

**S E P A R A T I O N   From Whom ?**  
**A Brother ?   Another Member of the Body of Christ ?**  
(I wonder, if that still applies during holidays and vacation time?)

During my nearly 30 years of being a 'mid-Acts-hyper-dispensationalist' .... I was taught to guard, above all else, what-they-call 'the integrity of grace' .... which-they-mean-to-be 'the distinctive doctrines of the apostle Paul'. Their primary focus was on 'the message'.

I could not count the many times I've heard these questions asked,  
"When did you get 'the message'?"  
"How long have you known 'the message'?"  
"Who taught you 'the message'?"  
"Where did you hear 'the message'?"

Well, 'the message' nearly ruined my life and my family.

When I learned 'the message' .... I wanted to be the champion for what-I-was-taught and what-I-thought was **rightly dividing** God's word of truth (2 Tim 2: 15).

I was quick to contend with saints over 'Paul is our apostle (Rom 11: 13), and no one else!'

I courageously scorned believers for not accepting 'Paul's gospel' as the only way of salvation.

I boldly told 'other preachers' that they were teaching doctrines of devils (1 Tim 4: 1) in their churches (although I still disagree with them).

I held Bible conferences for the specific promotion of 'grace doctrine' and a man who was a main leader/preacher/teacher of 'the grace movement' who had a 'grace school' and a 'rightly dividing chart'.

I cheered and laughed, along with many others at a conference, when a 'grace preacher' made fun and said that those other preachers were 'altar pimps' at 'religious whorehouses' (although I still oppose their teachings).

I bravely avoided 'Christians' (aka 'disciples') --- even my own family members --- even on holidays and birthday parties and vacation times and special occasions --- who refused to submit to 'Pauline authority'.

I was lionhearted.

Then, after all that time and money and effort, after raising my family in 'the message' .... I found out I was wrong. The doctrine I had so valiantly defended was wrong. How hard do you think that was for me to admit? It was quite embarrassing, especially with my 'type A' (?) personality. But I did admit it. And now, I am trying even harder to make up for lost time. I always liked the story of Ebenezer Scrooge; I didn't love money like he did .... but I have sensed the same repentance, relief, and joy he felt .... to release the error of wrong thinking.

At an upcoming 'mid-Acts' conference in Illinois, three men will preach on the subject of separation. These men profess to be 'KJV' and 'Pauline', but they don't want the 'KJV' 'Pauline' **title/name** of the office that God --- through Paul --- gave it. EVERY time Paul wrote about a '**bishop**' in the KJV .... The Living Bible used the word '**pastor**' instead .... and 'pastor' is what they go for (see 1 Tim 3:1,2; Titus 1:7; Phil 1:1). The irony of it is that a pastor is a shepherd over a flock of sheep .... and 'mid-Acts-ers' say that ONLY Israel is God's sheep --- NOT who-they-call is the body of Christ. So they put themselves in a 'Catch-22' position with their own doctrine!

**'Mid-Acts-ers' claim to 'follow Paul', well, they should follow Paul's example of working 'with the fellows' 'unto the kingdom of God'!**

But 'mid-Acts-ers' don't like that 'Pauline doctrine' because they think 'those saints' --- even though they were alive during the dispensation of grace --- were in '**a DIFFERENT PROGRAM**' (and they do so without a verse) .... what-they-call Israel's kingdom-prophecy program .... NOT for who-they-determine-is-in the body of Christ, **as if it is a program**. Thus, they apply their same warped, separation principle on saints today .... who-they-think function/operate under what-they-call a **Jewish** economy.

Paul wrote "to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse" (Col 1:2) and in closing the epistle, he gave them a list of names of who helped him (Col 4:7-18) .... and (Oh, no!) they were JEWS:

**Col 4:11** And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are **of the circumcision**. (What?! JEWS working for the kingdom of God with Paul?! ) These **only are my fellowworkers (Greek <sunergos>) unto the kingdom of God**, which have been a comfort unto me.

The Greek word <sunergos> is used 13 times, and translated in the KJV:  
 fellowlabourer - 4 times            helper - 3 times            fellowhelper - 2 times  
 fellowworkers - 1 time            workfellow - 1 time  
 labourer together with - 1 time            companion in labour - 1 time.

John also encouraged the church, and warned of a **'non-receiver'**:

**3 John 1:5-10** Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest  
**to the brethren, and to strangers;**

6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before **the church**: whom if  
 thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for **his name's sake** they went forth,  
 taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 **We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be  
 fellowhelpers (Greek <sunergos>) to the truth.**

9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrophes, who loveth to have the preemi-  
 nence among them, **receiveth us not.**

10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth,  
**prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith,**  
**neither doth he himself receive the brethren,**  
**and forbiddeth them that would,**  
**and casteth them out of the church.**

**Now let's see what God (through Paul) teaches about SEPARATION.**

In Rom 16:1-16, Paul also named some of his kinsmen and fellow-  
 prisoners, who were 'in Christ' before him (Rom 16:7), as well as others  
 who laboured 'in the Lord'. Right after this list of names, Paul wrote:

**Rom 16:17-18** Now I beseech you, brethren,  
**mark them which cause divisions and offences**  
**contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned;**  
**and avoid them.**

18 For they that are such **serve not our Lord Jesus Christ,**  
 but their own belly;  
 and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Next, in 1 Tim 1:9-11, **we get a specific, detailed description ....  
 of 'who' the people are .... that are CONTRARY to the doctrine.**

It is not those who SERVE Christ .... but those who don't serve Him.

('Mid-Acts-ers' use the end of verse 10 with verse 11 to say that Paul had a  
 'unique' gospel given only to him, and if you don't agree with that, then you  
 are contrary to sound doctrine, and should therefore be avoided):

**1 Tim 1:9-11** Knowing this, that the law is not made for  
**a righteous man,**

- but
- for the lawless and disobedient,
  - for the ungodly
  - and for sinners,
  - for unholy and profane,
  - for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers,
  - for manslayers,
  - 10 • For whoremongers,
  - for them that defile themselves with mankind,
  - for menstealers,
  - for liars,
  - for perjured persons,

and **if there be any other thing** (not listed here, but like these things)  
**that is contrary to sound doctrine;**

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God,  
 which was committed to my trust. (Those who are contrary to sound  
 doctrine .... are those who are **UNrighteous**, who are against the gospel.)

God (through Paul) made **the contrast of doctrine ....**

**between SIN and RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

- Those who obey the doctrine are righteous.
- Those who disobey (are contrary to) the doctrine are sinners:

**Rom 6:17-18** But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of **sin**,  
 but **ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine  
 which was delivered you.**

18 Being then made free from **sin**,  
 ye became the servants of **righteousness.**

To be contrary to the doctrine is to stand against the doctrine of GOD .... to  
 refuse the Lord's word and teachings. People who reject the truth of Christ  
 are who we should separate from, not from people who worship God:

**1 Tim 6:1-5** Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own  
 masters worthy of all honour, that **the name of God and his doctrine  
 be not blasphemed.** (also see Titus 2:9-10)

1 Tim 6:) 2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit.

These things teach and exhort.

3 **If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, (the doctrine of Christ) and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;**

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and **destitute of the truth**, supposing that gain is godliness:

**from such withdraw thyself. (that is, separate from them)**

John also shows that the separation is supposed to be from those who refuse GOD's doctrine .... those who deny Jesus Christ .... not separation from other **SAINTS** who **BELIEVE in Christ** (even if they have a different understanding of GOD's doctrine than you or I do):

2 **John 1:7-11** For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 **Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.**

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not **this doctrine, (the doctrine of Christ .... that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh)** receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

When Jesus taught in the temple, He told the Jews who marvelled at His knowledge, that His doctrine was the doctrine of GOD who sent Him.

Anyone willing to obey it, could know it. God would reveal it to them:

**John 7:17** If any man will do his will, **he shall know of the doctrine**, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

The prophet Isaiah wrote of people who were wrong becoming right:

**Isa 29:24** They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,  
and they that murmured **shall learn doctrine.**

Since ALL scripture is profitable for doctrine .... then we would be wise  
to use it ALL. 'Mid-Acts-ers' divide away from everything except Paul:

**2 Tim 3:16 All scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and **is profitable for doctrine**, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

The doctrine of the Lord .... is faith in the Lord. That is what a certain  
sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, tried to prevent a Gentile from having:

**Acts 13:8** But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation)  
withstood them, seeking to **turn away the deputy from the faith.** (Paul  
called him a child of the devil, and an enemy of all righteousness (Acts  
13: 10), and he blinded him (Acts 13: 11) for his subtilty and mischief):

**Acts 13:12** Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, **believed**,  
being astonished at **the doctrine of the Lord.**

God told believers to separate from **unbelievers** --- not from each other:

**2 Cor 6:14-18** Be ye not unequally **yoked together** with **unbelievers**:  
for what **fellowship** hath **righteousness** with **unrighteousness**?  
and what **communion** hath **light** with **darkness**?

15 And what **concord** hath **Christ** with **Belial** (a name of Satan)?  
or what **part** hath **he that believeth** with an **infidel** (unfaithful, unbeliev-  
ing, without trust in God)?

16 And what **agreement** hath **the temple of God** with **idols**?  
for **ye are the temple of the living God**;  
as **God hath said** (in both the old testament and the new),  
**I will dwell in them**, and walk in them;  
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore (because **God dwells-lives in you**)  
come out from among them,

and **be ye separate, saith the Lord**,

and touch not the unclean thing; and **I will receive you**,

18 And will be a Father unto you,  
and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

As saints, we separate from and correct wrong behavior, not be a part of it:

**Eph 5:3-17** But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness,  
**let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;**

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

**7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.**

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, **but now are ye light (not 'mid-Acts' or 'Pauline') in the Lord: walk as children of light:**

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

**11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.**

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and **Christ shall give thee light.**

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise,

but **understanding what the will of the Lord is.**

When Jesus lived on earth among men, He ate and drank with sinners

(Matt 9:10-13, 11:18-19; Luke 15:1-7, 19:1-10) for the purpose of calling

the lost to repentance .... but He did not participate in sin:

**Heb 7:26** For such an high priest became us,

- who is
- holy,
  - harmless,
  - undefiled,
  - **separate from sinners,**
  - and made higher than the heavens;

Peter separated from the wrong group. **He separated himself from BELIEVERS** .... because he was afraid of being an outcast among the Jews, if he was caught associating with who-they-thought were 'unclean' Gentiles. Wrong way, Peter! God had already showed him that the Gentiles were now cleansed (Acts 10:9-16, 11:4-10, 15:6-11). Paul didn't let him slide. Peter set a bad example, and others followed him. But Paul got him for it:

**Gal 2:11** But when Peter was come to Antioch,

**I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.**

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, **he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.**

13 And the other Jews **dissembled** likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was **carried away with their dissimulation.**

14 But when I saw that **they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel (that was, to RECEIVE the Gentiles as brethren .... and NOT separate from them)**, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

If sinners will not listen to our rebuke, they will disassociate with us:

**Luke 6:22** Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and **when they shall separate you from their company**, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

When we shine the light of God on their dark world, if they don't like it .... they will get out of our company .... because they reject the conviction:

**John 3:19-21** And this is the condemnation, that **light is come into the world** (also see John 8:12, 9:5, 12:46; Matt 5:14-16; 1 John 1:5-7), and men loved darkness rather than light, **because their deeds were evil.**

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. (also see John 1:5)

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Unbelievers will separate from believers (also Luke 6:22):

**Jude 1:17-23** But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you there should be **mockers** in the last time, **who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.**

19 **These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.**

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Believers were never to be connected with a crooked, wicked group:

**Acts 2:40** And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

**Psa 1:1** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

'Mid-Acts-ers' think they are the only body of Christ, and that they only have sound doctrine, but saints are to receive each other, faults and all:

**Rom 15:7** Wherefore **receive ye one another,** (also see Rom 14:4) **as Christ also received us** to the glory of God.

Paul described God's children as the children of light .... and so did Jesus:

**1 Thess 5:5** **Ye are all the children of light,** and the children of the day:  
we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

**John 12:36** While ye have light, believe in the light, that **ye may be the children of light.**  
These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

So said Jesus .... so said Paul:

**Phil 2:14-16** Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God,  
without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,  
**among whom ye shine as lights in the world;**

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ,  
that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

Does this list indicate that God .... through PAUL .... is teaching that  
His saints will enjoy a **'PRE-tribulation' rapture** up and away from harm,  
**before** things get 'really' bad ....

or **before 'GREAT' tribulation** (Matt 24:21)?

**Rom 8:35-39** **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| shall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tribulation,</li> <li>• or distress,</li> <li>• or persecution,</li> <li>• or famine,</li> <li>• or nakedness,</li> <li>• or peril,</li> <li>• or sword?</li> </ul> |
|-------|--|

Or is God .... through PAUL .... teaching His saints to **be PREPARED**  
for all kinds of trouble .... even death .... for Christ's sake?

(Rom 8:) 36 **As it is written** (Psa 44:22),  
**For thy sake we are killed** all the day long;  
we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (as was Christ - Isa 53:7,  
Acts 8:32-35) (also see John 16:2, 2 Cor 4:11)

Actually, God has always taught His saints to be willing to DIE for His  
sake .... throughout history

- even back when the Psalms were written,
- even back in Jesus' day on earth,
- even through the New Testament writers.

(Rom 8:) 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (Rom 5:8; 1 John 3:16, 4:9-10)

(also see Eph 2:4-7, 2 Thess 3:5, Tit 3:4-7)

38 **For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,**  
39 **Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,**  
**shall be able to separate us from the love of God,**  
**which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Paul prayed for the saints to know it .... and be full of it:

**Eph 3:19** And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

We can show God's love in us .... by loving one another in Christ ....

not by separating from others on the same team, because they have different views on issues than we have:

**1 John 4:10-11** Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

If you want to 'scripturally' avoid someone because of doctrine ....

then avoid the sinners who spurn it .... not Christians who love the Lord.

Believers ought **TO separate** from unbelievers who refuse God's truth.

Believers are **NOT to separate** from other believers, from saints who have believed the gospel doctrine of God, the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nothing can separate believers from God's love in Christ.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

*This is David Dowell, saying, "Think about it!"*