

The People Have Not Separated Themselves.

by F.B. Meyer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of separation from the world and the need for Christians to prioritize communion with God in order to maintain their distinctiveness.

Scripture: Ezra 9:1, Matthew 5:14-16, John 15:19, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 6:14, Galatians 1:4, Hebrews 13:13, James 4:4, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 2:15-17

Topics: "Spiritual Identity", "Separation from the World"

Description

F.B. Meyer addresses the issue of the Israelites' failure to separate themselves from surrounding nations, highlighting the consequences of intermarriage and the dilution of their holy identity. He reflects on Ezra's deep sorrow over this spiritual compromise, emphasizing that true communion with God brings both comfort and a burden for the world's grief. Meyer warns that as the end of the age approaches, the distinction between the lives of believers and the world is diminishing, urging Christians to maintain their separation and focus on God. He encourages believers to follow Christ's example of engaging with the world while keeping their hearts centered on the Father, even if it leads to social ostracism.

Transcript

The people have not separated themselves. Ezra ix. 1.

THIS was only too true! There had been, on the part of princes and rulers, gross intermarriage with the people of surrounding lands. The holy seed had become mixed and diluted. And it was the more sad that this should have taken place, when it was to cleanse his people from such alliances, and the evils to which they inevitably led, that God had passed them through the purging fires of the seventy years' captivity. It afflicted the good Ezra sorely. With every sign of Oriental grief he poured out his soul before God. And this is the lesson we should carry with us. It has been truly said that communion with the Lord dries many tears, but it starts many more. We no longer sorrow with the sorrow of the world; but we become burdened with some of the griefs that still rend the heart of the Lord in the glory.

This fellowship between the Lord's people and the world is becoming increasingly close as we near the end of the age. In the appointments of our homes, our amusements, books, and practices, there is very little to choose between the one and the other. If there is any distinction, it lies in a certain sadness with which Christians take their pleasures, as though remembering a something better. But the rest of us do not grieve over it; we do not rend our clothes: we do not take these things to heart, as though they specially concerned us.

Let us at least separate ourselves after the manner of Christ, who frequented the temple, acknowledged the State, accepted invitations to great houses; but his heart and speech always revolved about his Father. What if it led to our being cast out without the camp!

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