TITLE: Apartheid

TEXT: 1 Jn. 4:20-21; Ja. 1:27; Gal. 3:26-28; Ro. 12:3-5; 1 Co. 12:14-27; Col. 2:8; Ro. 12:2

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to start out by talking about a relatively new word in contemporary English. The word is “apartheid”.

It is a word that finds its origin from the republic of South Africa.

Although South Africa has not furnished a great number of words that have achieved general acceptance in British and American English, one in particular, *apartheid,* has gained wide circulation.

*Apartheid* is a word that came into South African English from Afrikaans, the language of the Dutch settlers of South Africa. They in turn had made up the word from the Dutch word *apart,* “separate,” and the suffix *-heid,* which corresponds to our suffix *-hood.* Thus *apartheid* literally means “separateness.”

The heritage Dictionary defines….

**a·part·heid** (…-pärt“hºt”, -h³t”) *n.* **1.** An official policy of racial segregation practiced in the Republic of South Africa, involving political, legal, and economic discrimination against nonwhites. **2.** Any policy or practice of separating or segregating groups. **3.** The condition of being separated from others; segregation.

What makes this word is an important one is that it is quickly becoming the philosophy of the world in which we live…. More alarming, it is quickly becoming the philosophy of the nation in which we live, and has to some degree even infected the Church.

Every day we are becoming more and more a nation of apartheid…A nation that practices the separating and segregating of groups of people.

You may be thinking well didn’t all of that end, or at least great gains were made against segregation in our nation in the 1960’s with the marches of men such as Martin Luther King? The fact is that segregation, a separating of our people, has, in a lot of ways, gotten worse in our nation over the last few years! The past year or two, it has really been ramped up.

Sure there have been laws enacted to put an end to some of our racial discrimination and segregation, but at the same time there has been an underlying philosophy of apartheid that has developed and is being promulgated in the politics of the left and the halls of higher academia in America.

Charles Colson shares that: many college campuses have dropped required courses that treat western culture as a whole. Instead the curriculum has splintered into East Asian studies, Judaic studies, Latin American studies, Women’s studies, Black studies…

Black students have come to just want to read material by black authors; Women just want to read material by female authors. The assumption seems to be that it is just race and gender that determine how people think.

Colsen says that this is nothing less than intellectual Balkanization!

Some try to justify this in the name of ethnic pride, but it is much more than that. It’s a blow at the very principles upon which America was built. America is a nation of immigrants. What gives us cultural cohesiveness is not a common ethnic background but a common belief—belief in such principles as the rule of law, the value of the individual, the freedoms outlined in our bill of rights…

The freedom of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The freedom to worship God in the way that we choose.

America depends for its very existence upon the conviction that we can transcend our native cultures and commit ourselves to a unified national vision.

This very thought, this very ideal is expressed in our national motto: e pluribus unum! (Out of many, we are one).

Out of many, we are one!

Things were a lot simpler when I was a Child.

For the most part an American was simply an American.

No one seems to simply be an American anymore!

Everyone seems to be sub-dividing into his or her own ethnic grouping within America! Black Americans, Latin Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, White European Americans, Indian Americans and the list goes on and on.

All of the emphasis that we have come to place on ethnic groupings within our nation is not unifying our people; it is helping to tear us apart! It separates people--not brings them together.

Our nation is literally being splintered before our very eyes. We are no longer simply Americans but we are black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, white European Americans…. Some would have us divide even further--- Female Americans and male Americans---the so-called gender war within America.

This is a philosophy of Apartheid, of separateness, and it will eventually tear us apart as a nation.

The sad thing is that we even have started to embrace this world philosophy of apartheid within the Church as well.

Even some Churches today are guilty of apartheid and have splintered into ethnic or social groupings within themselves.

Many professing Christians have embraced this world philosophy of apartheid in their spiritual lives….

Where we are willing to express the compassion and love of Christ to this group or that group of people but are not willing to express it to everyone!

There are those whom we are willing to approach with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and those whom we are not willing to go to.

EXAMPLE: Early on God seemed to bring me into a ministry with those struggling with drug and alcohol abuse.

Prior to going into the ministry I worked over 20 years in grocery retail management.

Possibly one of our biggest problems in grocery retail was shoplifting, theft by those often hooked on drugs and alcohol. So I had a pretty bad attitude about those kinds of people when I first went into the ministry.

Which is most likely why God made that a part of my ministry early on..

Not just so that He could use me to help them but He could use them to help me get over the apartheid attitude I had against them.

Through that part of my ministry God showed me a very important truth---but for the grace of God that be me!

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11(NIV)**  **9Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offender’s**  **10nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.**  **11And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

The fact is that in my youth that was what I was. I abused alcohol at a very young age.

God not only got me over my attitude of apartheid against them but developed a love within me for them.

1Joh 4:20 (NIV) If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

**21 And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.**

**Hate…**

**3404 miseo {mis-eh'-o}**

**1) to hate, pursue with hatred, detest**

To hate means to detest, look down upon, treat or look at with contempt!

This speaks of separation! Divided people into groups…those we think are worth saving and those who we think are not!

This worldview, the philosophy of apartheid, if embraced by the Church is a philosophy that has the potential to literally undermine and tear down the Church of Jesus Christ! Or at the least strip us of our power and effectiveness in the world in which we live..

The philosophy of apartheid goes against everything that the Word of God teaches and stands for. It goes against everything that Jesus taught and stood for..

Jame 1:27 (NIV) Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Do you realize that there are a lot of pollutants in our world today?

There are a lot of things, that we as Christians can be contaminated and polluted by in this world that will render us anything but pure and faultless in the eyes of God.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Polluted by embracing such things as the worldview of apartheid.

Actually Scripture teaches us just the opposite…

Do you realize that our nation’s motto, e pluribus unum, out of many-- we are one, actually is derived from a Scriptural concept?

E pluribus unum is a secularized version of a biblical vision of unity found in:

**Gala 3:26 (NIV) You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,**

**27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.**

**28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

You see, in Christ Jesus there is no Jew or Gentile!

In Christ Jesus there is no slave or freeman! In Christ Jesus there is no male or female, but are all are to be one in Him! All are the same in Him! All are to be united together in oneness with Him!

There are not to be any black Christians! There are not to be any white Christians! There are to be no yellow, purple, green or blue Christians! All are simply Christians! Christ like ones!

One group of people who have been bought by the blood of Christ and have taken on a new identity in Him.

And that new identity is to be a united one not a divided one.

Roma 12:3 (NIV) For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

**4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,**

**5 so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.**

Speaking using our physical bodies as an analogy, an example for the body of Christ, Paul carries this thought on in more detail in:

**1Cor 12:14 (NIV) Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.**

**15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.**

**16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.**

**17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?**

**18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.**

**19 If they were all one part, where would the body be?**

**20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body.**

**21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"**

**22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,**

**23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,**

**24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it,**

**25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.**

**26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.**

Example: My own body—About 12 years ago I broke my right arm and shoulder. Today I am very limited in what my right arm can do.

I can testify to you today with complete certainty that it is not just my right arm and shoulder that has been effected, but my entire body has been effected!

I have learned firsthand that when one part of my body suffers every part suffers right along with it!

**But God has combined the members of the body --so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.**

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

There is to be no division, no apartheid, in the body of Christ!

Yet how often do we, as Christians, allow things that divide and separate to come into the Church body? How often have we embraced the philosophies of this world spiritually, such as the philosophy of apartheid, without even realizing that we have done it?

**Colo 2:8 (NIV) See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.**

The philosophy of apartheid is a hollow and deceptive philosophy of this world that is based on human tradition not on the absolute truth of God’s Word!

So how do we deal with these kinds of destructive world philosophies as Christians?

Roma 12:2 (NIV) Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

We are not to conform but we are to be transformed!

The Greek word for conform is:

**suschematizo {soos-khay-mat-id'-zo}**

1. **to conform one's self (i.e. one's mind and character) to another's pattern, (fashion one's self according to)**

We are not to conform to the patterns, the philosophies of this world, allowing them to fashion us, fashion our way of thinking and acting any longer, but we are to allow God to transform us!

The Greek word for transform is:

**metamorphoo {met-am-or-fo'-o}**

1. to change into another form, to transform, to transfigure

It is where we get the word metamorphosis from…the process whereby a worm is changed into a beautiful butterfly!

It is the word that was used to describe how

Christ appearance was changed and was resplendent with divine brightness on the mount of transfiguration

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

What is Gods will for us In Christ Jesus?

It is to come to a place of unity and oneness in Him!

To not conform any longer to the patterns of this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds!

When we do then world philosophies such as the philosophy of apartheid, philosophy’s that separate and divide will no longer hamper and hinder us as Christians!

When we do we will truly be able to go out into all of the world that God has called us to go out into with the gospel message of Jesus Christ and literally make disciples of entire nations!

How about you this morning? On reflection, are there philosophies of this world that you have bought into, you have embraced?

Philosophy’s that depend, not on the absolute truth of God’s Word but philosophy's that depend on the traditions of men?

Are you allowing the world to conform you to its patterns or are you allowing God to transform you by the renewing of your mind?

Transformed you into the very image and nature of Jesus Christ?

Transform us from the worm that we are into the beautiful butterfly that God has for us to be?

It all comes down to one simple question… Have we truly given Jesus Lordship of our life? Have we totally and completely yielded our life to Him?

Are we allowing Him to change and transform us from the miserable creatures that we have been into the beautiful creations that He has for us to be?

Is it our desire to become so much like Jesus that it is Jesus that people see in us?

This morning, is it your desire to not conform to the patterns of this world any longer but to be transformed by allowing God to renew your mind?

Then submit yourself, all of yourself to Jesus this morning and watch that transformation begin….