

The Church is to be Holy

May 21, 2017

Ephesians 2:19-22 NASB

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

21 **in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,**

22 **in whom you also are being built together** (*synoikodomeo* - to construct by building out of several things to make one whole) **into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.**

In verses 21 and 22 we are called to two commitments as an assembly:

1. *To come together, to practice unity in purpose and function*
2. *To keep the environment and relationships of the assembly holy*
 - a. *starts with our personal pursuit of holiness*
 - b. *there can be no willful, unconfessed sin*

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 ESV

14 **Do not be unequally yoked** (*heterozygeō* - to come under an unequal or different yoke) **with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?**

Holiness is a relational separation, not a physical separation.

"You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together." Deuteronomy 22:10 NASB

"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'" 1 Corinthians 15:33 NASB

"And do not be conformed to this world..." Romans 12:2 NASB

15 **What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?**

16 **What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

17 **Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate** (*aphorizō* - to limit, to separate, mark off by boundaries, set apart for a purpose) **from them, says the Lord, and touch** (*haptō* - to fasten to, adhere to) **no unclean thing; then I will welcome you,**

18 **and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."**

There is a healthy tension between grace and holiness.

- *Grace freely brings us into a union and communion with God that we did not deserve, earn or merit.*

- *Once in that relationship, God's holiness cleanses, sanctifies and purifies.*
- *Holiness is the maturation and crowning achievement of grace.*
- *Holiness is never achieved by self-discipline or legalism, but by absolute surrender to God as we walk in relationship.*

Titus 2:11-14 NASB

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Keeping the assembly holy starts with personal holiness.

Isaiah 1:11-20 NASB

11 **"What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle; And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats.**

12 **"When you come to appear before Me, Who requires of you this trampling of My courts?"**

13 **"Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies-- I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly.**

14 **"I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them.**

15 **"So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood.**

16 **"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil,**

17 **Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow.**

18 **"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.**

19 **"If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land;**

20 **"But if you refuse and rebel, You will be devoured by the sword." Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken.**

Keeping the assembly holy is a communal commitment of each member.

1 Corinthians 5:1-13 NASB

1 It is actually reported that **there is immorality among you,** and immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father's wife.

2 **You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst.**

3 For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present.

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus,

5 I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough?

“Religion today is not transforming people; rather it is being transformed by the people. It is not raising the moral level of society; it is descending to society’s own level, and congratulating itself that it has scored a victory because society is smilingly accepting its surrender.” — A.W. Tozer

7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

8 Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people;

10 I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world.

11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler--not even to eat with such a one.

12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church?

13 But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.

Ephesians 5:3-13 NASB

3 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints;
4 and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

7 Therefore do not be partakers with them;

8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.

13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.

Matthew 18:15-17 NASB

15 "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

16 "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.

17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."

A second-century letter from an unknown author to a person named Diognetus.

"Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language, or customs. They do not inhabit separate cities of their own, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life. . . . With regard to dress, food, and manner of life in general, they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to be living in, whether it is Greek or foreign.

"And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but labor under all the disabilities of aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country. Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not [kill] them. They share their meals, but not their wives. They live in the flesh, but they are not governed by the desires of the flesh. They pass their days upon earth, but they are citizens of heaven. Obedient to the law, they yet live on a level that transcends the law. . . .

"To speak in general terms, we may say that the Christian is to the world what the soul is to the body. As the soul is present in every part of the body, while remaining distinct from it, so Christians are found in all the cities of the world, but cannot be identified with the world."