



Lesson Title: The Balance of the Spirit – Separation



Key Concept: As disciples of Christ we must learn to live a life balanced by the Spirit. We are to live separated unto God in a sinful world.



Scriptures:

⁶ Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: ⁷ And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the Lord.

(Exodus 6:6–8 *King James Version*)

¹⁷ Therefore, come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them, says the LORD. Don't touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you.

¹⁸ And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.

(2 Corinthians 6:17–18 *New Living Translation*)

Context Scriptures: Exodus 33:15–17; Romans 12:2; Matthew 5:13–16; James 4:4; Proverbs 11:30



Lesson Thoughts:

It is without question, that God calls and brings his people *out*. In the case of the Hebrew people, he brought them physically *out* from under the burdens of their oppressors, from amongst an ungodly people, and therefore *out* of bondage. Extraordinarily, where he desired to take them wasn't necessarily the promised land. He desired to *take them to himself for a people*. To be their God. To love, protect, and bless them. He succeeded in bringing them *out* of the land, but

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freeing them mentally and spiritually proved to be a much more formidable undertaking. They longed to be like those around them.

Like the Hebrews, we struggle with conformity. Scripture admonishes us not to copy the behavior and customs of the world. Instead, we are to allow God to transform us by changing the way we think. (Romans 12:2). The call isn't to leave a land but to leave a way of life. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Corinthians 6:17a). The call is to be separated *to* God. In the actions and instructions of Jesus, we find the how and the why.

Jesus ate with sinners, touched lepers, and associated with undesirables. To be like them? No, to reach them. Our light is not to be hid and our salt is to stay savory (Matthew 5:13–16). The world, our Egypt, is our mission field. We are to emphatically love people to Christ; to go after, welcome, and be examples to them. As the church (the called-out ones), we are in this world but not of it. Jesus was well aware of our precarious position, hence his prayer: "Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are" (John 17:11). We are not to embrace the world's ways, neither are we to exclude, control, or abuse others for fear they will taint us or lure us away. We are protected. When we embrace the privilege of being separated *to* him, our witness penetrates the darkness. Thus, the way to Christ is illuminated so that whosoever will can see the way.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) What extremes have Christians resorted to in order to be separate?
- 2) What dangers do we face when we continue to participate in activities and behaviors not becoming of God's children?
- 3) What is the difference between embracing the world and associating with the world?
- 4) What are some specific ways we can associate without embracing?

Next Lesson: Balance of the Spirit – Spiritual Abuse

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Another way scripture refers to being separate, is to be holy. Read and meditate on the scriptures below.

Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. (John 17:17 *New Living Translation*)

Because of the weakness of your human nature, I am using the illustration of slavery to help you understand all this. Previously, you let yourselves be slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin. Now you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living so that you will become holy. (Romans 6:19 *New Living Translation*)

Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy. (Ephesians 4:24 *New Living Translation*)

But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. (1 Peter 1:15 *New Living Translation*)

- 1) When you consider God's call to his people to be holy, how does that make you feel? Excluded, unworthy, special, challenged, privileged, other? Why?
- 2) When you evaluate your life, what is your honest assessment? Are you still entangled (agreeing with, comfortable) in the world? Are you making progress to be separate, holy?
- 3) In making your assessment, what was your measuring stick? Your cultural understanding of what it means to be holy or your open heart to God in prayer and his Word?