



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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The Discipline of Separation!

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

The word *discipline* means, “training that develops self-control, character; strict control to enforce obedience.” There are **two sources of power and strength** that we need to call upon to live a separated life from the world: **His power** and **will power**. If we try to depend only on the strength of the Lord to live a separated life, we will eventually fail due to the absence of discipline. **We must be self-disciplined!** On the other hand, if we try to live disciplined lives without the presence and strength of Jesus Christ, we still are completely vulnerable to failure. The only winning combination involves the combination of these two powers. Only then can we live successfully above sin.

For those who have discovered God’s Kingdom of light, there can be no contact or compromise with the kingdom of darkness (1 Corinthians 10:20, 21). Jesus said, “*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other*” (Matthew 6:24). He also added in Luke 11:34: “*When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light.*”

Paul urges believers not to form binding relationships with nonbelievers because this might weaken their Christian commitment, integrity, or standards. However, Paul explained that this did not mean isolating themselves from nonbelievers. He even urges Christians to stay with their nonbelieving spouses (1 Corinthians 7:12, 13). Paul wanted believers to be active in their witness for Christ to nonbelievers, but they should not lock themselves into personal or business relationships that could cause them to compromise their faith. Believers should avoid situations that would force them to divide their loyalties.

Separation from the world involves more than keeping our distance from sinners; it means staying close to God. It involves more than avoiding entertainment that leads to sin; it extends into how we spend our time and money. There is no way to separate ourselves daily from all sinful influences. Nevertheless, **we are to resist the sin around us, not give up and give in**. The world understands the necessity for separation when it comes to physical items (grocery or hardware, bananas, milk, and motors, tools and toothpaste), but unbelievers find it strange when Christian desire to be separate from sin and unrighteousness.

A believer and an unbeliever are like two animals that are not equally matched. Yoking them together manifests these differences and creates much difficulty. Differences in religious beliefs create built-in bumps in the road that can create major detours in life. Unequally yoked together with unbelievers undermines righteousness. Righteousness and unrighteousness can have no fellowship, like light and darkness, have nothing in common, therefore they have no mutual participation. Also, it undermines fellowship and communication, harmony and agreement. When we join together opposites, however, confusion ensues. Amos 3:3 says, “*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*”

Separation from the world establishes the opportunity for a new creation. When we choose the way of righteousness over unrighteousness, it forms for us a special relationship with the Lord; we belong to Him! When we belong to Him, we are able to enjoy a whole new world of wonderful things. Paul wrote, “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*” (2 Corinthians 5:17). There is always a reward for separation. When we please God by refraining from ungodly alliances, He rewards us with a relationship that includes heavenly communication, and ultimately, heaven itself.

Many in our world speak of “receiving the Lord Jesus Christ” as their “personal Savior,” but seldom do we hear about the Lord receiving us. More important than our receiving Him is His receiving us! “*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 7:1).

Serving God requires a disciplined life of separation!