

The Doctrine of Separation

I. Preliminary Considerations

- A) The Doctrine of Separation is clearly advocated by the Word of God. Ps 1:1; Pr 20:19, 24:1; 2Cor 6:14-18
- B) This Doctrine finds its source in the conflict that is presented in Scripture between God and Satan, and between positive and negative volition. 1Jn 1:5 cp Gen 1:4
- C) Bible Doctrine provides the believer the necessary discernment to separate from that which will ultimately drag them down spiritually. Pr 2:10-16
- D) Failure to separate from that which is opposed to God places the believer in the dangerous position of becoming like those with whom they associate. Pr 22:24-25
- E) The realities that govern the Angelic Conflict mandate that separation will always be an issue with God. Rev 21:8
- F) This Doctrine is one of many that are necessary to fulfill the principle of spiritual growth and Ph₂ sanctification. 1Cor 5:7 *“Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. ...”*
- G) Separation has both a positive and a negative effect:
 - 1) on a negative note, we are to separate ourselves from that which is in opposition to the Plan of God – those people, places, or things that are incompatible with the pursuit and application of BD, our MPR. Js 4:4
 - 2) on a positive note, we are to focus on the reality that when we separate from that which is incompatible with the +R of God, we are separating ourselves to God, which has great benefits. 2Cor 6:17-7:1
- H) Separation will be ultimately enforced by Jesus Christ, as seen in the judgment of the sheep and goats, and the Laodicean Church. Mt 25:32f; Rev 3:14f

II. In the Mosaic Law, Israel was commanded to stay aloof from their Gentile neighbors as God’s Priest Nation. Dt 7:1-4, 18:9-14

- A) This Doctrine was taught in the ceremonial code, indicating that physical association with items that had been declared unclean by the Lord rendered the person ceremonially unclean. Lev 5:2-3, 10:10, 11:4-25, 47, 20:25
- B) This was designed to teach the reality that association with that which is opposed to God is a source of spiritual defilement for the believer. Lev 18:24-28
- C) They were commanded to remain separate from:
 - 1) the religious practices of the nations around them. Lev 20:1-7
 - 2) the opposite sex of these nations, something that adjusted believers recognized even before the Mosaic Law. Gen 24:3, 27:46, 28:1; Dt 7:3-4
- D) When they observed these restrictions and separated from the pagan culture around them, they were blessed; when they did not, they fell under the cursing provision of the Mosaic Covenant. Lev 26:14f; Dt 31:15-20
- E) Failure to separate led to Israel’s separation from the Land. Lev 20:22-26
- F) Israel will be challenged to separate from their geographic environs and return to the Land of Promise during DSW. Jer 50:8, 51:6, 9-10; Zec 2:6-7
- G) Another passage from the Mosaic Law that teaches this Doctrine is Dt 22:9-11:
 - 1) sowing two kinds of seed in the same field – vs 9
 - 2) an unequal yoking of animals – vs 10
 - 3) mixing cloth materials in one garment – vs 11

III. The Doctrine of Separation and Unbelievers 2Cor 6:14-18

A) The actual translation of vs 14 is **“Stop becoming unequally yoked with unbelievers.”** (NEG PTCL μή WITH P M IP γίνομαι + P A P N M P ἑτεροζυγέω + D M P ADJ ἄπιστος)

- 1) the construction of *mē* with the Present Imperative stresses the fact that they are to stop an action already in progress
 - 2) the term *heterodzugeō* means to be yoked together with an animal of a different kind, hence to be mismatched or wrongly associated
 - 3) examples of being wrongly bound together with unbelievers include:
 - a) regular social life, vacations, etc. with unbelievers – including family, friends, and business associates
 - b) business partnerships with unbelievers
 - c) membership in clubs, societies, etc. where the goals or activities deny or compromise Bible Doctrine
 - d) dating or marrying unbelievers
- B) When one is bound together with an unbeliever, they violate the fundamental issues of the Angelic Conflict, as seen in the rhetorical questions that follow.
- 1) all these questions are posed for effect, not expecting an answer, since the answer to all of them is obviously “NONE”.
 - 2) **What partnership does righteousness have with unrighteousness?**
 - a) the term μετοχή – *metochē* occurs only here in the NT, and has the nuance of participating in something alongside another; a partnership
 - b) this question highlights the reality that believers, who have been made righteous by faith in Christ, cannot effectively enter a partnership with those that willingly continue to live outside the law of God – cp Mt 7:23
 - c) in Ph₂, it is impossible to pursue righteous principles and maintain any fidelity toward those that choose to operate in the realm of sin/ lawlessness – cp 1Jn 3:4 “*Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.*”
 - d) this question underscores the reality that the believer and the unbeliever have (or at least, should have) a completely different set of standards
 - 3) **What fellowship has light with darkness?**
 - a) the term κοινωνία – *koinōnia* denotes what is shared or held in common
 - b) God made it plain from the earliest revelation that light and darkness were distinct and would always remain separate – Gen 1:3-4
 - c) darkness is used to portray Satan and his viewpoint, while light is used as a figure for God’s Essence and His viewpoint – Jn 3:19 cp 1Jn 1:5
 - d) since all unbelievers willingly choose to reside in the realm of darkness, from which we have been delivered (Col 1:13), we cannot continue to fellowship/share with those in the kingdom of darkness
 - e) this question stresses that the believer and unbeliever share absolutely nothing in common in spiritual terms
 - 4) **What harmony has Christ with Beliar?**
 - a) the term συμφώνησις – *sumphōnēsis* speaks of different instruments sounding together in harmony, and indicates agreement
 - b) the term “Belial/Beliar” is a cryptic term for Satan, and literally means “worthlessness”

- c) if the Cornerstone of God's Plan does not have any agreement with His archenemy, how can a believer expect to find harmony with his spawn?
- d) this question points out that we have different lords/masters – cp Mt 6:24
- 5) **What has a believer in common with an unbeliever?**
 - a) the term *μερίς* – *meris* means a part, portion, or share, and looks toward the reality of Ph₃
 - b) the reality that we are going to be forever separated from all unbelievers and the fact that they have no share in our eternal life or inheritance is called to our attention
 - c) failure to separate in time contradicts this eternal reality
 - d) this question is designed to accentuate the fact that we have completely different destinies
- 6) **What agreement has the temple of God with idols?**
 - a) the term *συγκατάθεσις* – *sunkatathesis* means a mutual agreement that is determined by a group decision or vote (LIT – “A PUTTING TOGETHER”, I.E. VOTES FOR A DEMOCRATIC DECISION)
 - b) the individual believer is a temple of God (1Cor 6:19), while the Church corporately is the dwelling place of the Living God – 1Cor 3:16
 - c) believers are the true place in which the Living God chooses to dwell; how can there be any agreement with an idol, which is an image or likeness of a phantom/unreal/dead god?
 - d) this question stresses the truth that we are the reality, as opposed to the unreality of idols, which would never vote for the Living God
- C) Separation from unbelievers does not involve absolute disassociation.
 - 1) if it did, we would have to die and go to Heaven – 1Cor 5:9-10
 - 2) to do so, we would cease to be a fragrant aroma to them and an effective ambassador of Christ – 2Cor 2:14-17, 5:20
 - 3) there are legitimate times when the adjusted believer can socialize with an unbeliever for the express purpose of evangelization – 1Cor 10:27
 - 4) however, if the offer of salvation is rejected, or if the unbeliever manifests antagonism toward the Plan of God, the believer must discontinue their efforts – Mt 7:6; Mk 6:11
 - 5) Jesus Christ set the perfect standard in this regard while He was on earth, remaining undefiled and separate from sinners, yet interacting with them on a daily basis – Lk 7:34 cp Heb 7:26
- D) Conclusions regarding separation and the unbeliever
 - 1) first, pray about these matters, seeking God's will and guidance, since He will bless the believer who desires to please Him – 2Cor 5:9 cp Js 1:5
 - 2) when considering a given situation that constitutes being unequally yoked, ask yourself if you will have to compromise any BD in any way to maintain the association (even potentially)
 - 3) while it is necessary for us to have contact with unbelievers for the purpose of doing business, going to school, paying our debts, or conducting our daily lives, we must avoid situations that constitute:
 - a) partnership – marrying an unbeliever, business partnerships, etc.
 - b) fellowship – regular socialization, vacations, etc.

- c) harmony – agreement with those who disagree with our Lord
 - d) sharing/inheritance – we have different destinies, we are on different paths
 - e) agreement – suggesting that we have the same opinion as these people about God
- 4) our zeal to evangelize should not cause us to compromise the truths of BD by emphasizing patriotism, good citizenship, secular achievements, etc. in order to gain entrance into arenas to which we would otherwise be denied access
- E) The believer must recognize that applying this Doctrine can, and often will, incur the wrath of those who are negative. Jn 15:18-20; 1Pet 4:3-5
- F) We must be willing to consider maligning/slander as undeserved suffering and commit our cause to the Lord, who will ultimately vindicate us. 1Pet 4:14-16
- G) On a positive note, if one is seriously desiring to fulfill God’s Plan for their life, many times they will not have to actively apply this Doctrine; negative people will apply it for them and separate on their own. Gen 4:16 *“Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD...”*; 1Jn 2:19

IV. Separation and the Believer

- A) We recognize that there are believers who do not walk according to the Truth, and Scripture clearly teaches that we are to separate from anyone engaged in reversionism of whatever category. 1Cor 5:9-13
- B) The distinction between those who are Positive and those who are not is seen in their habitual attitude toward coming to the light/truth, as reflected in their commitment to Bible Class.
- C) Those that are Positive are willing to expose themselves continually to the Truth, while those that are negative are not, manifesting the conflict that truly exists between adjusted and maladjusted believers.
- D) When dealing with other believers, we must accept and honor the assessment that comes from Christ, that “you will know them by their fruits”. Mt 7:16-20
- E) It is clear from Rev 3:14-18 that Jesus Christ makes distinctions between believers based on His observations.
- 1) the reality by which Jesus Christ makes His assessment is the works/deeds of those He examines, and we know that He judges with a righteous judgment – Jn 7:24; Rev 3:14
 - 2) Jesus Christ distinguished between the two extremes that exist in the Church: the “cold believer”, who rejects BD in Ph₂, and the “hot believer”, who adheres to BD and exhibits maximum intake and application
 - 3) vs 16 targets believers/churches that attempt to take a middle ground
 - a) the Lord bases His evaluation on their works (vs 15), which must be works that He rejects and cannot qualify as DGP, and therefore fall into the category of human good
 - b) He declares that this type of believer is spiritually lukewarm in His view, and employs a graphic anthropomorphism to emphatically declare His revulsion toward them
 - c) this believer does not sit well with God, which causes Him to vomit them away, effectively separating Himself from them
 - d) it should be evident that these are believers, who go to church, read their Bible, and are engaged in every sort of program imaginable, including:

- (1) those that stay in ministries not committed to the teaching of sound doctrine, verse by verse, in context, seeking to communicate “the whole purpose of God” – Mt 5:18-19; Ac 20:27, 32; 2Tim 3:16-17
 - (2) ministries and believers that exclude certain doctrines in their teaching or personal life (such as this Doctrine), or teach certain doctrines for their personal gain or popularity – Ac 20:20; Tit 1:11
 - (3) ministries devoted to the traditions of men, that exalt non-biblical approaches to the Christian Way of Life – Mk 7:5-13; Col 2:8
- 4) it should also be evident that one does not have to be in a lukewarm church to be lukewarm; a believer can be in an adjusted ministry and still fall into the category of a “hearer and not a doer” – Js 1:22-25
 - 5) lukewarm believers fall into the category of negative volition and, ironically, are in a worse standing before God than the cold believer – Rev 3:15
 - 6) the mental attitude of these believers equates the acquisition of material things as directly reflecting their relationship with God
 - a) they determine that their success in the pursuit of the details of life and their comfortable surroundings parallels their spiritual standing
 - b) however, the opposite is actually true and they are completely deluded as to their status before the Lord
 - 7) the words of the Lord Jesus in vs 18 indicate that there is a corrective for their situation, if they will only avail themselves of it
- F) Consequently, if believers fall into the category of the Negative, separation is in order as evidenced by Jesus Christ Himself.
- G) Positive believers are commanded to separate from all people that do not adhere to categorically sound doctrine in their personal lives.
- 1) the example of the believer in 2Th 3:6 is one category in view
 - 2) the serious nature of this command is seen by the fact that Paul invokes the very authority of Jesus Christ when making this command
 - 3) the word *στέλλω* – *stellō* means to set in order or arrange, and when used with the preposition *apo* it means to keep aloof, keep away from, or avoid
 - 4) the person in view is called *ἀτάκτως* – *ataktōs*, which is a military term for a disorderly soldier, who refused to follow his marching orders
 - 5) this refers to those that are out of step with BD and with Paul’s own example, which is the tradition of sound doctrine
 - 6) the Doctrine of Separation is plain in vs 14, and demands that all believers in that LCh are to cease and desist from social life with the errant brother
 - 7) the purpose is to compel the maladjusted believer to come to grips with the fact that he is out of step with the Truth and with the LCh at large
 - 8) since there is no command to eject the believer from the church, it is rather the adjusted believer who is to provide the necessary verbal corrective about this area of failure – 1Th 5:14; 2Th 3:15
 - 9) adjusted believers are to use tact in their approach, not use this to vent their anger or frustration, and not treat the offender as an enemy
 - 10) it should be done with the appropriate concern one has for a brother in Christ, recognizing that the goal is restoration – cp Gal 6:1
- H) Adjusted believers are to be alert to those that cause strife and division in the LCh and separate from them. Rom 16:17-18

- 1) the verb σκοπεω – *skopeō* means to look at, consider, or keep a watchful eye on someone or something; hence, it means to be concerned about such types
 - 2) divisions and hindrances refer to their tactics of dividing and conquering, seeking to make another believer stumble by accepting their erroneous viewpoint
 - 3) their target is the BD in one's soul, and they will eventually focus on the man who brings that message
 - 4) the command here is the Present Imperative of ἐκκλίνω – *enklinō*, which means to bend out of line, turn away or aside, avoid, or shun, and emphasizes continual action
 - 5) one example of this would be believers that seek to divide the assembly by promoting factions and cliques – cp 1Cor 1:10-12
 - 6) another example are those who want to take someone aside and “straighten them out” about the doctrinal mistakes of the PT – cp Tit 1:10-11
 - 7) each of us must learn to recognize and discern those that come to us with a façade of godliness/piety, employing techniques of flattery and praise, who attempt to win our trust through deceitful means – Mt 10:16
 - 8) although they are quite pious overtly, use all the terminology and understand all the same concepts as we do, these men **are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own emotions**
- I) Believers are to be alert for other believers that practice consistent carnality in any of the areas listed in 1Cor 5:9-13
- 1) although this teaching was directed specifically to the Corinthian church, it is applicable to any LCh in history
 - 2) the Greek term here for “associate” is συναμιγνυμι – *sunanamignumi*, literally to mix together with, intermingle, or associate
 - 3) while not “mixing together with” them does not forbid all contact, it does forbid maintaining a social life with those that have flagrantly embraced these types of lifestyles
 - 4) the categories of overt sinning include:
 - a) immorality – phallic and/or sexual reversionism, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, etc.
 - b) covetousness – monetary reversionism, greed, which is a form of idolatry, and which is evident in those who are never satisfied with what they have, placing material possessions above the application of BD – cp Col 3:5; 1Tim 6:9-10; Heb 13:5
 - c) idolaters – religious reversionists, those involved in worship of things other than God; this includes any form of religious worship that does not find its basis in the Word of God, those who worship a god of their own making, or “another Jesus” – cp Gal 1:8, 9
 - d) revilers – verbal reversionists, who slander, gossip, and malign, those that stir up trouble with their speech – cp Tit 3:9-11
 - e) drunkards – alcoholic reversionism, those that consistently engage in substance abuse, which is the enemy of SG₃ – cp Pr 23:29-35; Gal 5:21
 - f) swindlers – another form of monetary reversionism; the term ἄρπαξ – *harpax* means one who is vicious, ravenous, and destructive, who cares only for the satisfaction of his own desires – cp Mat 7:15

- 5) of course, Paul is not referring to incidental sinning, since **we all stumble in many ways, and there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and who never sins** – Js 3:2; Ecc 7:20
 - 6) he is dealing with believers that are flagrantly and publicly engaging in these activities, and refusing to deal with it via Rebound and BD
- J) Adjusted believers must recognize that religious reversionism will abound in the last days; false teachers will be the norm, while lukewarm Christians will dutifully follow them – 2Tim 3:1-5.
- 1) the last days are a period of history characterized by arrogant, selfish STA types that project an appearance of positive volition and commitment to the Truth, but are in reality functioning under human good systems of religion – **holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power**
 - 2) we are instructed to identify these pretenders, which is only possible if we know what is the truth and error of their ministries, and make a judgment as to which is prevalent – **avoid such men as these**
 - 3) a portion of these false teachers has access to the household via radio, television, tapes, books, etc, and lead astray the easily deceived – vss 6-7
 - 4) this includes cults (Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormonism, etc.), religions of the East (Hinduism, Bahai, etc.), the mother/son cult, and New Age religions (Theosophical Society, Gaia worship, etc.)
 - 5) this also includes “Christian” religions that are not committed to teaching sound doctrine – those who have an overt, superficial appearance of godliness without a correct approach to Scripture (Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Nazarenes, Church of Christ, Charismatics, etc.)
 - 6) para-church organizations, like Promise Keepers, Campus Crusade, Focus on the Family, Youth Camps, Salvation Army, Christian Business Men’s Association and others not sanctioned by the Bible also fall into this category
 - 7) we must be vigilant and discerning about those that do appear to be operating under sound teaching, since many false doctrines are taught by otherwise sound ministries (Lordship Salvation, Edification Complex of the Soul, etc.)
 - 8) this category also includes those who have been exposed to the Truth in an adjusted ministry, who have determined that the diligent pursuit of that Truth is not their desire – 1Jn 2:19
- K) These passages make it clear that there is a time and place for applying the Doctrine of Separation on a personal level toward other believers.

V. Separation and the Church Leadership

- A) The government of the LCh is to enforce this Doctrine on any member of the congregation that brings public reproach on the body, by publicly flaunting STA activity.
- B) The example of this is found in Paul’s instructions for dealing with the incestuous Corinthian. 1Cor 5:1f
 - 1) the situation involved a believer that was engaged in a sexual relationship with his stepmother – **someone has his father's wife.**
 - 2) he chastises the congregation for tolerating this sexual perversion, which Paul says even unbelieving Gentiles viewed as repugnant – **a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles**

- 3) he rebukes the spirit of pride in very strong terms – **you are/remain in a state of complete arrogance** (Pf P P φυσιόω – *phusio*)
 - 4) the proper response would be righteous indignation, manifested in sorrow for the reproach brought on the body of Christ in Corinth
 - 5) he orders them to expel the offender, commanding the church to enforce this excommunication
- C) This separation is designed by God to produce sorrow in the offender as a direct result of other believers, or the LCh at large, avoiding him – 2Cor 2:6-8
 - D) The goal of the sorrow (lack of fellowship and support) is to bring the errant believer to a change of mind – 2Cor 7:8-10
 - E) If there is incidental contact with the wayward believer, the adjusted believer is responsible to make the issues clear to them, without rancor or ill-will – 2Th 3:15
 - F) Those that respond and make the appropriate adjustment(s) are to be forgiven and accepted back into fellowship with all love and comfort.
 - G) Separation is an example of love in action, and when one fails to apply this Doctrine, they negate this important principle.
 - 1) true love, which is manifested only through the application of BD under the filling of the Holy Spirit, always has the best spiritual interests of the object of love in view – 1Jn 5:2-3
 - 2) the best interests of one who is maladjusted to BD are served by withdrawing your fellowship and approval, in an attempt to get his attention and motivate him to change his mind
 - 3) failure to separate may manifest some sort of misplaced, emotional, human viewpoint attachment or affection, but it does not manifest Divine love
 - 4) the Word of God provides no reason for a positive believer to establish or continue to have social life with those who are not fulfilling their MPR

VI. Separation and Physical Family Members – Mt 10:34-39

- A) The Positive believer must be willing to apply this Doctrine, without partiality, including even the closest of family members that are negative.
- B) Although Jesus is the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6), His purpose at the 1st Advent was not to establish peace, nor to establish some religion on which everyone could agree – **I did not come to bring peace**
- C) Harmony in any area of life comes only when men and women think alike regarding the Truth that Jesus Christ brought; since most are negative and only the few positive, conflict erupts.
- D) The Positive believer will probably find that they experience more hostility from religious but negative relatives than from those that are irreligious.
- E) The **sword** is an agent of separation and is a reference to the Doctrines of Scripture that divide even the closest of relationships.
- F) The word translated “set...against” is διχαζω – *dichadzō*, which means to divide in two, to separate, or to turn someone against another.
- G) His coming only makes plain what is true already, our adherence to the Truth does not cause the negative to reject us, they have already done so.
- H) Persecution is a regular feature of the Angelic Conflict, and we are not to make peace with negative family members by denying the realities of BD; it is their choice to align with the Truth. cp Rom 12:18

- I) To do so is an affront to the Lord, who redeemed our soul from spiritual death and blessed us with every blessing in the heavenly places. cp Eph 1:3-6
- J) Christ asserts that those who refuse to apply this Doctrine in the face of family pressures manifest that they love their negative relatives more than Him. vs 37
- K) We must be willing to **take up our cross**, which means that we must put the Lord and His Word above all relationships and be willing to do the will of God even when it is painful.
- L) Those that **lose their life** are those that recognize that they have been bought with a price and must apply BD, even when it appears not to be in their best interest.
- M) Those that apply these difficult principles are the second category of those who **find their life**, a reference to the Ph₂ and Ph₃ blessings that will come to those whom God honors for their obedience. cp Mk 10:28-31
- N) Recognize also that Jesus Himself applied this Doctrine, under the pressures His family put on Him to compromise the Truth. Mk 3:21, 31-35
- O) Abraham is an example of a believer that had a problem applying this Doctrine, but who ultimately realized it was necessary and separated from his negative relatives. Gen 12:1, 4, 13:9
- P) Exceptions to applying separation from relatives include:
 - a) honoring father and mother – Mt 15:3-6; 1Tim 5:4 *“but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.”*
 - b) separation/divorce from a negative spouse – 1Cor 7:10-16
 - c) children cannot separate from their parents until legally old enough to do so – Col 3:20 *“Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.”*
- Q) Also understand and believe that God will establish sound relationships with other Positive believers, and these are the ones that ultimately are satisfying.
- R) Regarding marriage and separation:
 - 1) under the principle that forbids being unequally yoked, believers are not to pursue or establish relationships with unbelievers of the opposite sex
 - 2) this would obviously include dating someone negative with a view to marriage
 - 3) all believers must learn to wait on the Lord, and it is never more true than in this most important of all relationships, RMRW
 - 4) just as God brought Eve to Adam (he didn’t have to go find her), the single believer should wait for God to introduce them to their right spouse
 - 5) it is better to be single, fulfilling God’s Plan for one’s life, than to compromise BD and get into a relationship that will become a cause of grief – Pr 11:22, 21:9, 19, 27:15-16
 - 6) the real blessings in life come to those that honor God and apply His Word in this and all issues – Pr 19:14, 31:10f
 - 7) if a Positive believer is married to a negative believer or unbeliever, but who permits them to pursue MPR, they are required to remain in the marriage – 1Cor 7:12-13
 - 8) if a negative spouse makes it impossible for the Positive spouse to fulfill MPR, they are free to separate (not to divorce, unless the negative party instigates it) and have a clear conscience – 1Cor 7:15

VII. Conclusions

- A) There can be no doubt that the Doctrine of Separation is taught throughout the Bible, and is an issue brought on by the Angelic Conflict
- B) Failure to apply this Doctrine impartially neutralizes spiritual growth and the witness of the life, so avoid all associations that compromise BD.
- C) When dealing with other Positive believers, in our LCh or another, recognize that failure in a particular area, which is not severe enough to present to the leadership, is not grounds for separation.
 - 1) generally speaking, if someone is in class consistently, pursuing MPR, and are oriented to the pulpit, there is no reason to separate from them
 - 2) momentary (or even consistent) failures in some area are not grounds for separation
 - 3) this includes a believer who fails to apply this Doctrine, as well
- D) In any questionable situations, pursue God's Will through prayer, attendance in Bible Class, seeking Divine guidance, and He will bless your mental attitude desire to please Him
- E) When you come under pressure by separating from the negative or lukewarm, remember Proverbs 24:19-20
- F) Further, remember the blessings that are promised to those that apply this Doctrine. Ps 1:1-3; Mk 10:28-31; 2Cor 6:17-18

VIII. Objections and Answers

- A) Reasons to separate include:
 - 1) to set in motion the godly sorrow in the soul of the maladjusted – 2Cor 2:7
 - 2) to protect oneself from bad influences – 1Cor 15:33
 - 3) to fulfill the commandment of Scripture – 1Cor 5:9; 2Th 3:14
- B) Illegitimate reasons for separation include:
 - 1) personal dislike of another believer – 2Cor 13:11
 - 2) divorce – 1Cor 7:10-11
 - 3) momentary STA failures – Gal 6:1
- C) Objections to this Doctrine
 - 1) separation is only from unbelievers – Lot is specifically called a believer (2Pet 2:7), and Abraham was told to separate from him, since he held no interest in the Plan of God – Gen 12:1 cp Gen 19
 - 2) separation is only commanded if the association hurts you spiritually – the above example indicates otherwise
 - 3) we should not separate over doctrinal differences – Rom 16:17

And if anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that man and do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame.

2Th 3:14

THE DOCTRINE OF SEPARATION
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