

Subject: *Disciples Are Separated from the World*

Scripture: *John 14:21-31*

In John 14-17 we have a record of Jesus alone with His disciples. He has brought them apart from ministry to the world at large and is spending time with them just before His arrest and crucifixion. Judas the deceiver left the group in John 13. Behind closed doors in the upper room the disciples were separated physically from the outside world. During these hours Jesus reminded them that His disciples are separated from the world spiritually and eternally. He taught them that this world is not our home (Jn. 14), the world is not our friend (Jn. 15:18-19). He taught them that disciples are in the world but not of it (Jn. 17:14, 16). At the close of John 14 Jesus taught that we are separated from the world in four ways:

1. Disciples are separated by the Lord's priority

That priority is our love for Him that is shown by our obedience. True disciples love Jesus and they prove their love by obeying what He says. It is not only the test of love; it is the test of Lordship. **Luke 6:46** *And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*

John 10:27 *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*

John 14:15 *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

John 14:21 *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me...*

John 14:24 *He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.*

The words Jesus spoke were divine words, the Father's words. To reject His words or treat them lightly is to treat God lightly. The believer is different from the world because he loves the Lord and obeys Him. James says the evidence of genuine faith is obedience. Jesus says the evidence of genuine love is obedience.

1 John 5:2 *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.*

2. Disciples are separated by the Lord's presence

In verse 21 Jesus states that He will manifest (reveal) Himself to the person who obeys Him, the person who truly loves Him. Judas (not Iscariot) wondered how Jesus would reveal Himself to believers and not to the world. This is the third time in John 14 when Jesus taught something profound in answer to a question or request from one of His disciples. The first was Thomas' question about heaven (vs. 5). The second was Philip's request to see the Father (vs. 8).

In John 14:23 Jesus once again states that a true follower is one who loves Him and obeys Him. A true follower enjoys the presence of the Father and the Son. Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit who represents the Father and Himself. The Holy Spirit makes His home in the believer. A believer is different from the world because he has the presence of God in him.

Romans 8:9 *...Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

3. Disciples are separated by the Lord's promise

This promise is in regard to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit (the Comforter, Helper, one called alongside to help) would teach believers and bring to memory every thing Jesus said. This is the promise of divine instruction and guidance. It is a promise that involves revelation (the content or subject matter of Scripture), inspiration (the process of writing Scripture), and illumination (the Spirit's help in understanding Scripture). All three of these are referred to in **1 Corinthians 2:9-14** ⁹ *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* ¹⁰ *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* ¹¹ *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* ¹² *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.* ¹³ *Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.* ¹⁴ *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth because He possesses all truth and guides us into truth. The world cannot receive the Holy Spirit and it does not know Him (vs. 17). Believers are separated from the world because we have the Spirit and know the truth. We should live on a higher level and at a higher standard than the world.

John 16:13 *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

John 17:17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

4. Disciples are separated by the Lord's peace

Jesus left a legacy of peace. It is His peace. The world cannot give it because the world does not have it. The world can give pleasure, prestige, profit, power, and position, but it can't give peace. Peace is a special gift from Jesus to His people. Believers have peace in a troubled world. We have peace in a dangerous world. **John 16:33** *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

It's no wonder so many people are stressed out with all the problems and pressures of life. How can you cope if you don't have the peace of God? Believers are not exempt from problems, but we have peace to deal with our problems. **Philippians 4:6-7** ⁶ *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* ⁷ *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

The followers of Christ are separated in these four ways:

We are separated by the Lord's priority (we love and obey Him).

The world has no love for Christ and no desire to know or obey what He says.

We are separated by the Lord's presence (He lives in us).

The world does not know the Lord's presence, but lives according to the prince of this world who is Satan the deceiver. **Ephesians 2:2** *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.*

We are separated by the Lord's promise (He guides us by His truth).

The world does not know the truth of God's Word and has no desire to know it.

We are separated by the Lord's peace (He has peace in a troubled world).

The world has no real peace, but only some poor substitutes to relieve stress.

Why would a follower of Christ want to be like the world or fit in with the world? If you're a Christian, don't try to act like the world. You're different. Don't envy the world. You don't need what it has to offer. Don't love the world. **1 John 2:15** *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

The one thing that sets believers apart from the world is God's work of salvation. He takes away our sin and gives us a new heart. John 3 says it is being born again.

Psalms 51:10 *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.* Why is it that a lost sinner won't pray like that? It's because he doesn't think he needs a new heart. Let me use this illustration. The Bible says that all we like sheep have gone astray, but we don't see ourselves that way. We're like sheep on a green hillside and next to the green grass we think we're pretty clean. But if snow falls and covers that hill, the sheep look dirty and nasty against that white snow. We must see ourselves like God sees us, and only then will we ask Him to make us clean. **Isaiah 1:18** *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*