

Be Different!

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[0 : 00] Verse 23 of Ezekiel 44.

The context is of the priests, the Levites, and what they should do. And it says, There's like verses in Leviticus 10 verse 10, where in part it says, Put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.

And Exodus 11 verse 7 says, I want to give you a message from God's Word that's a little bit different.

It's about differences. Differences. And the kind of differences that we ought to have as the people of God, as it were, Israel, versus the people of the world, as it were, Egypt, the Egyptians.

And of course that's an illustrative thing, that contrast is right through the Word of God though. A contrast between the people of God and the people who are not of God.

[1 : 21] And we see, for example, in Titus 2, might want to flick there too, I'm going to touch on six things, you could say, six things that Christians are called to be that are different.

And the first one is we're meant to be unusual, unusual or peculiar. You could say abnormal, in a way, also. We're called to be abnormal.

Because what's normal for the world is not normal for us. It shouldn't be. As we read in Titus 2 verse 11, in the context there, it's talking of, the grace of God that bringeth salvation and hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and whirling lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people.

Zealous of good words. Peculiar. Beyond the usual. Beyond the normal, as the world would reckon it. Unusual. We should be that kind of people.

[2 : 40] God's people should be unusual in the world's eyes when they see you. How you live is not usual, as the world would reckon it. We should stand out from the crowd.

God's people should be unusual. Something different happens on the inside of you and your life becomes radically different. We're not more of the same. We don't follow the norm.

We've broken free from what the world would say is the mould and what's accepted to the world and acceptable to the world. We're not going to be normal, average and palatable to this world.

We're not going to fit in with this TV-soaked culture. Unusual. Another way that we're different is that we should be unfeigned.

Unfeigned. The Word of God says of a couple of things that Christians ought to be unfeigned. Now the word unfeigned, it means unhypocritical, if you could put it in a more understandable or more commonly used kind of description.

[3 : 48] unfeigned. Not hypocritical. Unfeigned. That's what we're meant to be. The genuine article. Genuine Christianity. Not a pretend. Not an imitation.

Not a fake. Not playing church. But the real deal. The real thing. The real genuine article. Because we're living in a world where there's frauds and fakes.

You know, we come across them in life, don't we? You know, there's folk who's attended this church and there's just been frauds and fakes that in retrospect, in reflection about them.

And I don't say that to condemn them, but just I feel sorry for them. for such folk. Because they're not real. They might be professing to be Christians, but the fruit is not there.

Certainly the opposite. And that's a sad thing. Because our world is filled with frauds and fakes. In the religious scene, we see that too.

[4 : 53] As many that we've got to be careful in these days. As well as in the worldly scene. People that are not true. But God says we should be unfeigned in a couple of areas particularly.

Unfeigned in our love. We see that in 1 Peter 1 verse 22. 1 Peter 1 verse 22 it says, Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto an unfeigned love of the brethren.

See that you love one another with a pure heart fervently. You've been purified in obeying the truth to unfeigned love.

Real love. Real love of the brethren. God's people. See that you love one another with a pure heart fervently. And then it says of faith. Our faith should be unfeigned as well.

We read that in 1 Timothy 1 verse 5. Paul tells Timothy Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned.

[6 : 00] So we see there faith should be unfeigned. Not hypocritical faith but real genuine faith and real love. Not feigned, not pretend.

Genuine love. Love for the brethren, for God's people. Not a show of counterfeit but the real thing. You know, we live in a world where there's a lot of showiness and a non-genuine kind of love.

And we as Christians can be guilty of that. I know we all can. Where we may not really love people like we ought to love them. To love our brothers and sisters like God tells us to.

To have a love for the brethren that we want to fellowship. We want to be with God's people. A love for them. And a faith that is real. A faith that is wholehearted and unswerving.

A faith that trusts in Christ that is steadfast. Unfeigned love. Unfeigned faith. It's different, isn't it? The world that we live, they don't care about faith.

[7 : 07] They don't care about a love for the brethren, a love for the truth, a love for the things of God. The faith that we have is not an airy fairy kind of faith.

You know, there's a lot of talk about spirituality and people having spirituality or having faith in some generalist kind of terminology. But the faith that we have is a soul-saving faith.

It's a faith that springs in our heart from a love for our Saviour, from a transformation that He has done by the work of the cross. It's a different kind of faith. It's real faith in God.

Soul-saving faith. A faith that shows in how we live. It's different in how we go about our lives. It's different. This love, this faith. It's not a vain show.

It's not a pretend kind of thing. It's the real thing. Not a man-made thing. Not an earthly thing. But a heavenly-sent thing.

[8 : 04] It's different. It's unfeigned. Another area is that our faith, our Christian life, our faith, should be unmovable. Unmovable.

We should be different in that we're unmovable. 1 Corinthians 15, 58. 1 Corinthians 15, 58. We're living in a world where it's easy to be swayed around.

In Christianity these days, there's all kinds of winds of doctrine that are blowing around. People are getting tossed to and fro on these currents, these winds of doctrine that are coming along.

Such confusion and instability. But God says we should be unmovable. 1 Corinthians 15, 58. It says, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding. Don't be shaken. Don't be blown around by the winds of doctrine.

[9 : 21] Be steadfast. Be rock solid. Unmovable. A Christian is not a quitter. A Christian is to be solid as a rock when everyone else might be going to water.

We're solid as a rock. We stand the test of time. Our labour is in the Lord. It's not in vain. And sometimes, I know, street preaching, witnessing, can be a hard yakku.

You don't see much tangible result at times. But be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. If it's his work, be steadfast in that.

It doesn't matter what you see for it because it's being steadfast, unmovable. It's labour. That means W-O-R-K.

Labour in the Lord. Work. Christians are called to work, to effort, to toil, to strain, to tears. It's not an easy, laid-back, lazy kind of faith.

[10 : 20] In 1 Corinthians 16, 15, they had addicted themselves to the work of the ministry. They were sold out. Their hearts were set on serving, addicted to the ministry, to serving, to serving God.

And these folk, they could be counted on. These are the folk that God is looking for, unmovable people. And that's different, isn't it? In these days, even in the church scene, it seems like people just come and go without any kind of commitment.

Where are the unmovable ones? Unmovable. I trust that you're in their number tonight. Unmovable. Be a stick in the mud for what is right, for what is true, for what is rock-solid scriptural truth. Hold your ground. Fight against the odds. Determine. Dedicated. Reliable. It's about unmovable commitment. That's what we're called to, that's what we're meant to be about. It's different. It's different to be committed, to be in there for the long haul, to be faithful, to work, to soldier, to be one of those rare breeds who will be unmovable in what is right. [11:27] Who will be there, rain, hail, sleep, or shine. Who will be unmoved by setbacks, opposition, disappointments, maybe even the heartache of life.

We will be unmovable. It doesn't matter how we feel, it doesn't matter our circumstances, we will be one of the unmovable. people, people who will stick with it. Instead of following the popular and easy way of going with the crowd, those who will go with God, be one of their number, unmovable. It's different to be one of those people. Another area of difference for God's people is that we're called to be unspotted, unspotted. We read that in James 1, verse 27. It says a pure religion, pure, it means clear, it means clear, pure religion. and undefiled. In other words, not stained, not defiled, not made dirty, pure religion and undefiled. Before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

[12:35] Are you unspotted from the world? If you're one of the different people, then God calls you to be unspotted from the world. It's not meant to be a mixture.

Of pure and undefiled. Like we read in those early scriptures, put a difference, teach my people the difference between the holy and the unholy, between the unclean and the clean.

Unspotted. Real Christianity is pure and undefiled. world. You know, it's kind of sad. I believe how it's not the world is trying to worldlyfy Christianity.

We're meant to be different. Different. We don't need to be the same as the world. But contrary to that, we're meant to be different from the world.

world. So, when people are trying to make the church the same as the world, I smell a rat. Okay?

[13:44] People, wake up. Christianity is under attack from the inside. It talks about his ministers will be transforming themselves into ministers of righteousness.

You know, there's times when I've questioned that. There's way back, when the Toronto blessing first came out, some Christians were trying to point out to me that this was wrong.

And at the time, I thought, oh, they're preaching. At the time, I was ignorant. When it first came out, I thought I was being a bit harsh and nasty and a bit mean about the preacher.

But when I started to really listen and observe and discern, you'd say, no, this is really way off track. And you've got to be tuning in to God and seeing what's going on.

Is it of God? If it's the same as the world, then you've got to question that absolutely. And it's different. The Christian life, the Christian truth should be crystal clear, uncontaminated, unspotted.

[15:01] It's cleansed. Better than hospital strength disinfectant. We are disinfected. Amen? We're meant to be. Disinfected.

Not going back into the garbage can to see what scraps we can eat. That's what's happening in some churches. They're delving into the garbage can of the world. And that's wrong.

Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be? In all holy conversation and godliness, it's different. We're meant to be different. To steer from such worldliness from the ways of the world.

Unusual. Unfamed. Unmovable. Unspotted. Another shocking but true way that we should be different. Dare I say it?

Un-Australian. We should be un-Australian. We should be un-Australian. Un-Australian. Yes. Because our allegiance is to another king.

[16:06] Another king. Another nation. In fact, it may mean being unpopular. Being hated for taking a stand because as Peter writes, you're a holy nation.

A peculiar people. A holy nation. We're meant to be a holy nation. A separate nation. The Lord says in John 15, if you were of the world, you could say if you were of Australia, the world would love his own.

But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hated you. Even as much as we love Australia, the things about Australia as godless and Christless

and Christ rejecting and if you belong to the world, it would love you as its own.

But you do not belong to the world, says our Lord. And 1 Peter 2, 11, it says, Dearly beloved, I beset you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

Strangers, it's got the sense of foreigners and of aliens. Pilgrims, it's got the sense of being a resident foreigner, a traveller. We do not belong to Australia.

[17 : 23] this is just a temporary place. My home is not in Birch Grove, Crodemore. My home is yet to come.

And if you love the Lord, your home is not the place of bricks and mortar that you live in at the moment. That is just a temporary dwelling place. And we do not belong to the world.

We do not belong to its values, to its use of time, of money, the way it views human events, the priorities that it sets, the way that it treats children and family, all the things most important for us are different from the world.

Can you look yourself in the mirror and honestly confess, I do not belong to this world, but to Christ. Can you confess that? We're chosen out as separated people.

And we might be called, because of that we might be called narrow-minded, dogmatic, unloving, simply because we have strong beliefs, because we believe God, we believe his truth, and it makes an impact.

[18 : 31] Unusual, unfeigned, unmovable, unspotted, un-Australian, and lastly, uncompromising. Uncompromising we ought to be. There was a famous actor who was introduced on a Christian TV show as being born again.

this TV actor. Did he leave his worldly past and live by faith? No. He had deluded himself into thinking that after coming to God, he could just go right back to his previous lifestyle as before. And the host questioned this and he wondered how could this same actor play in an immoral scene? How could you be in a movie like that? You're a Christian now. The man responded, but I'm still an actor.

I still have a living to make. Conflicts really, doesn't it? As our Lord said, no man can serve two masters either. He will love the one and hate the other.

He cannot serve God and money. He cannot serve two masters. Some say of this or that celebrity or a sports star, he's a Christian.

[19 : 45] Don't believe it. if he's still living for the God, small g, of this world, Satan, he isn't a Christian. Don't deceive yourself.

If you're thinking you can just live like the devil and think that you're going to heaven, then you're sadly mistaken.

Sadly mistaken. Christian life, Christian living, makes you different. Now, that said, there's lots of moral people who are going to hell too.

There's lots of clean living Mormons and Muslims and, you know, I actually saw a Muslim praying, just metres away from this church, doing all that particular ritual that they do.

and I thought, well, he's not afraid to declare his faith. I think it's not a faith in the God of the Bible, but he had something, some kind of spine, I suppose, and I wonder how many Christians have got spine these days.

[21 : 00] Friends, it's time to wake up and consider where we are at and try to consider our standing before him. As I say, there's lots of well-meaning, moral, upstanding people who are still lost.

We're not talking about works saving you. But when you trust the Saviour, when you trust him and he's shed blood for your soul to be saved, something happens.

There's a conversion. There's a something happens. And there's fruit that's evident for the repentance in your life. There's an evident change.

For some, they put a label on themselves. I'm a born-again Christian. But it's like someone said, a duck can call itself a horse if it wants to. But if it quacks like a duck and looks like a duck and waddles when it walks, it's not a horse but a duck.

And friends to mine, you might say, I'm a Christian. But if you talk like the world and walk like the world and think like the world and live like the world, then, friends, you must have to question whether you really know him, whether you really know him.

[22 : 24] Are you born again? Born again? Born again. James writes, you adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred towards God?

We can be a friend of the world and an enemy of God. Some people think a little bit of worldliness is alright, but sin is like a drug, it never satisfies us.

And Satan is like a fisherman dangling new bait. And much of the time you won't even get to enjoy the bait. As soon as you reach for it, you will reel you in. Some will say they believe in God.

James writes that you believe in God, that's a good thing. But even the demons believe and tremble. They tremble. So let it not just be a profession of faith, but a genuine conversion.

So to close friends, think of this now. The word says that we are to learn the difference between the holy and the unholy, between the clean and the unclean.

[23 : 34] And it might seem for you, wow, that's pretty straight talking tonight, that's a bit strong. wrong. But if you're really serious about living for the Lord Jesus, it's going to be a battle.

Satan will oppose you every step of the way. You might have family members or friends who will mock and scorn, ridicule. He'll even use loved ones to try to lead you astray, to be a distraction, to be a deterrent.

Paul himself said in 2 Timothy 4.16, no man stood with me. He told Timothy, endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

If you want to really please the Lord and take the straight and narrow way, it can be a lonely path. Look through history. God's people mocked and scorned, hated, tortured, stoned, afflicted, tormented.

Hebrews 11, 35-38, tells us of them, are you different from the world? John writes that, the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

[24 : 55] We know the word says that, I have not seen, nor have the ear heard, neither have it entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. Heaven's going to be different.

It's going to be different from this old sick planet. It's going to be different. It's going to be beautiful. Everything's going to be pure as crystal perfect. Beyond our comprehension, beyond our imagination, it's going to be different.

And we ought to be different people now, prepared for that place. He's preparing a people, he's preparing a place, and it's different. To think of this, and again, I'm not preaching works today, but because we love him, we want to be different.

Because we love him, we want to be unusual. Because we love him, our faith, our love, is real, unfeigned love. love him, our faith, our service, is unmovable.

Because we love him, we want to be unspotted from the world. We don't want a bit of that grime to stick. And though it be unpopular, we're willing to even be un-Australian.

[26 : 18] when what Australia stands for is wrong, we stand against it. We stand opposed to it. We don't stand for what God opposes.

And we're willing to stand with God, against the crowd, and to be uncompromising. Friends, not only are we to be different, but also to make a difference.

To make a difference, it's in Jude 22, it says, and if some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. It's got the sense of how we should be wanting to make a difference, making an impact on our planet, in our nation, in our community.

We are to be different, and we are to make a difference, and you can be different, you can make a difference. Friends, think of how. How can I be that? How can I aspire to that?

It's by His grace, isn't it? And I'll just urge each one to think, this week ahead, what can I do in my life? How can I stand out from the crowd, even if it means some rejection from the world?

[27 : 26] Because our Lord says that if they've hated you, that they're hating me, really, it's the same, isn't it? You can expect it to happen. I'll Let's Let's go ahead.

Let's go ahead. Let's go ahead. go ahead. Let's go ahead. Let's go ahead. Let's you