

1889 - Study Guide #14 – A Peculiar People

That the followers of Christ should be a peculiar people, not following the maxims, nor conforming to the ways, of the world; not loving its pleasures nor countenancing its follies; inasmuch as the apostle says that "whosoever therefore will be" in this sense, "a friend of the world, is the enemy of God" (James 4:4); and Christ says that we cannot have two masters, or, at the same time, serve God and mammon. Matt. 6:24..

1. That the followers of Christ should be a peculiar people

• 1828 Noah Webster

Peculiar - Belonging to a nation, system or other thing, and not to others.

The definition which fits our context is stated above. To be peculiar is to have laws, ways, deportment, pleasures, business management, etc. that are particular in this case to your own people. It will be different from the rest of the people around you.

Exodus 19:5 “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:”

Deuteronomy 14:2 “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.”

Deuteronomy 26:18 “And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments;”

Psalms 135:4 “For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.”

Titus 2:14 “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

1 Peter 2:9 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

Thought Question(s):

1. What is it that will make us a peculiar people?
2. According to the definition of “peculiar” as well as the verses quoted, if we want to be classed as among that people, would it necessitate being a part of a church, or community of believers?
3. According to the first epistle of Peter, what is the purpose of the followers of Christ being peculiar?

2. not following the maxims, nor conforming to the ways, of the world;

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Maxim - An established principle or proposition; a principle generally received or admitted as true.

Maxims

Colosians 2:8 “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments {principles} of the world, and not after Christ.”

• What are the types of things that are of this world?

Its Kingdoms

Luke 4:5 “And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the *kingdoms* of the world in a moment of time.”

John 18:36 “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.”

Not just evil things, but common things

Luke 12:29, 30 “²⁹And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. ³⁰For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.”

1Corinthians 7:34 “There is difference [also] between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please [her] husband.”

Cares

Matthew 13:22 “He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the *care* of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”

Way of thinking

Romans 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

1Corinthians 1:21 “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

1Corinthians 3:19 “For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.”

Attitude/affections/spirit

1Corinthians 2:12 “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.”

Behavior

2Corinthians 1:12 “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation (behavior) in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.”

Corruption, lust, pride

2Peter 1:4 “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

James 1:27 “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

1John 2:15 “¹⁵Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

Its speech

1John 4:5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

The whole world

Matthew 16:26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Psalms 17:14 “... from men of the world, [which have] their portion in [this] life, ...“

Thought Question(s):

1. What are some of the “rudiments” or principles of the world that you can think of?
2. What are some examples of thinking like the world vs thinking like a Christian, or the wisdom of the world vs the wisdom of Christ?
3. Why are even the non evil things, the necessary things said to be “of the world”? Does that mean we should not eat, work, wear clothes, or get married?

• A peculiar people will excite the hatred of the world, but Jesus promises peace

John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

• A peculiar people will be lights in a dark world

Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

3. not loving its pleasures nor countenancing its follies;

2Timothy 3:1-4 ¹This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ²For men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... ⁴Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

Psalms 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence [is] fulness of joy; at thy right hand [there are] pleasures for evermore.

Moses was an example of how we should be.

Hebrews 11:24, 25 ²⁴“By faith Moses, ... ²⁵Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;”

Thought Question(s):

1. What kind of pleasure is wrong, and why?
2. How does the pleasure we can receive from God differ from the pleasure of the world?

4. inasmuch as the apostle says that "whosoever therefore will be" in this sense, "a friend of the world, is the enemy of God" (James 4:4); and Christ says that we cannot have two masters, or, at the same time, serve God and mammon. Matt. 6:24..

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Friend - One who is attached to another by affection; one who entertains for another sentiments of esteem, respect and affection, which lead him to desire his company, and to seek to promote his happiness and prosperity; opposed to foe or enemy.

James 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

Friendship of the world is to esteem it, have affection for it, desire its company.

Matthew 6:19-25 ¹⁹Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. ²²The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. ²³But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great [is] that darkness! ²⁴No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. ²⁵Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?”

Matthew 6:31-33 ³¹Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we

drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ³²(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. ³³But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Thought Question(s):

1. Do you enjoy or desire the things of the world?
2. Which master will you choose?