

The Separated Life

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[0 : 00] A Blessed Man and a Blessed Son.

! And in his law doth he meditate day and night, and he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.

His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Let us pray. Lord, we take your word, we take it seriously, Lord. We pray we'll take it to heart.

Speak Lord through the special Lord. Be glorified in our midst, we pray.

[1 : 17] Lord, let us have something that you would have us to hear that will be nourishing and helpful to us. For your glory, Lord Jesus, we pray. Amen. Amen.

The blessed man. The separated life. The separated life. We read of the separated life of the way of the righteous, of the way of blessing, the way of fruitfulness in this psalm.

It's just really by way of introduction. The blessedness of the godly. The blessedness of the separated life. God has called us each one out of the world and into a personal and corporate purity of the blessed life, of the separated life.

Even while we're living in the midst of sinful culture, of the world that we have to go about our day by day. We're called out. We're called to be his people. The separated life.

The separated life. The separated life. It speaks of God's character, separation of his holiness. Our God is a holy God. God is holy.

[2 : 22] And he is separated. Separated from all that defiles. God is holy. God is jealous. He is jealous for his people.

He wants us all to himself. Separated from all others. To be, as we just sung, that pure and holy bride. That glorious, spotless, without wrinkle, without any such thing.

Separated. A glorious church. A separated life. What does it mean? And why? Why should we live such a life? Why should we live a separated life?

Because it's obedience to our Lord. As we read in 1 Peter 1, from verse 14, it tells us, As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation or way of life.

Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. Separation. It's right through the word of God. As we see the tabernacle, the temple, the utensils, the priests, the high priests, separated.

[3 : 37] Made separate unto God for his service, for his use. And separation is something precious. It's something positive. Something that's very godly and scriptural.

Something that's beautiful and glorifying and God-honoring. And separation, holiness, is something that we can delight in. God's word. As the blessed man of Psalm 1, he found his delight there.

He found his delight in the nourishment, in the nurture of the scriptures, in that refreshing of the word. It's like a river that he could soak into and draw from.

And there's a wonderful separation that is a wonderful, precious thing. A severing from that which is dishonoring to God. A not standing, a not sitting, a not walking with the ungodly.

But a drawing from the nourishment of God's word. The biblical doctrine of separation is something very glorious. It's very precious.

[4 : 37] It's following on from God's own attribute of holiness. God is holy. And he says, Be ye holy, even as I am holy.

What an incredible bar to set. To be holy as he is holy. The one of whom it says in Habakkuk 1.13, Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil.

And as believers we're called to be like him. To be called into that fellowship of a God who is light. And in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. 1 John 1.5-6. It's such a high standard, isn't it? It's something hard to fathom.

How could we aspire to such a thing? And yet he calls us to that. He calls us to that walk. He calls us to that walking with him. He calls us to that blessed place.

[5 : 40] To that blessed river, as it were. That place of refreshing. That place of his feeding. And to separate from whatever is darkness. To separate from the world.

And the things of the world. And the thinking of the world. And the loves of the world. To separate from what is doubtful. What is dangerous to our spiritual health and well-being. What is going to hurt and hinder our usefulness in his service.

And God's will is that we be that holy people. That we maintain that pure testimony. That godly conduct. What an example is Christ to us.

That one who we are to follow. To follow in his steps. Another example is the man Daniel. In Daniel 1 verse 8 in part it says. He purposed in his heart.

That he would not defile himself. He would not defile himself. With the portion of the king's meat. And of the wine which he drank. You know he was basing that on his conviction.

[6 : 38] Based upon the word of God. And Daniel's standard was the word of God. God's word. And like that too. It should be for us. A separating people.

To be separate from the world. The word church itself of course is commonly known. The word church. It means the called out of that word ecclesia.

A called out assembly. A called out people. Called out from the world. Called out. Transformed by his spirit. And called unto Christ.

Unto his service. Unto his fellowship. And it's our great privilege to be in that people. Who are called to be saints. You know we looked of late.

At 1 Corinthians 1. Them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. Called to be saints. With all that in every place. Call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

[7 : 35] Sanctified and called to be saints. Even the Corinthians. Even the Corinthians. What an example they were. With all of their faults and failings.

And their sinful past. God called them to be saints. What a wonder. That he should call us out. To be such a people. To be saints. To live that separated life.

To be walking worthy. Of the vocation. With which we are called. Ephesians 4 verse 1. He's called us with a holy calling. The holy God has put a difference.

In the word we see back in Leviticus. And other places. A difference between the sacred. And the common. Between the holy.

And the profane. Between the saved. And the unsaved. There's a dividing line. God has put a difference. And the word separate. In the Greek.

[8 : 30] It has the sense of to set a boundary. To separate. To be separate. Or to separate. It means to draw a line. As it were. To create a boundary.

To set up certain limitations. Beyond which we will not go. And how do we make such a division? How do we make such a distinction? It must be by the word.

The word guides us. And it is on the basis of the word. That we set our limitations. That we discern what it is that he would have us to do. And we take our stand by our convictions set by the word of God.

And God promises to bless separation. Separation is not something irksome and onerous. But something that is joyful and glad. It's something beautiful.

The beauty of holiness we read of. In Psalm 34 it says, The angel of the Lord encamps around them. That fear him and delivers them. We see God's care of Daniel.

[9 : 29] This man Daniel, he would not defile himself. He ended up thrown in the den of lions. Daniel thrown in the den of these hungry beasts. Yet God's care was there.

God's grace was there. God was with him. Then the three Hebrew children. These three Hebrew teenagers. They were thrown into the furnace of fire. Heated seven times higher than normal.

And they separated themselves unto God. And God was with them. There was a fourth man. The son of God. God visited. God was with them.

As they separated, God's care was about them. The angel of the Lord encamps round about them. That fear him and delivers them. Holiness is a principle right through the word of God.

A principle that separates the believer from the world. There's a dividing. There's a distinction. There's something different. There's a difference. In 2 Timothy 2.22.

[10:31] It says, He wants us to have such fellowship.

To have that separation. To flee and to follow. To leave the leavening, the spreading influence of sin. And to separate unto God.

It is his will for us. As we read in 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 3. For this is the will of God even for your sanctification. In other words, that process of being made holy.

That is his will. The will of God. We see a falling standard around about. A departure from the word of God. Many cry for tolerance and acceptance.

I was just reading of one leading lately. Rob Bell. Rob Bell apparently has come out in favour of a very liberal stand towards homosexuality for one thing. As much as we know, Rob Bell is completely off the scale as far as the godly doctrine goes.

[11:37] And these are the things that we've got to be watchful and guarded about, brothers and sisters. Many of the books and teachings that fill the Christian bookstores today are very dangerous material.

Because they err in many ways. There's a falling away. A falling away. I was reading lately how someone put it that the falling away is in three ways.

Three ways. Parents, the pulpit and the parliament. In all of these foundations of the nation. Parents, the pulpit and the parliament.

You know, families are under threat. Homes are being demolished. Talking of family units being demolished. We're seeing pulpits astray.

And we're seeing the parliaments, the governments of our world, of our nation. Bringing in ungodly laws, ungodly rulings.

[12:37] And friends, we must cry aloud in these days. Isaiah 58, verse 1 says, Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet. Show my people their transgression.

And the house of Jacob their sins. This is a time and day when we need to sound our voices aloud. Not to lower the standard, but to set it higher.

To aspire for purity. To aspire for God's standard. Not settle for something under that. Do we change with the times?

Or do we hold fast the word of God? Do we move the ancient landmark? Or do we go by it? Do we make our decisions based on fickle tastes or fads?

Or do we use the separation principles from God's word? About our musical choices? About how we worship? How we go about our Christian walk?

[13:38] Are our choices directed by fitting with the culture? Or rather finding what is befitting of our Saviour? Questions we need to answer, isn't it?

Do we appease the masses? Or do we rather hold fast the faithful word? The authority of the word of God. As that which we must not deviate from.

I know as much as there's different opinions about what the word says. Some things are so clear cut. They cannot be questioned. And yet the basic principles I know in some quarters, you know, they're denying the very virgin birth.

As Pastor Ken was enlightening us of late, for example. And others that have said, such like. Where liberal churches are, it's almost like anything goes.

And we all have to ask ourselves this question. When we're facing a decision. When we're looking at situations. Ask ourselves honestly, what is the biblical thing to do?

[14:43] What is biblical? And take that part. We are urged to keep faithful to obey God's command. Paul said that he was separated unto the gospel of God.

Romans 1 verse 1. He was separated unto it. Separation is a. It's both a from and a to. Now from the world and that which is doubtful.

And unto the gospel. Unto God. Unto His grace. Unto the Christian war. And the separated man. The blessed man of Psalm 1. His delight was in the law of the Lord.

His delight was there. In the book. In unyielding faith. In the book. And we likewise, if we follow God's truth. If we follow the God of truth.

And the word of truth. The sufficiency of scripture will be that rule of faith. Of conduct. That standard. That does not change.

[15:42] It does not shift. With the fashions of men. And John 17. 17. It says. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth.

It was our Savior's prayer for his people. Sanctify them. Make them holy. Through thy truth. Thy word is truth. That's his prayer for us still.

And we need to be a people. Who are prompted to purity. Of faith and practice. The blessed man found his delight. In the word of God.

The word of God. And our faithfulness to it. Is that by which we determine. Right from wrong. It's how we discern. It's how we set that boundary. It's how we draw that line.

That we must make. And to declare the whole counsel. Of God. As Paul did. In Acts 20. 27. And in Psalm 119. That wonderful psalm.

[16:36] About the word of God. The psalmist said. In Psalm 119. Verse 128. Therefore I esteem. I esteem. All thy precepts.

Concerning all things. To be right. And I hate. Every false way. I hate. Every false way. There's an impurity. And there's a purity. We've got to find.

What it is that God. Would be pleased with. And eliminate. That which is impure. It's a daily. Decision making really.

Isn't it? As we believe in the authority. Of the scriptures. Let's try to find. And discern. God's will from them. Because that is the authority. That speaks to all areas of life.

And godliness. The bible commands have not changed. And we're accountable to this. And to the god of the word. He is our deliverer. He's delivered us from Egypt.

[17:32] And he's to our uncompromising worship. You know the people in. Moses day. They. They. They. They. Had some different ideas.

When. When. Moses was taking his time. Coming down. From the mountain. And. They ended up in all kinds of trouble. And so we need to. Be very guarded. About. Such things. That.

Problem of contamination. Is what. They face. When they. They. Hankered after the things of Egypt. And then the gods of Egypt. And the worship. Of the holy. The righteous.

The undefiled one. Can not be compromised. Or tarnished. By some cheap. Imitation. I was just. Reading of late. How. One of the fundamentalists.

Of the bible. If you like. Hezekiah. In 2 Kings 18. 2 Kings 18. And verse 4. One of the men. That we can aspire to be like. Hezekiah.

[18:26] He removed the high places. And he. Break the images. He cut down the groves. And break in pieces. The brazen serpent. That Moses had made. For unto those days. The children of Israel.

Did burn incense to it. And he called it. Nehushtan. Nehushtan. Apparently it means. A thing made of brass. He just called it. Just a piece of brass. A nehushtan.

And. It's interesting. Isn't it? That this was. That which thing. The Lord. Sought the people. To. Represent. Christ. To represent. The atonement.

This. Serpent. On a. A stick. Represented Christ. On the cross. For us. And. Those who looked to it. Were healed. And so on. I suppose. If such a thing.

Was. Around today. There'd be. People. Creating. Pilgrimages. To the site. Maybe it would be. In a box of gold. On some altar. On some. On some church altar.

[19:22] In some. Wonderful cathedral. And. People would be. Paying. Millions. To just go and see it. Or to pray. To it. And such like. As that. And this is what the people. Of Israel were like. Bowing down to this.

What God calls. Just a piece of brass. A nahashkan. And even though it was made. For a godly purpose. And it was used. As a godly. Type.

God was displeased with it. Because the people started to worship. That thing. An idol. A piece of brass. A thing of brass. We need to have that same zeal.

That Hezekiah had. In trashing it. In removing the high places. The images. The groves. And breaking in pieces. The brazen serpent.

To have that. Love of the truth. That. We want to have that consistent testimony. That holiness of life. That sanctified life. That separated life. To be strangers and pilgrims.

[20:19] On this world. And our citizenship. In heaven. To have that zeal of. Jude 1 verse 3. Of wanting to earnestly. Contend. For the faith. We're urged to that.

To that boldness. The boldness that Hezekiah had. The boldness of men. Like the radical. Josiah. Josiah in 2 Kings 23. Verse 14.

2 Kings 23. Verse 14. Josiah was radical too. He went through the entire land. And oversaw the destruction. Of the idols.

He broke in pieces. The images. He cut down the groves. And he filled their places. With the bones of man. In other words. He defiled them. They were made unfit.

As places of worship. It makes you think of the iconoclasm. Of the days of old. In the dark ages. When the people of God. They saw those statues.

[21 : 15] And those images. Even though they were. They were made of saints. Of biblical characters. And they smashed them to smithereens. They didn't want anything. To take away from that true worship.

That was due unto our God. You know. Sometimes we can make things. Of statues. And images. And even crosses. And crucifixes. And yet. The reformers of old.

The men and women. The reformers of old. Smashed such things. As a. As something that would draw people away from. That which is true worship. It was unfit.

Of our God. And yet. In the Bible. It tells us of men like Asa. And Jehoshaphat. They compromised with idols. They. They did some things. Just so.

But they didn't go far enough. They weren't aggressive enough. In tearing them down. In demolishing. And destroying. Those high places. Where the people worshipped. And friends. We've got to be guided.

[22 : 11] Cautious. About. Such matters. Because the church. Is the pillar. And ground. Of the truth. The pillar. And ground.

Of the truth. That's something. Very special. Isn't it? That something is so. Precious. It's. It's founded. It's. It's sure. It's. Absolutely. Crystal clear.

That which is the truth. The pillar. And ground. Of the truth. And we want to be a church. Like that. God helping us. Not. That we can claim any. Special credit for it.

But that God helping us. We can be that biblical church. We can be spiritually healthy. We can be. Discipling. We can be growing. In our faith. And steering from that.

Which is doubtful. And this is personally. Corporately. Things such as. Flee these things. 1 Timothy. 6. 11. There's things to flee. There's some things. To run away from.

[23 : 08] To find. Just to run from. 1 Thessalonians 5. 22. It says. Abstain from all appearance. Of evil. Ephesians 4. 27.

It says. Neither give place to. The devil. In 1. 75. 22. It says. Keep thyself. Pure. These are all scriptures. That we can take. Personally to heart. Find.

How we can apply them. To our own lives. Because separation. Is important. It's not something minor. It's a major doctrine. Of God's word. We know that. Familiar one.

Love not the world. 1 John 2. Neither the things. That are in the world. For. If any man love the world. The love of the father. Is not in him. For all. That is in the world.

The lust of the flesh. The lust of the eyes. And the pride of life. Is not of the father. But. Is of the world. And the world passeth away. And the lust thereof.

[24 : 03] But he that doeth the will of God. Abideth forever. So we've all got to guard ourselves. And consider. What is of the world. What is. Of. Question. What is.

Something. Unworthy of him. What is. God's will. And find that. Find that blessed life. That separated life. Seeking the company.

Of the congregation. Of the righteous. With them. That call on the Lord. Out of a pure heart. 2 Timothy 2. 22. God commands.

Separation. It's very clear. And. Just to. Wrap up. A quote. From Spurgeon. He. Quoted. Hebrews 13. Verse 13.

He commented. On this scripture. Let us go forth. Therefore. Unto him. Without the camp. Let us. Go forth. Therefore. Unto him. Without the camp.

[24 : 57] And Spurgeon says this. He says. Jesus bearing his cross. Went forth. To suffer. Without the gates. The Christian's reason. For leaving the camp. Of the world. Sin.

And religion. Is not. Because he loves to be singular. But. Because Jesus. Did so. And the disciple. Must follow. His master. Christ was not. Of the world. His life.

And his testimony. Were a constant protest. Against conformity. With the world. Never was such.
 Overflowing affection. For men. As you will find.
 In him. But still. He was separate. From sinners. In like manner. Christ's people. Must go forth. Unto
 him. They must take their position. Without the camp.
 As witness bearers. For the truth. They must be prepared. To tread. The straight. And narrow path.
 They must have a. Bold. Unflinching. Lion-like heart.
 [25 : 53] Loving Christ first. And his truth next. And Christ and his truth. Beyond. All the world.
 Jesus would have. His people. Go forth. Without the camp.
 For their own. Sanctification. You cannot grow in grace. To any high degree. While you are
 conformed. To the world. The life of separation. May be a path.
 Of sorrow. But it is the highway. Of safety. And though the separated life. May cost you. Many
 pangs. And make every day. A battle. Yet.
 It is a happy life. After all. No joy can excel. That of the soldier. Of Christ. Jesus reveals himself. So
 graciously. And gives such sweet refreshment.
 That the warrior. Feels more calm. And peace. In his daily strife. Than others. In their hours of rest.
 The highway. Of holiness. Is the highway. Of communion.
 [26 : 49] It is thus. We shall hope. To win the crown. If we are enabled. By divine grace. Faithfully.
 To follow Christ. Without the camp. The crown of glory. Will follow the cross.
 Of separation. A moment's shame. Will be well. Recompensed. By eternal honour. A little while. Of
 witness bearing. Will seem nothing. When we are.
 Forever. With the Lord. Now there's lots of truth there. That sense of. Of that going without the
 camp. There's a sense where. Christ was just shunned. By the establishment.
 You know. He was a non-conformist. And he would not. Bow. To the. Secular. Or the. Or the
 religious. Popular. Expectation.
 And we need to. Go outside the camp. Even though it means. That we are. Seen as. As oddballs. If
 it be so. That we might.
 [27 : 44] Stand with him. Not that we're going to be. Some kind of cult. Or some kind of. Holier than
 thou. But. We want to follow. In his steps. And that might mean.
 Taking a place of scorn. And shame. Of ridicule. Of mockery. Our God is holy. Our God. Is holy.
 And he calls. You and me.
 To be holy. To be holy. As he. Is holy. What a. An inconceivable. Extent. That he should call us. To
 be that holy.
 To be like him. Of course it's only. By his grace. That we can. Even receive. His invitation. To be
 separated. To be holy. Unto him. To be obedient.
 To God's command. And of course it's a walk. It's a progressive. Step by step. And sometimes. One
 step forward. Two steps back. But yet. God helping us. God helps us.
 [28 : 38] To be more like him. He helps us. To be more like Christ. To help us. To be more
 consistent. In our testimony. To be. More. Godly. By his grace.
 And no matter the cost. Friends. He calls us. To that walk. To be strangers. And pilgrims. And
 there's a blessedness there.
 Blessed. In other words. Joyful. Happy. There's a blessing. For the man. The woman. Who walketh
 not. In the counsel of the ungodly.
 Nor standeth. In the way of sinners. Nor sitteth. In the seat. Of the scornful. But. His delight. Is in the
 law. Of the Lord. And in his law.
 God. He meditates. Day. And night. Separation. The separated life. The way of blessing. And
 fruitfulness. Let us pray.