

Intoxicated With Babylon-Chapter Four

by Steve Gallagher

God's people are called to remain separate from the unsaved world around them, both physically and spiritually, in order to remain spiritually pure and grow in their relationship with God.

Duration: 9:02

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:14, Ephesians 2:1

Topics: "Babylon"

Description

In this sermon transcript, the speaker discusses the negative influence of the world on Christians and emphasizes the importance of separating oneself from worldly values. The speaker highlights the prevalence of immoral content in media and warns against Christians immersing themselves in such influences. The sermon emphasizes the need for an eternal perspective and the long-term goal of God in preparing believers to come out from the world. The ultimate purpose of separating from the world is to be devoted to God and to be part of the bride of Christ, free from any other lovers.

Transcript

The following interview was originally recorded for the Purity for Life radio broadcast. For additional interviews with Steve Gallagher and podcasts of the Purity for Life program, visit our website at purityforlifeministries.org. Steve, as we continue our discussions today on your book, *Intoxicated with Babylon*, in that book, one of the key messages was the need for God's people to separate themselves from the unbelieving world around them. Talk to us first about how that played itself out in the Old Testament times.

One of the great expectations God had of his people in the Old Testament times was that they remain separate from the pagan nations around them, the Canaanites, the Amorites, and so on, because those nations were totally given over to devil worship. But not just that, it was also their lifestyles were very ungodly and carnal. And so the nation of Israel was like an island.

That's the way that Jehovah foresaw it, and that his presence would prevail in that land and amongst that people. And then from there, then they would be able to export that godliness to the heathen nations around them. Okay, how did that change then as we move into the New Testament times? When we come into the New Testament, everything changed at Calvary.

Obviously, Jesus Christ, his death was the sacrifice for man's sin. We no longer had to go through the sacrificial system and all of that. But that did not end God's expectation of his people to be separated unto his purposes.

The difference now would be that instead of them being a people who were physically separated by national borders, now God's people were going to be living amongst the unsaved and yet in their hearts. And this is the great change from the Old Testament to the New. Instead of things being outward, now they were going to be inward.

And so in the New Testament times, God's people were expected to remain separate from the world in their hearts. Now, Steve, so often what we see amongst professing Christians today is that they have made some response to the call of God, and yet they're still living with one foot, as you put it, in the devil's kingdom and trying to live one foot in God's kingdom. What does the Word of God tell us about that? Well, actually, the Greek is very clear on this subject.

It really is, and I'm not sure why it hasn't been brought out more by others. But for instance, the word *hagios*, which is the word we see for saints throughout the New Testament, it literally means separated ones, set-apart ones, holy ones. That's what the word means.

And that's what a believer is supposed to be, a separated one, separated from the unsaved world around them. And then also, not only that, the same concept is transferred to the corporate body of these separated ones. I'm talking about the Greek word for church, which is *ecclesia*.

And that comes from the combining of the two words *ek*, which means out of, and *kleitos*, which means called. So in other words, the church literally means, in the Greek, that term literally means called out ones. So again, this idea is reinforced with that word as well.

Steve, in 2 Corinthians chapter 6, Paul goes into some significant detail about what it really means to live as a separated Christian, and you bring out of that passage three commandments. Let's go through those. I think that'll help folks to understand really what it means to be a separated Christian.

And you start out the first commandment, get out of unequal yokes. Yeah, and this one is one of those things where people get themselves into relationships with unbelievers that really are only going to drain them spiritually and lead them astray. For instance, a young Christian girl marries an unbelieving boyfriend.

Now we all know stories where God has used it for good and the boy ends up getting saved and they live happily ever after. But we should never take one of those exceptions and use it to dismiss the wisdom and even the commandment in God's Word. When he says, do not be unequally yoked, we need to take that commandment seriously.

Steve, how do we reconcile that command with our responsibility to be a witness? I mean, we are, after all, in this world. Yeah, that's a very good point, Mike. We are to be a light to an unbelieving world.

But there's a difference between having a loose association with unbelievers, you know, unbelieving family members and co-workers and so on, where you can live out the Christian life before them and they can see Christ through your life. That's one thing. But to be in close, intimate relationships with unbelievers, that's another matter.

And I think that's the difference between the two. Okay, the second command that you took out of that passage from Paul was your lifestyle must change. The implication there, Mike, is that before they came to Christ, they were part of this ungodly world.

In fact, Paul had written to the Ephesians, you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world. But when we come to Christ, something must change. That's what repentance is all about.

We repent of, we turn away from the devil's kingdom and we now join ourselves with God and His kingdom and we take on a whole new value system and we identify ourselves with the purposes of God. Any part of our lifestyle that still reflects that old worldly mentality must change. Okay, the third command was to decontaminate yourself.

Paul told the Corinthians in this passage, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Again, this is another direct reference to the contaminating influences of this fallen world around us. And you know, the picture of it is in the Old Testament times when you got around a leper's house, let's say you had to go in that house for some reason, and the idea is don't touch anything because you're going to become terribly contaminated.

And it's that same kind of mentality, I believe, that Paul had when he's telling these Greek believers that they need to separate themselves from the ungodly world around them and don't become involved with it because you will be contaminated by it. You know, as you're sharing that, Steve, I mean, what just becomes real to us is that in the church today, we're not hearing this kind of preaching. We're not hearing this kind of message that we have to take these things seriously.

I know, and I believe the reason for that is because so much of the church has already become so immersed in this world, in the pagan culture in which we live. I think for most Christians, the culture is much bigger in their minds and in their hearts than the kingdom of God. But nevertheless, these commandments are still there, you know? For instance, not long ago, I was in a hotel and I watched some television, something I rarely have the opportunity to do and rarely do, but I was just flipping through the channels trying to find a decent channel, something like the History Channel or whatever.

And just in one go round through the channels, I saw just unbelievable things. And what occurred to me later was this is what Christians are immersing themselves with every night, practically. They are contaminating themselves with the immoral values of this world.

And let's not forget, Satan is called the prince of this world. I think one of the things that was very encouraging to me, Steve, in reading this chapter and that I think will help folks to understand the long-term goal of God wanting us to come out from this world is that we really need to have an eternal perspective because we do have a home that we're going to. There is a reason God is wanting to prepare us in this way.

Yeah, I mean, it sounds like a totally negative message that we're talking about, but there is a purpose behind it. The purpose is to separate ourselves from the world. For what? For God.

Because he is calling a people out unto himself. Jesus is calling a bride out to himself. And he's not going to have a bride with other lovers.

And the eternal ramifications of that love affair are just so astounding, they're beyond our comprehension. Steve Gallagher, thanks for talking to us about God's call to come out. Amen.

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