**A Peculiar People**

Titus 2:13-14

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# I. Introduction:

1. The Bible tells us Christians, God’s people, are different!

2. 2 In Titus chapter two the apostle Paul informed the young preacher Titus that the Lord purchased for Himself *“a peculiar people zealous of good works.”*

*“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;* ***14*** *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good work.”* (Titus 2:13-14)

3. 3 Peter, through inspiration, expresses the same idea in 1 Peter 2:9-10: *“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:* ***10*** *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”*

4. I think it is significant that both of these writers, guided by the Holy Spirit, called God’s people *“peculiar.”*

A. The word *“peculiar”* does not mean we are odd, unusual, or different from people in general.

B. To some degree we are *“peculiar”* in dress and adornment, but that in and of itself does not distinguish us from most people of the world (e.g., Amish, Mennonites).

C. The basic idea of the word *“peculiar”* is perhaps best expressed in the *American Standard Version* where Peter said Christians are *“a people for (God's) own possession.”*

D. That’s the concept we’re talking about—individuals who’ve become Christians become God’s people, His own possession.

E. In other words, maybe you’re driving down a country road and you come to a sign that says, “Private Property.” That’s the basic idea of the word *“peculiar”*—they’re God’s private property.

F. And I want us to understand and understand well that as the Bible describes and discusses a *“peculiar”* people that it’s discussing a people that are *private property*—folks who belong to God (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

5. The next time you hear somebody say *“I’ll just do as I please!”* you might as well mark it down that this person is not a *“peculiar”* person as described on the pages of the Bible, the word of God!

6. Christians as God’s *“peculiar”* people are different from people of the world not just because God has acquired them as His possession, as His people. But also, because of certain *characteristics* God requires His people to possess.

7. So for the few minutes we’ve allotted tonight for the lesson let’s talk about a few God-required *characteristics* that separate Christians from people of the world and therefore make us *“peculiar.”*

# II. Discussion:

1. 4 **You Have Answered God’s Call** (1 Pet. 2:10; 2 Thess. 2:13-14)

A. The very meaning of the word *“called”* carries with it the idea of being different than those who have not answered God’s call (Matt. 22:14; Lk. 8:11-15).

B. The word *“church”* (74 times in NKJ-NT) comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* (compound word: *ek* = out of; and *kaleo* = to call). The church then consists of those individuals who have answered the call of the gospel (Col. 1:13; Acts 2:47). The word *“translated”* means to be changed—for example, like you would translate a book from one language (e.g., Spanish) into another (e.g., English); the individual is *transformed* from one state (in the world, lost) to another (in Christ, saved).

C. Similar thoughts are expressed when the Bible calls Christians by the word *“saint.”*

(1) It is the idea of being *“sanctified”* or *“set apart”* for a special purpose (Eph. 5:3)

(2) He didn’t say don’t do these things “very much,” he said *“let it not be once named among you”*!

(3) That certainly makes one *“peculiar”* in the eyes of the world! 1 Peter 4:4

D. God’s people are *“peculiar”* because they have answered the *“call”* to live in a different “state” than people of the world! They compose the church, they’re the “called out” and they’ve been *“bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”*

E. It takes a lot of courage and dedication to live this *“peculiar”* life when the majority don’t and ridicule and ostracize those who do.

(1) Anybody can float downstream with the tide following the ways of the world; it requires no effort, it takes no sacrifice.

(2) But, it takes a lot of courage, determination and enthusiasm to buck the conventions of the world and be *“peculiar”* \*(Isa. 51:7-8).

2. 5 **You Are Different From the World**

A. We’ve already established that when we answer God’s call to become a Christian we “change” (Rom. 12:1-2).

B. We are not the same people we were before! Eph. 2:11-13 6 (note contrasts):

*“without Christ” 🡪 “in Christ”*

*“aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” 🡪 “translated into the kingdom of His dear Son”*

*“strangers from the covenants of promise” 🡪 “no longer strangers and foreigners”*

*“having no hope” 🡪 “hope we have as an anchor of the soul”*

*“without God in the world” 🡪 “but are now the people of God”*

*“once were afar off” 🡪 “brought near by the blood of Christ”*

C. In view of what God does for us; what should be our *“reasonable service”* (from Greek *logikos*)? To *“present our bodies a living sacrifice”*! To *“glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”*

3. 7 **You Have No Desire For Revenge**

A. It’s not an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, because Christians are *peculiar* when it comes to “getting back”! Romans 12:17-21 It’s not: *“I don’t get mad I get even!”*

B. If as Christians we haven’t gotten that out of our system we need to do so because God requires us to be *“peculiar”* in regards to vengeance!

(1) We are God’s people! We are peculiar! We are at the top of the ladder! The cream of the crop! We must stand head and shoulders above the crowd and set the good example! Matt. 5:38-41

(2) Husband and wife were having some difficulties so the preacher came over to help them settle their problem.

(a) He read Rom. 12:19-21 to them.

(b) He then told the wife: *“Now what you need to do is to realize that the Bible says that you need to be good to him and by doing that you can heap coals of fire on his head.”*

(c) She shot back: *“I don’t think that will work. I’ve already tried hot grease!”*

(3) That typifies the attitude of most about these matters: We just take matters into our own hands despite the Lord’s requirement for His *“peculiar”* people.

(4) He didn’t mention hot grease; He didn’t even mention literal fire; He’s says we are to overcome evil with good; by doing so the Lord’s people are *“peculiar”* and leave vengeance to the Lord! I need to learn that and learn that well! Romans 12:14 *“Revenge does more harm than the original injury.”*

4. 8 **Pleasers of God**

A. Formerly we sought only to please ourselves, but when we become *“peculiar”* people we seek only to please God.

(1) It’s like the song says, *“all of self and none of Thee”* must give way to *“none of self and all of Thee.”*

(2) Selfishness is our natural inclination.

(a) Consider children: “This is my toy and you’re not going to play with it. It’s mine!”

(b) We as parents work on that quite a bit and teach them to share.

(c) But do we get it ourselves as adults?! Rom. 15:3; Eph. 5:8-12

(3) So, who am I to think I can just go around pleasing myself at the expense of others? That doesn’t make me a *“peculiar”* person! It makes me like the majority!

(4) Remember: We are “Private Property”! We are *“not our own”*! Phil. 2:3-4

B. Col. 1:9-10: It would be a tremendous thing if we could all put that into action all the time!

(1) When we read Scripture or when we point out what the Bible teaches many say (explicitly or implicitly), *“Well, we understand what that means but we like to do things our way.”*

(2) That’s not walking *“worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing”*!

(3) We are not acting as *“peculiar”* people when we don’t seek to please God in everything!

(a) It negates our service to Him! 1 Jn. 2:3-4; Lk. 6:46

(b) It hinders our prayers! 1 Jn. 3:22

5. 9 **How You Treat Others**

A. How do people of the world treat others? Mean, nasty, discourteous, cheat, lie, etc.

(1) That’s not *“peculiar”* behavior; that’s “typical” behavior.

(2) I hate dealing with people of the world, because that is what you expect to receive. When you don’t, it’s refreshing and rare! (U-Haul return)

B. Christians, as *“peculiar”* people have no business being ugly and rude to others! Matt. 7:12; Eph. 4:32; Phil. 2:3-4

C. Just think how great the world would be if everyone put those principles into practice at all times!

(1) I’ve found over the years that you can disarm people from a lot of negativity and get a lot further by “being nice” than by being “ugly.”

(2) “Being nice” doesn’t always work, but it certainly is how we should act if we are truly *“peculiar”* people.

6. 10 **How You Talk**

A. You can really tell if a fellow is different or not by how he talks.

(1) Not talking about different languages (English, Spanish, German), nor different accents (southern, eastern, northern, etc.).

(2) It’s all about the words we use to express ourselves and “how” we say things (body language, facial expressions).

B. I’m amazed at how much our language has deteriorated over the past several years.

(1) Language that used to be considered “gutter” talk is now common, tolerated, even celebrated and sadly piped into our homes via TV, radio, and the internet (recall *Gone With the Wind*?).

(2) When I was a boy I would have received a “whippin” if I said (or implied) some of the things said on TV today!

C. The Christian, however, is different.

(1) You shouldn’t hear him/her taking the Lord’s name in vain even when he/she hits the thumb instead of the nail.

(2) The saint doesn’t cuss or tell dirty jokes (even double entendre!), gossip, or listen to gossip.

(3) Because he/she is different! *“peculiar”*! It’s not easy! Jas. 3:2-12 But it must show in our speech! Col. 4:6; Eph. 4:29-31

7. 11 **Where You Go**

A. You can tell a lot about a person by the places he goes, or doesn’t go.

(1) Some might say, *“It’s nobody’s business where I go. I’ll go where I want to and when I want to!”*

(2) If that’s your attitude then I already know a lot about your character. You certainly don’t understand what the word *“peculiar”* means.

B. A *“peculiar”* person will not frequent places where evil and ungodliness goes on: bars, casinos, dance halls, etc. Proverbs 1:10ff; 1 Pet. 4:4

(1) He won’t accept invitations to places where he’ll be tempted to do wrong or damage his influence (Prov. 27:8; working for universities—open, cash bar).

(2) Why? Because he’s different! He’s *“peculiar”*!

(3) Instead you’ll find him at Bible study; at church services; he’ll be about his work as a Christian wherever he goes (Psa. 84:10).

(4) We need to stand up and make it crystal clear there are places we will not go! I urge young people to learn that lesson as early in life as possible. Because you’ll have learned a lesson that you can’t buy with money. It’s priceless! It makes you God’s private property!

8. 12 **What You Read**

A. Another checkpoint to see whether or not you’re *“peculiar”* is by what you read. Someone might say, *“It doesn’t matter what you read. Anyway it’s none of your business and it’s none of God’s business!”*

(1) I beg to differ! Proverbs 23:7

(2) GIGO!

(3) Vice versa, put good stuff in and good stuff will come out! It really matters!

B. Many people guilty of crimes were ready filthy material before they committed the crime (e.g., Ted Bundy was a habitual reader of pornography).

C. Once you get these images in your mind you can’t get them out (Matt. 6:22-23; 15:18-19).

(1) I’ve read that pornography can be more addictive than crack cocaine!

(2) There are thousands of porn books and magazines produced in the U.S. each year; I can remember when I was a youth that it was very rare to find even a *Playboy* magazine.

(3) In my youth you couldn’t buy a *Playboy* or *Penthouse* at the newsstand or drug store, now they are right out in the open!

(4) Google: “porn books” (731,000,000 hits); “righteousness books” (7,190,000 hits).

(5) But there is a lot of other material (non-pornographic) that can be detrimental to our spiritual health (e.g., romance novels, political web sites, etc.).

D. Remember Prov. 23:7? Then if we hope to remain *“peculiar”* we must put Prov. 4:23 into practice when it comes to what we read. Don’t play with fire thinking you’ll not be burned!

9. 13 **What You Watch**

A. Another checkpoint to see whether or not you’re “peculiar” is by what watch. Someone might say, *“It doesn’t matter what you watch. Anyway it’s none of you or God’s business what I watch!”*

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(1) \*Google: “porn videos” (845, 000,000 hits); “righteousness videos” (2,810,000 hits).

(2) I’ve read that pornography can be more addictive than crack cocaine!

(3) There are thousands of porn books and magazines produced in the U.S. each year; I can remember when I was a youth that it was very rare to find even a *Playboy* magazine.

(4) The cumulative effect is what some call the “pornification” of our culture; can anybody say “Madonna,” or “Miley Cyris”?

(5) But there is a lot of other material (non-pornographic) that can be detrimental to our spiritual health (e.g., romance novels, political web sites, etc.).

D. According to Nielsen, Americans average 34 hours per week watching TV! I’m not opposed to television, but even watching “wholesome” TV program can be problematic if we do so at the expense of things like Bible study!

E. Remember Prov. 23:7? Then if we hope to remain *“peculiar”* we must put Prov. 4:23 into practice when it comes to what we watch. Don’t play with fire thinking you’ll not be burned!

10. 14 **Who You Are With**

A. But not only what we read and watch, but who we are with is important. Someone will say, *“I’ll go where I want to and with whom I want to!”* That’s certainly your right to do that, but it indicates you are not a *“peculiar”* person in the biblical sense.

B. Who you “run with” has a tremendous influence on you! Prov. 24:1; 1 Cor. 15:33

C. If there was only one piece of advice I was allowed to tell parents it would be: “Find out who your kid’s friends and associates are and what kind of people they are.” (my youth!)

D. “Birds of a feather, flock together.” Light attracts light, doesn’t it? We shouldn’t desire to associate with anyone on a regular basis who cannot edify us and help us get to heaven! 2 Cor. 6:14

11. 15 **Who You Are**

A. A final checkpoint we can use to tell whether or not we are *“peculiar”* is by “Who You Are.”

B. “Character counts” as they say; it’s not just a cliché it’s the honest to God truth! It has always mystified me that most people of the world preach the need for “good character,” but most don’t follow after it or really try to cultivate it in their children! Neighbor’s kids (Michael & Christin)

C. The Lord described the Pharisees when He said, *“For they say and do not.”* (Matt. 23:3). I think that’s called being a “hypocrite”!

(1) We can’t be that way and expect to be *“peculiar.”*

(2) We’ve got to be people who ***say*** AND ***do***!

(3) Such character will separate us from 99% of the people in this world and sadly many of the people who claim to be Christians!

D. *“Peculiar”* people are not *“…conformed to this world, but [are] transformed by the renewing of your mind”* (Rom. 12:2).

E. Therefore they stand out from the crowd because of *who they have become*. Do you stand out for the right reason? 1 Cor. 11:1

# III. Conclusion:

1. 16 Only *“peculiar”* people who remain *“peculiar”* will be saved!

2. Are you *“peculiar”* for the right reasons?

**1 Peter 2:9-10:** *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: 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

3. If you are not a Christian it is imperative that you become one:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Hear (Rom. 10:17) | Repent (Acts 17:30) |
| Believe (Heb. 11:6) | Baptized (Gal. 3:27) |
| Confess (Rom. 10:9-10) | Faithfulness (Rev. 2:10) |

4. If you’re a Christian and you’ve wandered from the fold of safety you also need to change! Acts 8:22

5. Be saved by obeying right now! 2 Cor. 6:2

Adapted from a sermon (*A Peculiar People*) by Ryan Thomas.