

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 1 of 13

---

Today we are resuming our series of messages on the Biblical doctrine of separation. As we begin, let me call your attention once again to the passages that have set the theme for this series of messages. If you are able to do so, I hope that you will turn with me in your own copy of God's Word to the book of Colossians chapter 3. I want to read for you once again the first four verses of chapter 3, and also verses 16 and 17. Colossians chapter 3, beginning at verse one:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

And then let me call your attention to verses 16 and 17 of this same chapter. Colossians chapter 3, verses 16 and 17:

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. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

The words that we have just read speak to us of the fact that God commands believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to be separated from this present world and

---

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 2 of 13

---

separated unto Him. God commands His people to separate themselves from the pattern of sinful thinking and sinful living and sinful associations which are the way of this world that is under the sway of Satan. And not only are God's people commanded to separate themselves from the world, but they are also to separate themselves unto God, because we have been raised with Christ, raised to newness of life.

### **Separation Means Spiritual Safety**

The true Christian, the truly regenerated individual, has been crucified with Christ. The person who is saved has been raised with Christ. The life of the individual Christian is hidden with Christ in God. That is your position as a Christian. You are no longer of the world, spiritually speaking. You are in Christ. It is in Christ that you are made alive. It is in Christ that you have been given the righteousness of God. And it is in Christ that you have been given the wisdom of God's Word to live a life that is worthy of the Lord even though you are still living in this present evil world.

To be in Christ is to be in the ultimate place of safety and certainty in this spiritually unsafe and uncertain present evil world. To be in Christ is the ultimate place of safety and protection from the wrath that is coming upon this world and upon those who refuse Christ. To be in Christ is not only the ultimate place of safety for the life to come in the New Heavens and New Earth. To be in Christ, to be in His Word, to be seeking those things which are above, to set your mind

---

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 3 of 13

---

not on the things of this earth but on things above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God – that is also the ultimate place of safety from the influences of this present evil world which seeks to subvert the individual Christian and to subvert the church.

### **The Church's Problem Today**

But today, many people who profess to be Christians, and many churches that profess to be Bible-based, Bible-believing churches, are not thinking and speaking and living in that position of safety. Many Christians, and many churches, have their minds firmly fixed on the things of this present evil world, the philosophies and thinking of this present evil world, a way of living that is under the influence of the world and in agreement with the world.

This is the problem we confront in the church today. And we must confront it. We must be honest to recognize the tragic situation that we find in much of the church today. And we must understand what God says must be done, and we must resolve to do what God commands us to do.

Now as we have been studying the subject of Biblical separation, we have been asking a series of questions. And we come now to a question that follows from the ones that we have asked previously. The question I want to place before you today, and answer from Scripture today, is this: What is to be the relationship of the Christian and the church to this present evil world? Or to put the question a different way: What changes when you become a Christian? What

---

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 4 of 13

---

changes when you are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and God places you in the body of Christ?

### **What Does It Mean to Be a Member of the Body of Christ?**

Now before I go on to begin to answer these questions, I want to make sure that we understand what it means to be in the body of Christ. It is not simply a matter of joining a visible church. The vast majority of people who are members of a visible church today are not members of the body of Christ.

Now that may surprise some of you. That may even shock or offend some of you. But it is the truth according to the Word of God. Dear friend, listen to me carefully: You do not become a Christian by having your name added to the membership roll of an organized church. You do not become a Christian by being baptized. You do not become a member of the body of Christ by standing up in front of a group of people and taking a church membership vow.

None of these things makes you a Christian. None of these things regenerates you. None of these things brings you to spiritual life. None of those things crucifies you with Christ. None of those things crucifies the old man. None of these trappings of membership in a visible church makes you dead to this present evil world. None of those things raises you to spiritual life in Christ.

None of these things places you in the position that the Apostle Paul is speaking of here – the position of your life being hidden with Christ in God.

---

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 5 of 13

---

None of these things, none of the trappings of visible church membership, are the guarantee that when Christ appears, you will also appear with Him in glory.

You cannot join yourself to a local church, you cannot associate yourself with an organized church, in order to become a Christian. A person joins himself to a local Bible-believing church, a person associates and identifies himself with a local body of believers, because God has made him a Christian.

Acts chapter two, verse 47 tells us that it was the Lord who added to the church each day those who were being saved. Acts chapter five, verse 14 declares that it was "believers [who] were increasingly added to the Lord" – added, that is, to the body of Christ – "multitudes of both men and women." Ephesians 1:23 declares to us that it is those who are regenerated by the Spirit of God who are members of the true body of Christ.

### **A Dramatic Change of Relationship**

Now, in light of this truth, let me come back to our question: What is to be the relationship of the Christian and the church to this present evil world? Or to put the question a different way: What changes when you become a Christian?

The answer is that the relationship is changed dramatically. We saw this in an earlier series of messages when we were studying the first verses of Colossians chapter 3 in greater detail, when we looked at the fact that the Bible teaches that the true Christian, the person who has been saved, the person who has been

---

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 6 of 13

---

regenerated by the Spirit of God – that person has been given adoption as a son by God. If you are truly in Christ, it means that God who was once your condemning Judge is now God your loving Father. It means that you are part of the family of those who bear the name of Jesus Christ.

Dear friend, note well what this means. It means that if you are a Christian, your family relationship has changed. Spiritually speaking, those who remain in a lost condition, those who are unsaved – those people, even though they may in some cases be your blood relatives – spiritually speaking, those unsaved people are no longer your brothers and sisters. If you are a Christian you are no longer a member of the family of the unsaved. You are a member of the family of the saints of Jesus Christ.

Philippians chapter 3 verse 20 tells us that "our citizenship is in Heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself." And then the Apostle Paul says this in the very next verse: "Therefore, my beloved and longed for brethren, my joy and crown [because this is true], so stand fast in the Lord, beloved."

This is a dramatic change from an individual's previous position. A complete change. Ephesians chapter 2 verse 12 tells us that when we were outside of Christ, we were aliens and strangers in the eyes of God. We were without hope,

---

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 7 of 13

---

we were without God in the world. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 18 tells us that before we were brought to life in Christ our spiritual understanding was darkened, we were alienated from the life of God. In Colossians chapter 1, beginning at verse 21, the Apostle Paul says this of the Colossian believers, and it is true of every believer. He writes this:

And you, who were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He [Christ] has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight – if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel...

### **No Compartmentalization**

And dear friend, this is why the words that we read at the beginning of this message are so vital for you. It is absolutely essential for you to be continually in the Word of God, because it is absolutely essential for the Word of God to be continually in you. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." And we saw that that word "dwell" in the original language has the sense of the Word of God being at home, completely at home, within you, having free reign within you.

In other words, there can be no compartmentalization in the life of the Christian. You cannot have certain areas of your life that are separated from the world and certain areas of your life that are not.

---

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 8 of 13

---

This is true of the individual Christian, and it is true of the church as a body. At the beginning of each of our broadcasts, the announcer says this: "The church of Jesus Christ must be the Scripture-driven church, relying upon God's inspired, inerrant Word as our sole authority and our infallible critic in every area of life and ministry."

The Word of God must have free reign in every area of your life and your thinking. And the Word of God must have free reign in every area of the life and ministry of the church. No individual Christian has the right to say to God, "This is a part of my life and my thinking that is off-limits to You. You can come this far, but no further." You cannot say that to God. You have no right to say that to God.

And the same is true for the church. No church leadership, and no congregation, has the right to say to God, in effect, "This is an area of the life and thinking of this church that is off-limits to the Word of God." Hebrews chapter 4 verse 12 tells us that

the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.



Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 9 of 13

---

## **The Pattern of Church Compromise**

But today, many individuals who call themselves Christians, and many churches that call themselves Evangelical or Fundamental or Reformed are conducting themselves as though these verses were not even in the Bible.

They are effectively saying to God, "You can come this far and no further. We will only be subject to the Word of God up to this point. We will only be subject to the Word of God to the extent that we are comfortable. We will only be subject to the Word of God to the extent that it makes unsaved people feel comfortable with us.

"We establish the boundaries of the influence of the Word of God. Beyond this point, beyond the boundaries that we have established, the word of man has free reign. The philosophies of man have free reign. The influences of this present evil world have free reign."

Now will you hear a preacher say this from the pulpit? No, you probably will not – at least not in the beginning. The book of Jude verse four tells us that such men, pastors and church leaders who want to compartmentalize the ministry of the church and place certain things off-limits to the critical eye of the Word of God, we are told that such preachers and leaders creep into the visible church, unnoticed. A literal translation of Jude verse four reads like this:

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 10 of 13

---

For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who were long ago marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into shameless rebellion, who disregard and reject the authority of the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear friends, I hear of this happening more and more frequently in local churches today. In fact, while I was preparing this broadcast message we received a phone call from a lady who was in a local church in which this very thing was happening.

And the pattern is always very much the same. A man comes in as the new pastor of what has been a sound, Bible believing church. And this man comes in talking the talk that the congregation is accustomed to hearing.

But over time, usually over the course of one or two years, things begin to change. The new man begins to change the worship of the church to make it more acceptable to the world. The new man begins to change the emphasis in the pulpit from expository preaching to the use of Scripture texts, taken out of their context, to support a new agenda in the church.

The new agenda may be the purpose driven church agenda. It may be the emergent church agenda. It may be a health and wealth agenda. It may be a material success agenda. Or, increasingly in our own time, it may be a social justice agenda.

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 11 of 13

---

And the man who is doing this may not be a new man. In some cases, these changes may be brought about by a man who has been the pastor of a church for many years, but he has come under ungodly influences and he brings those ungodly influences into the local church.

Something else is also usually a part of the pattern when these changes take place, when the church ceases to be a separated Church and becomes a church that is in friendship with the world. The additional thing that usually occurs is that when Bible believing Christians who have been in the congregation for many years stand up in opposition to the un-Biblical changes that are being made, stand up in opposition to the move away from a spiritually separated position, the man in the pulpit begins to change the emphasis in his preaching to an emphasis – and I should say and on Biblical emphasis – on the authority of the pastor and of the leadership of the church.

The pastor of the church that is going the way of the world sets himself up, and sets up those who have allied with him in leadership in moving the church in these ungodly directions, he sets them up as the authority in the church, instead of the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ being the authority.

Now this is not to say that there is not a place in the church for spiritual authority. But it must be authority that is in subjection to the Word of God and in subjection to the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 12 of 13

---

## **The Responsibility That Many Men Abdicate**

And once again, this takes us back to the verses that we have referred to so often in this series of messages, in Colossians chapter 3, verses 16 and 17. The Word of Christ must first of all have free reign within the hearts and minds of the pastor and the leaders of the church. All that the pastor and the leaders of the church do, the example that they set, the direction in which they lead the church, must be a direction that is worthy of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It must be a position and a direction that is separated from the world and separated unto God.

The pastor and the leaders of the church must be constantly placing before the people of the church the imperative of separation from the world and separation unto God. And it cannot simply be a matter of talking the talk, but not walking the walk.

There is much more to be said on this subject, and as we continue, I want to place before you an example from the Old Testament in which a spiritual leader, King Solomon himself, departed from a separated position and involved himself and his kingdom and the people of God in deep compromise with the world, with disastrous results.

Dear friends, this is not a pleasant thing to have to look at. But we need to look at this if we are to be true to God and true to His Word. We need to understand the parallel in the church in our own time so that we may be warned,

Series: *Biblical Separation*

Title: "The Pattern of Compromise" (Colossians 3:16-17, Jude 4)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 4/27/2014

Page 13 of 13

---

and so that we may not fall into the same tragic error, and so that we may truly serve our Lord and glorify Him with our whole hearts.

#### **About the Broadcast**

*The Scripture-Driven Church* airs each week across the United States and around the world. Our goal is that of the Great Commission: to preach the Gospel to the world, and to equip believers to stand upon and live by the sole authority of God's Word, to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

#### **How You Can Help Us**

*Above all, please pray for us.* The prayers of our listeners and supporters are vital to all we do. We thank you for bringing this ministry before the throne of grace.

The broadcast is supported entirely by the gifts of God's people. If the Lord leads you to help us financially, you can:

- Call us toll-free at 888-804-9655 to give a gift by credit card
- Give a gift online at our secure website, [www.teachingtheword.org](http://www.teachingtheword.org)
- Mail your gift to TeachingTheWord, Box 2533, Westminster, Maryland 21158

**TeachingtheWord Ministries** is recognized as a tax-exempt religious organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code.

**May the Lord richly bless your personal study  
of His inspired, infallible, inerrant Word.**