

## Set Apart for God's Purposes



Gary Wilkerson July 13, 2020

When the lost souls of this world face serious life crises and have no source of hope, Christ's church is meant to embody the difference they are looking for. Our lives are to be distinguished by hope, joy, peace, love and giving. But a lot of followers today have erased those distinctions by creeping toward a line of compromise and even crossing it. As a result, the lost and hurting see Christians' lives as no different from their own.

Jesus addressed this when he said to his disciples, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ... Peace I leave with you; my peace, I give to you" (John 14:23, 27). Jesus essentially stated, "You've seen that the peace I offer isn't received by the world. I've demonstrated to you the values of my kingdom — how to live, believe, walk and serve the Father. Those values are in stark contrast to the world's and you are to live out my kingdom values."

When God speaks of separating from the world, he doesn't mean removing ourselves from it. The separation he desires takes place in the heart. It happens through revelation of God — and his glory remains with us even in our hard times.

When the prophet Isaiah entered the temple, he saw the glory of God: "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of his robe filled the temple" (Isaiah 6:1). That holy sight sent Isaiah face down on the floor in humble awe and he said, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (6:5).

At that moment Isaiah recognized God's separateness and the Lord told him, "I have separated you for my holy purposes. I am sending you to preach my word to a corrupt people who will resist you, but you'll be able to endure it because you have seen my glory. You have seen the nature of the God who has called you."

The beauty of our God is paradoxical: holy and pure yet intimate and caring. He is above us and with us — and he gives us peace we could never find on our own. He is a God worthy of our confidence in and through all things!

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