

CHRISTIANS MUST SEPARATE FROM THOSE WHO ARE INTENTIONALLY DISOBEDIENT (II Thes. 3:6-13). The Spirit of God specifically commands that there be no toleration for those who conduct themselves in a manner contrary to the “traditions” given to the church. Verse 10 helps us to understand that the “traditions” referenced here specifically means the Word of God. Christians are to avoid association with those who call themselves Christians but walk contrary to the clear authority of the Bible.

I Corinthians 16:13-14 provides a convicting challenge for those who would practice ethical separation in our day and age. Note here we see:

1. The Separatist’s Vigilance – “Watch ye!” Those who are serious about the doctrines of sanctification and personal separation cannot help but be alarmed at the drift toward worldliness in many churches.
 - Watch out for worldly music (Eph. 5:18).
 - Watch out for worldly movies (Phil. 4:8).
 - Watch out for worldly morals (Prov. 4:23).
 - Watch out for worldly mixes (Prov. 20:1; Prov. 23:31).
 - Watch out for worldly motives (Luke 12:15).
2. The Separatist’s Veracity - “Stand fast in the faith.”
 - Our preaching must be true to God’s Word (II Tim. 4:1-2)
 - Our prophetic understanding must be true to God’s Word (I Thes. 4-5).
3. The Separatist’s Valor – “Quit you like men!” We must not put down our weapons in the spiritual warfare. We must not be tricked into a false peace with the enemies of truth. We must be willing to mark them (Rom. 16:17) and to rebuke them (Titus 1:13).
4. The Separatist’s Vigor – “Be strong!” The believer’s strength will come from being in the Word (John 17:17).
5. The Separatist’s Virtue – “Let all your things be done with love!” Our duty is to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).



CONNECTING TO COLONIAL'S CORE
Our Walk - 5

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SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

Just as a family is known by its common characteristics, so to, a church family is identified by its distinctive character traits. Since its founding in 1957, Colonial Hills Baptist Church has been well-known for certain Core Values. There are values that mark the worship (public practice) and the walk (private practice) of our church. These values make up our DNA (Distinctively Non-Negotiable Attributes). Let’s take the time to review our Core Values.

COLONIAL’S PRACTICE

Our Worship – The DNA of our Corporate Assembly.

1. Scripture-saturated, Savior-centered Preaching
Jn. 17:17.
2. Soul-stirring Singing that Glorifies God – Col. 3:16.
3. Supplication before the Throne of Grace – Matt. 21:13.
4. Sacrificial Giving – I Cor. 16:2.
5. Sharing Communion – I Cor. 11:24.

Our Walk – The DNA of our Individual Activity.

1. Studying the Scriptures – II Tim. 2:15.
2. Speaking the Gospel – Rom. 1:16.
3. Serving with Excellence – Rom. 12:11.
4. Sweetness in Fellowship – I John 4:7
5. Separated from the World – I John 2:15-17.

Members of Colonial Hills Baptist Church bind themselves in a Covenant relationship (See Church Covenant, Colonial Hills Baptist Church, adopted March, 1958). Of the many promises within the Covenant is this, “To walk circumspectly in the world.” The only way to fulfill this promise is practice separation from the world.

CONNECTING

The doctrine of separation has fallen on hard times. In 1992, Charles Colson wrote an article in *Christianity Today*, entitled, *Welcome to McChurch*. Colson observed, “What many are looking for is a spiritual social club, an institution that offers convivial relationships but avoids influencing people on how they live or what they believe. Whenever the church does assert a historically orthodox position, one that might in some way restrict an individual’s doing whatever he or she chooses, the church is accused of being “out of touch” – as if its beliefs are to be determined by majority vote or by market surveys. Spiritual consumers are interested not in what the church stands for but in the fulfillment it can deliver.” (*Christianity Today*, 11/23/92)

When a church speaks today of separation, it is immediately branded as “legalistic.” Fewer and fewer churches are willing to endure the heat that comes with the legalistic brand and so general statements have replaced specific statements. Church leadership standards which once specifically prohibited drinking or smoking have been replaced by nonspecific statements about doing “all things to the glory of God.”

In August of 1887, Charles Spurgeon lamented, “At the back of doctrinal falsehood comes a natural decline of spiritual life, evidenced by a taste for questionable amusements, and a weariness of devotional meetings. . . . Many would like to unite church and stage, cards and prayer, dancing and sacraments. If we are powerless to stem this torrent, we can at least warn men of its existence, and entreat them to come out of it. When the old faith is gone, and enthusiasm for the gospel is extinct, it is no wonder that people seek something else in the way of delight. Lacking bread they feed on ashes; rejecting the way of the Lord, they run greedily in the path of folly” (*The Sword and the Trowel*).

A separatist is someone who will willingly say, “No,” to unbiblical and worldly alliances and practices in order to obediently say, “Yes,” to God’s directives. The primary allegiance of the separatists is to the Word of God (Is. 5:20; James 1:27). Separatists are motivated to live obediently because they love the Lord Jesus Christ (John 15:10).

Everyone is a separatist. Separatism is not a 21st century phenomenon restricted to certain denominations and sects. The New Testament and the history of the church is a history of separation. For instance, John the Baptist was a separatist. John separated from the Pharisees and Sadducees and confronted their error (Matt. 3:7-12). Jesus Christ separated from the religious leaders of His day (John 7:1). Paul separated from Judaism. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and Huss all separated from Roman Catholicism. During the last century, evangelical-fundamentalist separated from modernists who denied the inspiration and authority of the Bible.

