many Christian leaders and organizations are (1) a changed attitude in work and worship, one of irreverence, lightness and frivolity; an increasing emphasis on "clowns" to amuse rather than "crowns" to be won; (2) a changed attitude toward the importance of sound doctrine where fellowship becomes paramount and correct doctrine takes a back seat; (3) a changed position in theological matters, one which may be described as "flexible" rather than "fixed" -- with such a flexible position, further changes come thick and fast; (4) a changed emphasis in ministry, one which endeavors to "build bridges" into the camp of the enemy rather than to "build walls" to protect the sheep from the wolves; (5) a changed scale of values which extols quantity rather than quality. Following this policy, some very impressive programs, lacking a solid, biblical foundation will inevitably be "blown about with every wind of doctrine," leaving the door open for even further and more drastic changes in the future.

Doctrinal separation by Biblical definition must not be based on the persons of men (*1 Corinthians 1:12-13*), matters of Christian liberty (*Romans 14:1-5*), and human conflict (*Philippians 4:2*).

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? *1 Corinthians 1:12-13*

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations. 2 For one

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believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. 3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. 4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. 5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. *Romans 14:1-5*

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. *Philippians 4:2*

As the ecumenical movement pushes toward the "one world" church, we **must not** become ensnared in its clutches because they are as wicked as hell and in fact are straight out of the pits of hell. The ecumenical movement is the child of Satan. The word ecumenical means *universal*. Does that ring a bell? It should because *Catholic also means universal!* We are instructed in *Romans 16:17*, *2 John 8-11*, *Revelation 2:2*, and *Revelation 17* to separate based upon doctrine.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. *Romans 16:17*

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. 9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: 11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. *2 John 8-11*

2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: *Revelation 2:2*

I included *Revelation 17* because it is about a religious Babylon at war with the Lamb Of God. Many of those in the ecumenical movement will use *Romans 16:17* to accuse any who would stand for doctrinal separation of causing division. The problem is that they mark us for causing division. However, they cannot mark us for offenses contrary to Biblical doctrine which is the qualification for marking. We can only be marked for standing for Biblical truth which ultimately means that we must stand apart. Thank you Lord! Paul compares the final state of those who are marked according to sound doctrine and those who are marked according to false doctrine in *Philippians 3:17-20*:

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is

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destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.) 20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: *Philippians 3:17-20*

This makes it very clear that we are to separate on the basis of doctrine especially when considered in light of Romans 16:17. Both the false prophets and the brethren who walk according to sound doctrine are to be marked. That is, they are to be separated. Paul feared false doctrine. He said in *2 Corinthians 11:3-4*:

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*. *2 Corinthians 11:3-4*

Consider Paul's fear and ponder this question for a few minutes: "What is more important; doctrine or salvation?". The doctrine of salvation is the most frequently perverted Bible doctrine.

PRACTICAL SEPARATION

Our concluding topic in this study is the subject of practical separation. Practical separation is the use of church discipline to separate ourselves from that Christian brother or sister who will not walk according to the teachings of the Bible. We are to put that Christian that is in open rebellion out of our congregation if they will not obey the plain teaching of the Bible. This type of discipline is not to be used to punish a Christian who occasionally falls short. Remember what the Bible says in *Galatians 6:1*:

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. *Galatians 6:1*

The discipline that we refer to in practical separation is that described in *1 Corinthians 5:11-13*, *2 Thessalonians 3:6*, and *1 Timothy 6:3-5*.

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? 13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. *1 Corinthians 5:11-13*

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye

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withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. *2 Thessalonians 3:6*

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. *1 Timothy 6:3-5*

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ prescribed the method for dealing with a brother that would not repent in *Matthew 18:15-18*:

15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. *Matthew 18:15-18*

That is the Biblical method for church discipline.

It is my sincere prayer that this study has helped any who would read and study it to grow in the grace of God. It was a real blessing to me to prepare it.