

The Church "People"

Ephesians 2:13

A lot of members are like wheelbarrows -- not good unless pushed.

Some are like canoes -- need to be paddled.

Some are like kites -- if a string isn't kept on them, they fly away.

Some are like kittens -- more contented when petted.

Some are like balloons -- full of wind and ready to blow up.

Some are like footballs -- you can't tell which way they'll bounce next.

Some are like trailers -- they have to be pulled.

Some are like neon lights -- they keep going on and off.

Many, thank goodness, are like the North Star -- there when you need them, dependable and ever loyal."

This may be humorous, but what about "the church people?" What should they be like?

This message deals with our standing with God as a church. The people of the church must meet these requirements or else the church is not made up of the right kind of people.

The points of this message deal with our standing, not our practice. Each of these points could be expounded to show how we are to live, but the point of this verse is not so much Christian living as it is Christian standing with God. If our position in Christ is right, then our position in the "church" is right.

Each of these points gives us a specific action that

was accomplished when we were saved, and it also shows us a continued action during our Christian life. The problem with "the church people" is that they may have the first point down, but do not understand the others.

It is my goal today to give us some instruction on just what God expects "the church people" to be.

I. SAVED - "BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS YE"

A. Saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. The word for "in" means to be at rest. It was because of what He did, without any merit of our own, that we can be saved, that we can be "at rest" with God.

The first two words are in contrast to verse 12 where it says, "at that time." When we got saved our position changed and we were no longer spoken of in the past but spoken of in the present, for now our future is secured.

[Acts 15:11](#)

¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

[Ephesians 2:5](#)

⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

[Ephesians 2:8](#)

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

[2 Timothy 1:9](#)

⁹ Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but

according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

B. Salvation is for all - Jew and Gentile - seen in the word "Christ." This word is referring to the Messiah coming in the person of Jesus. Thus, He came for the Jew first, but since they rejected Him, He came to the Gentile as well. This is seen in the fact that He was crucified outside of the walls of Jerusalem.

This whole passage (ch. 2) is referring to all, no matter who they are, being one in Christ. If salvation is only for the Jew, or for one particular race or color, then salvation is not for all, therefore, salvation is for no one.

[John 1:11-13](#)

¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

[Romans 1:16](#)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

[Galatians 3:28](#)

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

C. Salvation is personal - "ye"

Although plural, the word "ye" following "Jesus" shows it is a personal salvation. "Jesus" was His earthly name, but also the name of our Saviour. The word "ye" puts that Saviour, Jesus, as ours, personally.

II. SEPARATED - "WHO SOMETIMES WERE FAR OFF ARE MADE NIGH"

This is what we call at times "primary separation" - that separation that inevitably comes with salvation. We have no choice in it - we are changed, therefore separated - 2 Cor. 5:17. This passage is not speaking of separation from others who don't believe like we do ("secondary separation"), nor specifically is it in reference of our separation from any particular worldly practice. It is speaking of what happened when we were saved. We were taken from being "far off" and placed "nigh" unto God. Again, this happened through no amount of effort on our part. We were "made" - created, formed - nigh. Just as we had no say in our original formation at birth, we have no say in our second birth. With all that in mind, it is a natural occurrence for us to practice separation from worldly practice for in so doing we signify we are separated.

A. Those that are "far off", in this passage, are the Gentiles. Spiritually speaking, it is anyone who is without Christ, the lost. When we got saved, we were "separated" from the world by spiritual death to that world and life unto Jesus Christ - Rom. 6-7.

Psalm 73:27

²⁷ For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a

whoring from thee.

Acts 2:38-39

³⁸ Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

³⁹ For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Romans 15:12

¹² And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

B. The words "far off" indicate our position outside of Christ. We knew we needed something, we needed to change our position, but without Christ, and God's grace, we could not change our position. We remained "far off" because of sin, and until we accepted God's payment for sin we could not "draw near."

Hebrews 10:22

²² Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

C. We can be thankful for the last part of this phrase - "are made nigh." If it weren't for the blood of Christ shed for our sins on the cross, and God's gift of grace, calling us to believe, we would still be "far off," never able to get close enough to get saved.

John 6:44

⁴⁴ No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

III. SANCTIFIED - "BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST" - HEBREWS 10:1-25; ROM. 12:1-2

The word "sanctified" means to be set apart for God. In this teaching of sanctification there seems to be three stages, each one being possible because of the blood of Christ being shed for our sins on the cross.

It is not my point to teach everything there is to know about the believer's sanctification in this message for time does not permit. The purpose is to show that "the church people" are not only to be saved from sin, separated through death to the world, but sanctified in life - set apart for God and His will.

A. Initial, or past, stage - happened when we got saved. This is something we have no control over. It is finished action in time past.

1 Corinthians 1:2

² Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

B. Progressive stage - this is in contrast to initial sanctification - we do have a part in this stage for this is what happens when we grow in the Lord.

2 Corinthians 7:1

¹ Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all

filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 3:18

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Ephesians 4:11–15

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

1 Thessalonians 3:12

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

1 Thessalonians 4:1

1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

C. Final stage - this will take place at the coming of our Lord to take us home to be with Him.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

¹² And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

¹³ To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

Philippians 3:12-13

¹² Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

¹³ Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

1 Thessalonians 5:23

²³ And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:2

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Conclusion: Are you the kind of "people" God wants in a church? Are you saved, separated, and sanctified?

If you are saved you are also separated and sanctified, but there are also some things that God

wants us to do and those are to continue the separation that began with our salvation and to continue the sanctification that began with our salvation. In other words, God wants us to grow and to learn and to obey His Word.