



Cherreguine Bible Doctrine Ministries

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Lesson From Church History

Church history has proven again and again that separation is the only solution to apostasy. There is not an instance in all of church history where a denomination has departed from the Word of God and then some time later returned to a more solid Biblical position. Sad but true, the only effective answer is to come out from among them and be separate.

Dr. John Whitcomb has said it this way:

The only possible way to perpetuate His truth is to separate it from all forms of error and compromise. A refusal to recognize this fundamental fact is the fatal blunder of modern ecclesiastical ecumenism in all its forms, including evangelical ecumenism. *Truth cannot be perpetuated through compromise and compromise cannot be avoided without separation.* This is a formula which God's people have discovered through centuries of sad experience with the weakness of fallen human nature in the presence of "the god of this world," and especially through the direct teachings of God's Word (*Christ, Our Pattern and Plan*, p. 14).

F.B.Meyer has said,

There is not a single hero or saint, whose name sparkles on the inspired page, who moved his times from within: All, without exception, have raised the cry, "Let us go forth without the camp"; and have joined the constant stream of martyrs, confessors, prophets, and saints, of which the world was not worthy, but who can trace their kinship to Him of whom it is written, "He suffered without the gate."

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan also spoke of the urgent need for separation:

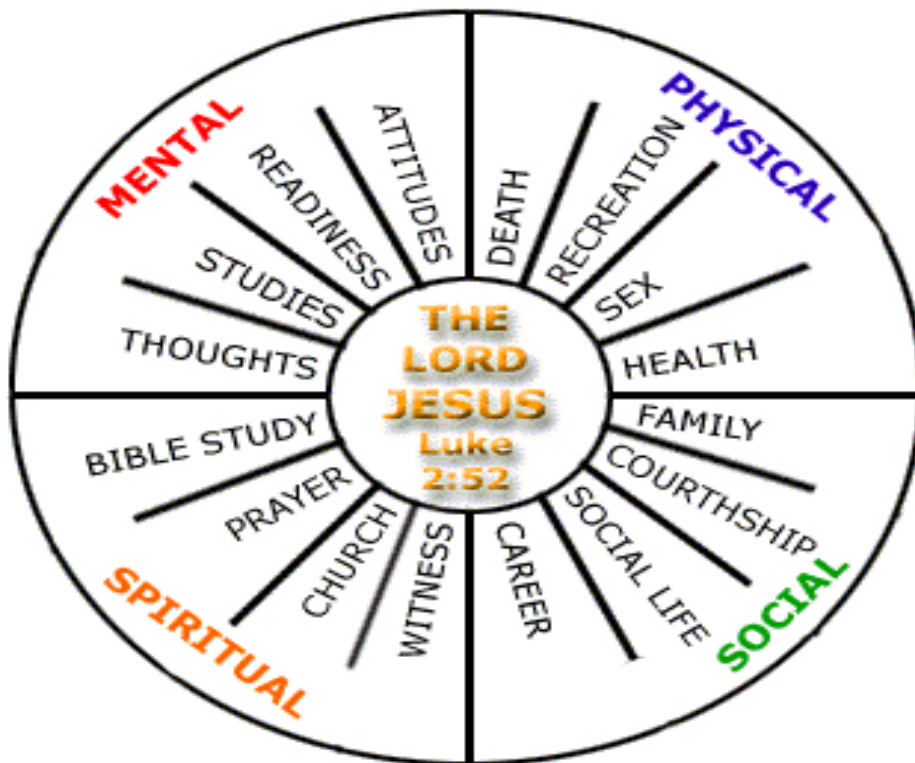
There is a toleration which is treachery. There is a peace which issues in paralysis. There are hours when the church must say NO to those who should ask communion with her, in the doing of her work, upon the basis of compromise. Such standing aloof may produce ostracism and persecution; but it will maintain power and influence. If the Church of God in the cities of today were aloof from the maxims of the age, separated from the materialistic philosophies of the schools, bearing her witness alone to the all-sufficiency of Christ, and the perfection of His salvation, even though persecuted and ostracized and bruised, it would be to her that men would look in the hour of their heartbreak and sorrow and national need. The reason why men do not look to the church today is that she has destroyed her own influence by compromise.

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--George Zeller (1975)

For help in understanding how to live a life set apart and separated unto the Lord, consider the following:

The doctrine of personal separation will be examined within the framework of the four aspects of life set forth in Luke 2:52—“And Jesus increased in **wisdom** (mental) and **stature** (physical), and **in favor with God** (spiritual) and **man** (social).” The following diagram may be helpful (taken from *The Four Aspects of Life* by Robert Ramey, “The Philosophy of Christ’s Life,” unpublished class notes, Grace Theological Seminary)



Separation in the Christian’s Mental Life

Thoughts

All practical godliness must begin with the thought life of the Christian, “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). Separation in the thought life is particularly important because the Christian possesses two natures: two dispositions which are continually striving with each other for the control of the believer (Galatians 5:17). If the Christian is to “walk in the

Spirit,” he must distinguish the desires of the Spirit. To make the differentiation easy, Paul has given the believer an objective criterion for distinguishing the desires of the flesh from the desires of the Spirit in the form of a list of examples (see Galatians 5:19-23). By meditating upon this list, the Christian will be able to readily discern between the desires of his old nature and those of the Holy Spirit and will, by obeying His desires, be controlled by the Spirit.

Reading and other activities

The realization that the Christian still possesses his old nature, as a kind of caged-up wild beast looking for a way to get out, ought to make him careful of the kind of “food for thought” he allows to come in. The Christian must distinguish between that which feeds the flesh and that which nourishes his new nature in the things which he allows to enter through the eyes and ears. David failed to turn his head at the first glimpse of Bathsheba, and paid the consequences. Split-second discernment and reaction is becoming imperative for the Christian living in a world where modest women dress like the harlots of ten years ago.

Attitudes

To be pleasing to the Lord, the right thing must be done in the right way. Israel had served the Lord, and yet He said:

Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things, therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies whom the LORD shall send against thee” (Deut. 28:47-48).

The Christian must be extremely discriminatory in the choice of attitudes which he manifests. He must be as set apart from wrong attitudes as he is from wrong actions. As the Apostle Paul stated:

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you (Eph. 4:31-32).

The true Christian, then, will be a fanatical separatist with regards to his own attitudes.