

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OCT 16, 2016

HOME: Fred & Romaine Elliott, Henry McDonald, Bobbie Dailey, Wilma Brown, Charlie Richardson, Bettye Henderson, Aubrie Seal

PRAYER LIST: April Lazenby, Sue Hinds, Joshua Jackson, Elmer Williams, Debra Webb, Patsy Tucker, Debbie Odom, Robert Turner, Bobby Holloway, Ricky McDonald, David Brown, Kim Elliott, J.D. Dailey, Donna Laratta, Kathy Windham, Arthur Mason, John Pruitt, Madison Banks, Charles Crump, Martha Ann, Margie Thomasson, Micah Earnest, Vonciel Phillips, Wanda Self, Jamie Sanford, Bruce Windham, Raymond Johnson, Joyce Jacobs, Patrick Parker, Gene McDonald, Sabrina Handley, Mike Miles, Terry Galloway, Jon Sanford, Marvin White, Jimmy Harrison, Otto Tolbert, Diane Chambers, Angie Jones, Victor Crosby, Brianna Cordell, Michael Griggs, Bud Howell, Margaret Henson

AM - B.J. CLARKE

PM - B.J. CLARKE

TODAY IS MISSION EMPHASIS DAY AND B.J. CLARKE IS WITH US. PLEASE STAY FOR OUR MEAL FOLLOWING MORNING SERVICES AND OUR AFTERNOON SERVICE AT 1:30

TRUNK-OR-TREAT AT FRANK & WILMA'S OCTOBER 28 AT 6 PM

HALLOWEEN GET-TOGETHER AT DAVID & MARGARET'S OCT 31. PLEASE BRING DESSERTS, DRINKS, AND CANDY

OUR 5TH SUNDAY CONTRIBUTIONS ARE GOING TO BE GIVEN TO VARIOUS MISSION EFFORTS WE SUPPORT: OCTOBER - MSOP/GBN

THE WEST WALKER WELCOMER

WEST WALKER CHURCH OF CHRIST
26036 HWY 78
CARBON HILL, AL 35549
(205) 924-9038
westwalkerchurchofchrist.org

TIMES OF SERVICES

SUNDAY MORNING

Bible Class 9:30

Worship 10:20

SUNDAY EVENING 5:00

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY 7:00

ELDERS:

Gene McDonald 924-4827

Carlton Myers 221-0637

Neil Myers 924-9289

Bruce Windham 221-2348

DEACONS:

Danny Busby 387-0213

David Preston 300-1927

Kevin Richardson 295-8864

Chris Robbins 388-1354

Vince Roden 924-4062

MINISTER:

Ben Wright 522-8004

A Peculiar People **B.J. Clarke**

Paul reminded Titus of Jesus “who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). The King James Version translation of the word “peculiar” is from the Greek word *periousios*, a word which appears only one time in the entire New Testament.

But what is the significance of the phrase “peculiar people?” The phrase is not used in this particular context to connote something that is strange or odd. Rather this particular phrase is translated in the American Standard Version, “a people for God's own possession.” In fact, the Septuagint uses a form of the same word employed in Titus 2:14 in Deuteronomy 14:2, wherein Moses reminded the Jews that their relationship with God was such that they were “a people for his own possession (ASV).” Hence, the meaning of Titus 2 is not so much that the people of God are to be peculiar in their manner of living in comparison to the world, but rather that the people of God are a treasured possession of God Almighty. This was true of fleshly Jews under the Old Covenant, and it is true today of Spiritual Israel, the church.

Having said this, we do not wish to leave the impression that God's people are not to be peculiar, i.e., different from the world and its carnal ways. Although such is not the precise meaning of Titus 2:14, there are dozens of passages which show that the people of God are to be different and distinct from the world. Indeed, the world looks at the people of God and considers us to be peculiar, to say the least. And why does the world view God's people as strange and peculiar? There are two major reasons: 1) because of what we do, and 2) because of what we don't do.

Because of What We Do

What are some of the things that we do as God's people which cause the world to regard us as strange? In the first place, we “shew forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9). I am reminded of the story of the young Christian man who was growing weary of the steady stream of profanity he was subjected by his fellow employees in the workplace. One day, when it became too much for him to take, he raised his voice above the voices of those cursing and swearing and said, “Praise the Lord for he is wonderful. He is the Creator and Master of the universe and the one who sent His Son to die for the sins of the world.” An eerie silence swept over the workplace and his fellow employees stared at him in amazement. One of them said, “And just what do you think you are doing?” The Christian young man replied, “Well, you all have been speaking so much for the devil that I just decided I would give God equal time.”

Of course, there are many other ways to exhibit the praises of God before men, but we should remember that when we let our lights shine before men (Matthew 5:16), evildoers hate us for so doing (John 3:19-21).

In the second place, the world may think us strange for our willingness to submit ourselves to others. Peter exhorted the recipients of his first epistle, “submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well” (I Peter 2:13-14). Hence, the people of God are a people interested in obeying the laws of the land. While others may joke about getting away with breaking the laws of the land, God's people manifest allegiance and obedience to every law which does not call for disobedience to God's law.

Because of What We Don't Do

It is also the case that the people of God are reckoned to be strange because of what they don't do. The apostle Peter exhorted his brethren: "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, reveling, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you" (I Peter 4:3-4).

Please observe that Peter encouraged his fellow Christians not to think it strange that others thought them to be strange. The Christian life is so radically different from the worldly life that those living a worldly life will be amazed at the distinction.

In fact, one of the major problems facing the church today is that the formerly clear line of demarcation between the church member and the ways of the world is now blurred. Romans 12:1-2 is still in the Bible and needs to be heeded: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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."

Who are the people of God? They are the people who will not allow the world to shape them into its mold. They are the people who talk differently, dress differently, think differently, recreate and entertain themselves differently. Not all who avoid cursing are the people of God, but all people of God will refrain from swearing. Not everyone who dresses modestly is a child of God, but all faithful children of God will adorn themselves with modest apparel (I Timothy 2:9; I Peter 3:1-4).

The people of God will, as obedient children, not fashion themselves according to their former lusts in ignorance. Rather, they will be holy in all manner of conduct. They will attempt to be holy because they recognize that they have been called by the Holy One (I Peter 1:14-16).

Who are the people of God? They are the people who do not involve themselves in malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings (I Peter 2:1; 3:9-12). They are the people who do not revile or retaliate when they are reviled against (I Peter 2:23). In short, the people of God are those who, "as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Peter 2:11).

Not only is it the case that the people of God are thought strange because of immoral acts they don't engage in, it is also the case that the people of God are considered peculiar for what they won't do in the realm of worship and religion. For example, the people of God won't sing spiritual songs with the accompaniment of mechanical instruments of music because there is no New Testament authority for doing so. The religious world may consider this peculiar, and even a bit cranky, but the people of God must refuse to engage in any act of worship for which there is no New Testament authority. Furthermore, the people of God are considered strange for their refusal to fellowship those who teach any doctrine other than the doctrine of Christ. But the people of God must follow the teaching of passages such as Ephesians 5:11; I Timothy 6:3-5, and II John 9-11. Peculiar though it may seem, the people of God must be willing to distinguish themselves from both the secular world and the denominational religious world.