

# Be Separate

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*Deuteronomy 7:1-5*

## INTRODUCTION

- A. In today's world, one often has difficulty seeing a difference between Christians and non-Christians.
  - 1. Christians often go see the same movies non-Christians go see.
  - 2. Christians often use the same profanity and euphemisms non-Christians use.
  - 3. Christians often divorce at a rate similar to that of non-Christians.
- B. God would have Christians be different than the rest of the world.
  - 1. God instructed the Israelites to be different than the nations around them.
    - a. "Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God" (Lev. 20:7).
    - b. "You shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine" (Lev. 20:26).
  - 2. God has instructed Christians to be different than the world around them.
    - a. "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord" (2 Cor. 6:17).
    - b. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jn. 2:15).
- C. The text we want to study this morning speaks of the Israelites' being separate from the world around them.

## SEPARATE IN FELLOWSHIP, vv. 1-2

- A. The Lord was bringing the Israelites into the land they were going to possess, v. 1.
  - 1. The Lord gave the Israelites the land of Canaan.
    - a. When Abram was in Canaan, the Lord told him, "All the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever" (Gen. 13:15).
    - b. Concerning Ai, the Lord told Joshua, "I will give it into your hand" (Josh. 8:18).
      - 1) Over and over, we see God giving the Israelites Canaan.
        - a) The waters of the Jordan stopped flowing so the Israelites could cross into Canaan.
        - b) The walls of Jericho came down by miraculous means.
        - c) The sun stood still so that the Israelites could defeat the five kings of the Amorites.
      - 2) God intervened so much that the Israelites could not take credit for the capture of the land; that credit belonged to God.
  - 2. The Israelites would possess the land; the land would be theirs.
- B. The Lord would cast out many nations before the Israelites, v. 1.
  - 1. These nations were greater and mightier than the Israelites.
  - 2. Since these nations were greater and mightier than the Israelites, the Israelites needed God's help in conquering the land.
- C. When the Lord delivered these nations over to the Israelites, they were to conquer them and utterly destroy them.
  - 1. "Utterly destroy" is a technical term meaning that everyone is to be offered as a holocaust to the Lord; no one is to be left.
  - 2. This was not an arbitrary killing; these individuals were to be killed lest they lead the Israelites away from God (Deut. 20:18).
  - 3. Because the Israelites did not kill all the pagans in Canaan, the pagans became a thorn in the Israelites' side.
    - a. The Angel of the LORD told the Israelites that because they had not killed all the pagans, "they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you" (Jud. 2:3).
    - b. The Israelites followed the gods of the people around them (Jud. 2:12).
- D. The Israelites were to make no covenant with the Canaanites nor show mercy to them.
  - 1. The Israelites were to do nothing which would jeopardize their separation from the Canaanites.
  - 2. Making a treaty with the Canaanites might have caused the Israelites to make concessions with them they had no right to make.
  - 3. If the Israelites showed the Canaanites mercy, they might not have killed all of them.
- E. The Israelites were to have no fellowship, association with the pagans around them.
  - 1. Christians today are to be separate in fellowship; we need to be careful about the company we keep.
    - a. "Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them (Prov. 24:1).
    - b. "Evil company corrupts good habits" (1 Cor. 15:33).

- c. “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14).
- 2. We need to be careful what we say on this point.
  - a. It is not wrong to have friends who are not Christians.
    - 1) Jesus ate with sinners (Mk. 2:15).
    - 2) 1 Cor. 5:9-10.
  - b. If we kept no company with unbelievers, how could we evangelize?
  - c. However, we dare not be in a friendship where we are encouraged to sin.
    - 1) Our friends need to respect our Christian values and not tempt us to sin.
    - 2) We dare not be in any relationship where our Christianity will be jeopardized.
- 3. What kind of company do you keep?

## **SEPARATE IN MARRIAGE, vv. 3-4**

- A. The Israelites were not to make marriages with the Canaanites.
  - 1. They were not to give their daughter to a pagan son, nor take a pagan daughter for their son, v. 3.
  - 2. They were not to do this because the pagan spouses would turn away their children from following God to serve other gods, v. 4.
    - a. Throughout history, husbands and wives have encouraged their spouses to sin.
      - 1) Eve gave Adam of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:6).
      - 2) When Job endured suffering, his wife told him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9).
      - 3) When Solomon was old, “his wives turned his heart after other gods” (1 Ki. 11:4).
    - b. God would spare his children the heartache of having his children led into sin by their spouses.
  - 3. If the Israelites married pagans, God’s anger would be aroused against them and destroy them suddenly, v. 4.
    - a. God’s blessing of possessing the Promised Land was conditional--if the Israelites failed to obey God, they would lose the Promised Land.
    - b. Because the Israelites became unfaithful, God sent his children into captivity.
- B. We need young people who marry faithful Christians.
  - 1. The Bible does not teach that marrying a non-Christian is sinful.
  - 2. However, marrying a non-Christian is a fatal mistake.
    - a. So many have left the faith because of their marriage.
    - b. Marrying a non-Christian brings up many important questions.
      - 1) Where will you attend worship if you attend at all?
      - 2) Where will your children attend worship if they attend at all?
      - 3) What will your children be taught religiously?
  - 3. Anyone who wants to marry a non-Christian needs to think long and hard.

## **SEPARATE IN WORSHIP, v. 5**

- A. The Israelites were to get rid of the idols of the Canaanites.
  - 1. The Israelites were to destroy the altars, break down the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden images, and burn the carved images with fire.
  - 2. The Israelites were not to participate in false worship.
- B. We, as Christians, cannot participate in false worship.
  - 1. From time to time, many Christians do participate in false worship.
    - a. Perhaps we have a friend who invites us to worship with him.
    - b. Perhaps we have a family member who comes to visit us and instead of offending him we go to services with him.
  - 2. Just as the Israelites could not participate in false worship, we cannot participate in false worship.
  - 3. There is a right and wrong way to worship; we must worship properly.
    - a. “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:24).
    - b. Speaking of false worshipers, Jesus said, “In vain they worship Me” (Mt. 15:9).
      - 1) It is possible to worship God in vain.
      - 2) We need to make every effort that we do not worship God in vain.
  - 4. We need to remain separate from false worship; do you make it a habit to worship properly?

## **CONCLUSION**

- A. The Israelites were to be different than the nations around them because they belonged to God.

- B. We are to be different than those around us because we belong to God.
1. “As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct” (1 Pet. 1:15).
  2. Are we holy?
    - a. Do we see the same movies those in the world see?
    - b. Do we use the same foul language those in the world use?
    - c. Do we divorce at the same rate as those in the world?
  3. Are you holy? If not, we invite you to come as we stand and sing.