

**THE CHRISTIAN IN THE MARKETPLACE (7)**

Our last study brought us to seeing the similarities between natural Israel and spiritual Israel, the Church in terms of what the Christian should be doing in the marketplace. We noted that God's intention for His people is that they would be the source of the revelation of God to a world that is yet to know Him, through their character and conduct (**Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48**)!

We noted that the Christians in the marketplace must conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the One Who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. The Christian is of a chosen generation, which means that he is deliberately chosen by God (not by men) to fulfil God's purpose of redeeming mankind through Jesus Christ. It is therefore the responsibility of every Christian to accomplish God's assignment for him in the marketplace. Christians must also realize that they belong to a royal priesthood in the same category as Melchizedek and our Lord Jesus Christ (our forerunner). As such, we are royal priests, who will reign as kings in the Millennial Reign of Christ. Therefore, we must first offer ourselves to God as living sacrifices, have constant communion and fellowship with God, and intercede to God on behalf of other believers as well as for unbelievers to be saved. We are not expected to be engaged in activities that are not royal and priestly, such as offering unacceptable sacrifices unto God, engaging in idol practices, selfish prayers, prayerlessness, just sitting in the church not serving God, etc. Furthermore, we noted that the Christian's conduct in all areas of life must reflect the holy nature of God, as distinct from those who have no relationship with God. And because of the task of bringing people to the saving knowledge of Christ, we are set apart for holy use; thus we consecrate ourselves before God, are totally devoted to God, and fully dedicated unto His service, while separating ourselves from the customs, traditions, and ways of the world. Thus, God is able to work through and with us.

As peculiar people, we were purchased by God with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, thus showing how much of a treasure we are to Him, even though we were once undesirables! We are thus God's own special possession, which makes us the glaring testimony of God's goodness and grace toward mankind, in changing undesirables who were only fit for eternal judgment, into special treasures who bring pleasure and praise to the name of God. And this is our mandate on the earth: to bring men and women to the knowledge of the salvation and transforming power of God in delivering them from sin's destruction, the influence of the flesh, and the destruction of the world. In addition, Christians are strangers in this world, whose ways, customs, speech, and lifestyle should betray that they are indeed strangers in the world. Similarly, Christians are likened to pilgrims who have come to the earth on a holy mission, and who must return to their homeland—heaven, and not seek a permanent residence on earth. Therefore, we must live on earth in a manner that is devoid of the fleshly lusts (desires, passions, ambitions, etc.) of the people of the world, and be set apart from the ways of the world.

Ultimately, we must realize that we are ambassadors of Christ who have been sent to the earth to reconcile men to God, and we must conduct ourselves as one (**2 Corinthians 5:20; Matthew 11:29; Ephesians 4:17-24**)!

**Scripture Text: 1 Peter 2:12**

After God had delivered natural Israel from the bondage of Egypt, He gave them ordinances by which they would be able to acceptably serve Him, and live before Him, and hence, be

distinct from the other nations. The Christian likewise has to be able to live in a manner that glorifies God, and that projects the nature of God well to the people of the world. To this end, we have scriptures that deal with how Christians, who are ambassadors of Christ, ought to live in this dark and perverse world—the marketplace!

From our scripture text, we can see that the Christian in the marketplace is to have his “*conversation honest among the Gentiles ...*”; meaning that we are to behave and conduct ourselves honourably and with integrity among unbelievers (**Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:7**); so that when the people of the world “... *speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation*” (**Acts 4:1-22**). Unbelievers are bound to speak evil or ill of the believer in Christ; but the believer’s conduct will make nonsense of such ill-comments provided they are indeed living by God’s standard (**Matthew 5:14-16; 6:22-23**).

How the believer in Christ conducts himself in the marketplace is indeed of utmost significance if he is to impact the lives of unbelievers. John the Baptist was concerned about this, and spoke about it to those who were coming to his baptism (**Luke 3:7-14**). In Old Testament times, Daniel and his friends were a testimony to God, and made His name and Person known in the heathen kingdoms of Babylon and Medo-Persia.

## ASSIGNMENT

Let us take some time to study the scriptures following and note the way these people conducted themselves in a heathen land, which today, can be likened to the Christian in the world: **Daniel 1:1-20; 2:1-49; 3:1-30; 4:1-37; 6:1-28.**

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