

LESSON - 22

SEPARATION

Reading : 1 Cor 5: 9-13; 2Cor.6: 14-7;1; James 3

Memory verse : 1 Pet. 1:15,16

Theme : Saved people of God must observe separation throughout their lives.

Introduction: Which are the words opposite in meanings for holiness, goodness, light, truth and righteousness? They are unholiness, evil, darkness, untruth and unrighteousness. We recognize these attributes easily because they are distinctly different. Similarly a child of God and satan's people will never be similar as there are unreconcilable differences between them. Separation is a quality, which should be maintained by a child of God all his life. This topic is dealt with through out the Bible. We can even say that separation is another word for holiness.

SEPARATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

(Nun.23:9; Deut. 14:1,2 Lev. 11:44)

The book of Genesis opens with the separation of light from darkness. Bible ends with the eternal separation of the saved and the unsaved in the book of Revelation. Individuals and incidents in the Old Testament point towards separation. Holy God has laid down that his worshipers must also be holy and separated from evil and unholy surroundings.

When God called Abraham, he was commanded to get out of his own house, land, occupation and people. He got all his blessings later because he obeyed the command of God.

Life of Joseph is a fine example of separated life. Satan spread many snares inn front of Joseph. But the spirit filled Joseph did not lose his holiness and separation. Therefore God raised him up to unbelievable heights.

Moses chose to be with God's people rather than the short-lived pleasure of sin in Egypt. Hence he became the greatest leader of people that the world has ever seen. The people of Israel were called to worship God after getting out of Egypt. Moreover they were strictly instructed not to mingle with godless people nor to serve their Gods.

Job who made a covenant with his eyes, Jeremiah who would not sit amidst mockers and Daniel who stayed away from royal food and worship are men of God who successfully kept their lives holy in the face of great opposition and adversities. We also see that when ever His people lost their separateness God stretched forth His punishing hand at them.

CHURCH AND SEPARATION : (Eph.1:4; 5: 26-27)

We have already learned the Greek word for church as ecclesia. The meaning of 'Ecclesia' is : group of called out people. Christ has called us out from this evil world to be only and unblemished people for Him. And it is for this purpose that He gave Himself for us. We should not forget the fact that the church is made up of people who obey God's unchangeable command to observe separation.

a) Jesus Christ commanded separation; (John 17: 14,19:10:: 36; Heb.10:10) God sent Jesus Christ to this world to separate us for Him, Jesus said, "As I am not of this world, they are also not of this world." The Lord desires that His people keep themselves apart from all evil things of this world. When he said that true worshipers must worship the Father in spirit and in truth, He meant that His children should keep away from ritualistic worship, which is not pleasing to God. It is the fullness of Spirit that helps us keep our separation.

b) Separation was taught by the Apostles: Separation was an important teaching of the Apostles. We find many such references in the writings of Paul, Peter, John and Jude: Eph.4:31, 1 Pet 1:2, 2:9, Rev. 22:11, 1 Thes. 3:13,5:23, Col.1:22 Phil. 1:10, 2 Pet. 3:12, 1 John 3:3 Heb. 12:14; Jude 24.

AREAS IN WHICH CHILDREN OF GOD HAVE TO OBSERVE SEPARATION

1. From things of this world and unbelievers: Dances, cinema, lust to the flesh and lust of the eye etc. belong to this world. A believer is crucified to this world. Although we live in the world, yet we are not of the world (1 John 2:15-17; Gal, 6:14, 1Pet 1:2). Many things which are acceptable to a worldly man may not be acceptable to a believer according to the World of God (Rom.12:12). No man will see God without holiness (Heb.12:14). We must not keep any relationship with unbelievers and atheists (2Cor.6:14). Business and marriage relationships with such people should be avoided. Our dealings with them should only be to give them the gospel. Otherwise it is possible that we lose our separation and become partners in their sins.

2. From sins and evils: Even though we are saved, our fleshly nature is not changed. No good dwells in our flesh (Rom.7:18; 1 John 1:8). If we do not flee immorality, uncleanness, greed, evil, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, slander, envy and filthy language, we will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Col.3:5,8-9; 1Pet.2:1). Drunkenness is forbidden to children of God because it destroys the body, which is the temple of God.

3. From false doctrines and ritual worship: There will be people who follow doctrines that are against the teachings of our Lord and the Apostles. Keep away from them (Gal. 1:8, 9; Rom.16:17-18). Those who walk in the evil ways should be warned once or twice and then kept away. People who teach false doctrines, false prophets and those who deny Christ will enter the fold of the church (Jude 4; Titus 3: 10,11, Acts 20:29,30). Idolatry, praying to the dead, praying to saints and Virgin Mary, intercession by priests and offerings and rituals for remission of sins are satanic teachings. A believer should keep away from all these.

If a child of God commits a sin knowingly or unknowingly, he must seek pardon from God and resolve firmly not to do it again. He should cleanse himself with the Word of God, Holy Spirit and the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Otherwise he will not enter the kingdom of God.

The result of separation: (Heb. 10: 14; 2:11,12;12:14; Acts 26:18;Rom.8:17)

We who are in Christ will grow to the stature of Christ and become joint heirs with him.

QUESTIONS

1. How are the words, "separation" and "holiness" related to each other?
2. The saints of Old Testament observed separation. Give examples.
3. What is the importance of separation with regard to the church?
4. What are the teachings of Christ and the Apostles regarding separation?
5. In which areas do we have to observe separation? Explain.
6. Which are the fruits of separation?
7. Write an essays on separation.

LESSON - 23

HEALING

Reading : Isa 53:3, James 5:13-16

Memory verses : James 5: 14,15

Theme : Healing can be claimed form our Lord by faith. He heals the sick.

Introduction : Creations of God are beautiful. The heavens, the sun, moon and stars, the earth in which we live and the arrangements made init, the birds, the flowering plants, the green fields, the streams, the iakes, the rivers and the great oceans are all attractive to our hearts. The dear ones who love us and whom we love give us great joy. But at the same time, there are many