



## **Our Position on Personal and Collective Separation**

We affirm that those who are saved should live in such a manner so as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God (2 Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 14:13; 2 John 1:9-11; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

At a personal level, we are to live in the world, but not be of the world (John 17:15-51). Therefore, we must strive to find that fine balance between eating with sinners for the sake of the gospel, as Jesus did, while also being holy, as the Father is holy (Mark 2:16-17; 1 Pet. 1:14-16). We also recognize that as believers, we must use wisdom in our relationships with both unbelievers and with those who claim the name of Christ, but do not live accordingly (2 Cor. 6:14; 2 Thess. 3:14-15). Overall, it is our ambition to live quiet productive lives, behaving properly toward outsiders, while shining as lights and reflecting the glory of God (1 Thess. 4:11-12; 2 Cor. 4:1-6).

At the same time, we must also be wary, for even within the church there will be those who, though having the appearance of godliness, will be seeking to captivate our families and destroy our confidence in the truth. We must therefore avoid such men and women (2 Tim. 3:1-7). Further, we must contend against those false teachers who will encourage sensual behavior and will deny the teachings of Jesus Christ, as delivered by the apostles (Jude 3-4; 2 Pet. 2:1-3). Ultimately, we must turn away and separate ourselves from those who deny essential doctrines of our faith (Rom. 16:17-18).

At the collective level, as a local church, we must guard the flock by remaining separate in our evangelistic endeavors from churches and organizations which deny what we consider to be essential doctrines (Rom. 16:17; Phil. 3:17-19; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). We will use discretion with respect to other proposed collaborative activities. For example, we might collaborate with certain churches and organizations in support of a charitable work or in support of an academic institution, while declining to collaborate with these churches and organizations in our internal and outreach ministries. We will evaluate each potential collaborative proposal on an individual basis.

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