

Engaged but not Entangled

14 - 2 Peter: A Blazing Faith

Sunday, 21 July 2013 | Church on the Park

Text: 2 Peter 2:4-10

Theme: It's easy for Christians to either disengage this world or be entangled in it because of its wickedness. But, God has a purpose for us being here.

Intro: Last week we looked at the introduction to Peter's warning about false teachers and false prophets. This week we will see that God makes a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked—the wicked will be destroyed and the righteous will be delivered.

1) Throughout Scripture God makes a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between light and darkness (2 Pet. 2:4-9, *cf. Ps 1:4-6)

- This passage shows us that in the beginning God **separated** the faithful angels from the unfaithful. He **separated** Noah and his family, as well as Lot and his family.
- We read about **Noah** in **Genesis 6:5-14, 22**
 - Noah in the Bible movie (Phil. 1:18)
 - Peter brings out something unique about the story of Noah—he was a **preacher of righteousness**.
 - And yet, he was only able to **win his family**—no one believed him
 - That's the type of devotion we need to have to God: **faithfulness** no matter what the **majority** (the world) is doing. (**Micaiah's** faithfulness)
 - **Success** is not **numbers** but **obedience**
 - Eventually, they had the **numbers**; they **repopulated** the world.
 - But there was a season of time when they looked like a **Frangipane Tree**, bare and empty.
 - The **desire** to be **liked** can be a trap
 - The Bible **begins** by separating **light** and **darkness** (Gen. 1:1-3). The Old Testament ends by showing that God will separate light and darkness (**Mal. 3:16-18**). **Jesus** began his ministry making a distinction between light and darkness in the sermon on the mount. And ultimately, the Bible **ends** with God separating light and darkness (Rev. 20).

Why does God have us in this world, a world full of warfare (spiritual and natural), sin and pain? Why didn't he just get everything over with during Noah's time?

2) We have been chosen by God to be a light in the darkness (2 Pet. 2:4-10, *cf. Acts 26:18)

- We know for certain (through Scripture) that the whole world in our age will not be saved. We are here to testify about God's salvation to the some that will listen.

- “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to **perish** but for **all** to come to **repentance**.” (2 Pet. 3:9)
 - This world is an **opportunity**—a **space** of God’s grace and mercy for people to repent and turn to him.
 - In the end, there will be a **massive harvest** of people from all nations worshipping the Lamb (**Rev. 7:9-10**).
 - We are in this world to lead people to repentance
- God’s people have always been a **minority**.
 - Noah was **outnumbered**. Lot was outnumbered. The apostles were outnumbered. In the last great tribulation, we see the antichrist overpowering the saints.
- ***Daniel 12:2-3:** “Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”
- **We are in this world to be a light in the darkness.**
 - **“In it but not of it.”** Engaged in it but different from it. An improvement on the statement: **“Engaged but not Entangled.”** It’s very easy for believers to disengage with the world; disengagement is not love. (***The ice rescue***)
 - In my early days of salvation I withdrew too much from the world.
 - It takes **wisdom** to lead people to righteousness, to win their souls.
 - In Scripture wisdom is **connected** with **creativity**. In order for us to win souls we need to be **creative**. False teaching will often **crush creativity**.
 - **Exo. 31:1-5 - Bezalel**
 - If God’s people fail to be creative, the harvest will die in the fields.

Why does God have us in this world?

3) God has us in this world to test us. To see who is genuine and who is real.

- He’s been doing this since the beginning. Look at the **garden** (Gen. 3)
- God **allows false teaching** and teachers to see if our hearts are true
 - *Would we rather get truth from the source, God’s Word, or take a short cut and let other people tell us the knowledge of good and evil.*
- **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** - “Who can I give the chocolate factory to?”
- God will separate the light from the darkness
- He is raising up judges and leaders for **the age to come**.
- **Judges 3:1-4** - The enemy was left to test the **Israelites**
- **Vanity Fair** in Pilgrim’s Progress (pg 94, old edition)
 - “Then I saw in my dream, that when they were got out of the wilderness, they presently saw a town before them, and the name of that town is Vanity; and at that town is a fair kept, called Vanity Fair.”
 - All pilgrims have to go through this town; it was erected by the enemy thousands of years ago.

4) We are in this world to be trained—equipped for ministry in this life and the one to come.

- Judges 3:1-4
- Peter gives us insight into **Lot's inner tensions**.
 - The things of this world should **distress** us like Lot.
 - The world tries to get us to feel **comfortable** with sin.
 - Look at **Paul in Athens** (Acts 17:16)
 - We should never become comfortable with this world

5) In the midst of the falsehood and sin of this world and religion, we have a great hope: God still knows how to deliver his people. (2 Pet. 2:7-9)

- God still knows how to **deliver** his people
 - **Psalm 18:18-19**
 - In this life we will experience God's continual deliverance, because we need it.
- God delivered Noah and Lot, God will deliver us
 - from what? wicked men, false teachers, sin, temptation, spiritual forces of darkness
- **Jesus' return** is our **ultimate deliverance**

Conclusion: God has us in the world for a purpose: first, to be a light; second, to test us; lastly, to train us. While here he wants us to be engaged in the world but not entangled by it. Ultimately, he will deliver us from the spirit of this age.

END NOTES

God's people have always been a minority in the world, they have always been the underdog.

Just as God separated the light and darkness in day one, he continually separates God's people of light from the darkness.

God knows how to deliver his people.

The time before deliverance is the testing time. God is testing the heart and actions—seeing if we are genuine. Our real reward is in the life to come.

The righteous are distressed by lawlessness.

- The world tries to make sin feel comfortable
- It tries to get us accustomed to sin
- Paul when he went into Athens and saw the idols
- Ask the Lord to make you distressed by the things that distress him

The nature of unrighteousness

- Follows the flesh rather than the Holy Spirit
- Despises authority rather than submits to Jesus as Lord

- Makes up fabric rated stories and myths rather than trusting in the reliability of Scripture

God is testing us to see who is fit for the Kingdom to come.

We need to get used to being different and be unashamed of holiness and righteousness.