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The Wooley Springs Helper

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Dare To Be Different

It seems as though our society has pushed the need for “inclusivity” especially hard this past decade. I am concerned that this push has created a desire within Christians to be included with those of the world and/or created a fear within them of being excluded by those of the world. With this in mind, how are Christians supposed to view the differences between themselves and the world? Should there be differences at all? Should Christians fear being different knowing that the people of the world will not accept them? Let’s see what God’s Word has to say about it.

From beginning to end, the scriptures have shown a distinct contrast between those serving God and those not serving God. This contrast is as stark as “lightness and darkness” - (1 Thessalonians 5:5), “enslaved and free” - (Romans 6:18), “few and many” - (Matthew 7:13-14), even “dead and alive” - (Ephesians 2:5). Could these illustrations be more powerful? I believe they prove the point perfectly that God’s people are polar opposites from the people of the world, and the differences between them should be profound. The things we say, the way we dress, and the way we conduct our lives should in NO way reflect the way of the world; but instead, should reflect the Pattern left by our Savior Jesus Christ who “...gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” - (Titus 2:14).

Jesus did NOT redeem us so that we would desire to be INCLUDED with those of the world, but rather so that we would walk WORTHY of being EXCLUDED. We know that Jesus Himself was rejected and excluded from the world. In John 15:18-19 Jesus comforts us by saying, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you...but I have chosen you out of the world...". Jesus has chosen us out of the world to be separate, to be changed, and to be different. In Romans 12:2 we are admonished to "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God". Living this transformed life in service to God will never be the life the world accepts, despite it being the life that God commands us to live. When Christians dress modestly at the beach, the world excludes them. When Christians refuse to engage in fornication, the world excludes them. When Christians do not partake in drinking alcohol, the world excludes them. Whose acceptance do you value more, the world's or God's? Who will judge you in the Last Day? (Matthew 25:31-46). Dare to be different as Christ was different.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16).

— Jared Davis

This May Shock You

This may shock you, but there are a number of things that the Bible does not teach that a multitude of people are not aware of.

1. The Bible does not teach that one church is as good as another. Rather, the Bible says, "There is one body" (Ephesians 4:4). Christ only built one church. Are the ones He didn't build just as good as the one He did build? That would make man's works as good as God's. Jesus said, "Every plant, which My heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13). You see, Jesus didn't seem to think that one church is as good as another.

2. The Bible does not teach that Christ will return to earth to reign on a literal throne for 1,000 years. That would be a shocking fact for more than 80% of religious people. However, the verse that so teaches is yet to be found. I read, that when Christ comes again, that will be the end (1 Corinthians 15:23-24).

3. The Bible doesn't teach that Christ was born on December 25th. Neither does the Bible teach that there were three wise men.

4. The Bible doesn't teach that terms such as "Reverend," "Pastor," and "Father" should be applied to a preacher. The term "Reverend" is only used one time in the Bible, and that time it applies to God (Ps. 111:9, KJV). "Pastor" simply means one that is a shepherd over a flock. It is descriptive of an elder in the church that meets certain qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Jesus condemned the use of such terms as "Father" in Matthew 23:1-12.

5. The Bible teaches that only those who are the members of the body of Christ will be saved. I read that Christ is "the Savior of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). Thus, He only promises to save those in the body. His body and church are one and the same (Colossians 1:18). Thus, only those in His church, the church of Christ, will be saved (Romans 16:16).

6. If number five is a shocker, this will shock you more. The Bible teaches that not all of those in the body of Christ will be eternally saved. I read how the faithful will receive a crown of life (Revelation 2:10). Some of those that were once sanctified by the blood of Christ will turn aside and be lost (Hebrews 10:26-29).

7. The Bible teaches us that "rejoice" and "forgive one another," are commands of God (Philippians 4:4; Ephesians 4:32). These are not just suggestions that will make us better people. Neither is there an option to choose or not to choose. These are commands! Violating them is sin (1 John 3:4). To sin is to separate oneself from God (Isaiah 59:1-2).

8. The Bible teaches that "faith" is a work (John 6:29). If we are saved by faith only, we are saved by a work. If works do not save us at all, then we are not saved by faith.

— Donnie Raeder, *The Spirit's Sword*

Keep these in your prayers : Dot Sims, Clarice Cantrell, Gail Faulk, Pat McCay, Liz Mealer, Jane Belew (now at home), David Posey, Faustine Robinson (grandmother of Casey Carter), Jesse McCune, Eldean Dollar, and Chessie Harwell (Jack's mom).

A Heart of Forgiveness

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses” (Mark 11:25-26).

Christ teaches us to have a willing heart to forgive those who sin against us. We do not wait until the offender says, “Forgive me” before being ready to forgive. We are to probe our hearts and remove any malice toward one who has sinned against us. True, God grants forgiveness when the sinner petitions Him for relief according to His will (Rom. 10:13; Acts 2:37-38; 22:16). Still, Jesus, Stephen, and Paul illustrate the willing heart of forgiveness before sinners repented of their sinful deeds (Luke 23:34; Acts 7:59-60; 2 Tim. 4:16).

God's readiness to forgive is our model: “For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You. Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; And attend to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, for You will answer me” (Ps. 65:5-7). God is ready to forgive. Likewise, we must have hearts of forgiveness (Col. 3:12-13). The provision Christ states is unmistakable. If we are holding something against a person, we must forgive to be forgiven.

– Joe R. Price

No atheist can injure the Bible's influence as thoroughly as a Christian who disregards it in his daily life.

The smallest good deed is better than the grandest intention.