

B-P Distinctives

Session 3 – Biblical Separation

Article 4.2.12, of our Church Constitution states:

We believe in the real, spiritual unity in Christ of all redeemed by His precious blood and the necessity of faithfully maintaining the purity of the Church in doctrine and life according to the Word of God and the principle and practice of Biblical separation from the apostasy of the day being spearheaded by the Ecumenical Movement (or other such movements)

In today's study, we will try to understand:

- *What is Biblical separation?*
- *Why Biblical separation?*
- *The different aspects and practice of Biblical separation.*

What is biblical separation?

God is Holy. In the Bible, being holy means, "being set apart, separated." Biblical separation is the recognition that God has called believers out of the world and into both personal and corporate (or ecclesiastical) purity in the midst of sinful cultures. The outcome that God wants is we obey the Bible, we be set part, we be separated to be used by God, because God is thrice Holy (Isa 6:3).

At a personal level, as a form of introduction: Personal separation involves an individual's commitment to a godly standard of behavior. Daniel practiced personal separatism when he "resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine" (Daniel 1:8). This was Biblical separation because his standard was based on God's revelation in the Mosaic law.

A modern example of personal separation could be the decision to decline invitations to activities or places where you know you can be tempted to covet or commit adultery for example. Such a decision might be made in order to prevent yourself being tempted (Romans 13:14), to avoid "every kind of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22), or simply to be consistent with a personal conviction (Romans 14:5).

Ecclesiastical separation involves the decisions of a church concerning its ties to other organizations, based on their theology or practices.

The main act of biblical separation is 2-fold: separation from... and separation to...

There are generally 2 collective aspects of Biblical Separation:

The first collective aspect can be described as Worldliness and Idolatry.

The Bible clearly teaches that the child of God is to be *separate from the world*.

"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.' Therefore, come out from them and be separate, says the Lord..." (2 Corinthians 6:14-17)

So, Idolatry starts in the heart: craving, wanting, enjoying, being satisfied by anything that you treasure more than God."

Can we honestly be part of this Ecumenical Movement?

There is a biblical account illustrating *Ecclesiastical Biblical Separation*. Look at 2 Chronicles 19:2-4. Note that Jehoshaphat really had all kinds of good reasons why he should cooperate with Ahab in this endeavour against

the Syrians. Jehoshaphat saw that Syria was not only a threat to the northern kingdom but to Judah as well, and that if Judah was to be spared and was to escape destruction at the hand of the Syrians, it was better that he forms an alliance with Ahab in order successfully to repel the armies of the Syrians with a united front.

The Lord said to Jehoshaphat, You may not do that. The Lord did not deny that He had his people in the northern kingdom. The Lord did not deny that there were prophets of the Lord in the northern kingdom. The Lord did not deny that He would preserve a remnant in the northern kingdom, but He said to Jehoshaphat in no uncertain terms, You may not do that. "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?"

Noting this principle, if a liberal sponsor was willing to host us for God's work, we must inquire (Matt 10:11) and refuse because such an association is not permitted.

In Matt 7:15 Jesus Himself frequently rebuked the Pharisees and called them false teachers in sheep's clothing but inwardly were ravaging wolves (their self-righteous, legalism and unbelief). Jesus went to the temple to preach to lost sinners but never worked with Pharisees or get them to participate or open in prayer. There was no cooperation.

Today, many of the modernists and liberals have changed their position and many have moved closer to us fundamental evangelicals. We did not shift; it was they who shifted. But we should never work with or associate ourselves ecclesiastically with denominations, churches that want to shake hands with the Roman church, liberals or modernists. Hence, we do not formally work with Methodists, Lutherans.

We have seen Biblical Separation in 2 aspects: Personal and Ecclesiastical.

But we would be hypocrites if we practice Ecclesiastical Biblical Separation in our church community without first welcoming God to search our own hearts, whether we be of the Lord, and obey Him in Personal Biblical Separation from idols, worldliness, and sin.

I leave us with 2 Bible verses for our sanctification.

"Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what partnership has light with darkness?" – 2 Cor 6:14

Therefore, go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you," – 2 Cor 6:17