

Title:        **THE DIFFERENCE**

Text:        1 Peter 2:9-10

Subject:    *The Difference the Reprobate and the Elect*

Date:        Sunday Evening — September 20, 2009

Tape # Z-71b

Readings: *Bob Duff and Merle Hart*

Introduction:

The title of my message tonight is — **THE DIFFERENCE**. I want to show you the difference between the elect and the reprobate, the difference between those who are lost and those who are saved. Obviously, the difference is set before us in many ways in the Word of God. And the difference is a difference that grace alone makes. Tonight, I want us to see how God the Holy Spirit shows us the difference between the reprobate and the elect in 1 Peter 2.

In this 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter God the Holy Spirit draws a very clear line of distinction between God's elect and all other people. Let's begin in verse 3.

(1 Peter 2:3-10) “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious. (4) To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, (5) Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

**Some things have to be tasted to be known.**

- Our Savior had to taste death for us.
- We have tasted the heavenly gift.
- We who believe have tasted to good Word of God.
- And we “*have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*”

Some of us “*have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*” We've experienced what David sang about. — “*O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him*”(Psalms 34:8). Trusting him, we find him full of grace! Because he is gracious, we have come to him, are coming to him and shall come to him.

- Salvation begins, in our experience of it, with coming to the Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 45:22; Matthew 11:28-30; Hebrews 7:25). — The Prodigal!
- Salvation is a continual coming to Christ (1 Peter 2:5).

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- Salvation will at last be consummated by our coming to Christ.

Christ is the Foundation Stone God has laid before our eyes, the Foundation Stone laid in Zion, upon which God builds his house, his Church and Temple.

- He is elect, chosen of God and precious.
- God's Church is a spiritual House built up on Christ.
- We are "*a holy priesthood*" offering up "*spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*" — More about that in a minute or two. — Read on...

(6) "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. (7) Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, (8) And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

What a difference there is between the believer and the unbeliever!

- To you who believe Christ is precious. — To the unbeliever Christ is despised and disallowed.
- To the believer Christ is a solid rock of stability and hope. — To the unbeliever he is a stumbling stone and rock of offence.
- You who believe shall never be confounded, confused or put to shame. — The unbeliever is constantly and shall forever be confounded, confused and put to shame.

Now, let's look at verses 9 and 10, and behold the difference grace has made. — "*For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

(9) "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show 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."

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Here are five things by which our God makes the difference between his elect and the reprobate.

### **“A CHOSEN GENERATION”**

First, Peter tells us that the reason why we are saved while others are lost, the reason why we believe when others do not, the reason why we trust Christ while others refuse to trust him is God’s free, sovereign electing mercy, love and grace. — How we ought to thank God for electing love!

(John 15:16) “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

(2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (14) Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(1 Peter 1:2) “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”

The Lord God calls us, “*My people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise*” (Isaiah 43:20-21). Being regenerated by his grace, begotten of God through his abundant mercy and by his incorruptible seed born again, we are accounted to the Lord for a

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generation. We are his seed, his children, made akin to God by adopting grace!

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Head, our Husband and our Brother. We are his body, his members and his brethren, — “*a chosen generation.*” **John Trapp** interpreted those words like this — “A picked people, the dearly beloved of God’s soul; such as he first chose for his love, and then loves for his choice.”

‘Tis not that I did choose Thee,  
For Lord, that could not be;  
This heart would still refuse Thee,  
Hadst Thou not chosen me.  
Thou from the sin that stained me  
Hast cleansed and set me free;  
Of old Thou hast ordained me,  
That I should live to Thee.

‘Twas sov’ reign mercy called me  
And taught my op’ning mind;  
The world had else enthralled me,  
To heav’nly glories blind.  
My heart owns none before Thee,  
For Thy rich grace I thirst;  
This knowing, if I love Thee,  
Thou must have loved me first.

In sovereign election, the God of all grace reached into the teeming masses of lost humanity and chose a people for Himself. He did this according to His own will and He took these people He chose and created a brand new race of men.

When God called Abraham, the Hebrew race of people was born. A race that had never existed came into being. The same thing is true about God’s spiritual Israel. We are a distinct race of men, a new race, a new creation.

**“A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD”**

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Next, the difference between God's elect and all other people is the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ has made us "*a royal priesthood!*" God's elect are a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:5-6; Revelation 1:5-6; 5:10).

(Exodus 19:5-6) "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: (6) And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

(Revelation 1:5-6) "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, (6) And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

(Revelation 5:10) "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

### **This royal priesthood possesses...**

- The Power to Rule as kings in this world.
- The Riches of Kings. — "*Unsearchable riches of Christ.*"
- Wears the Apparel of Kings. — The Robe of Christ's Righteousness.
- Lives upon the Fare of Kings. — Sitting at the King's table, like Mephibosheth, feeding on royal dainties.
- Has the Retinue of Kings. — The Angels of God are our Constant Attendants.

God's elect are kings and they are a priestly people, having direct access to God, always living at God's Altar, constantly offering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Christ Jesus. In the Old Testament the kingly and priestly offices were jealously kept apart in Israel. In Christ they are blended together (Zechariah 6:13). He is our Priest and King and we are priests and kings in him.

(Zechariah 6:13) "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

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### **“AN HOLY NATION”**

Third, the Lord God has distinguished us as his people by making his church “*an holy nation.*” As the ancient Israelites were separated by God from other nations, and legally and externally sanctified by him, so all the true Israel of God is sanctified, or set apart by God the Father, in eternal election, to real and perfect holiness. All God’s Israel is sanctified and cleansed from sin by the blood and sacrifice of Christ. And the Israel of God is internally sanctified by God the Holy Spirit in regeneration. In the new birth, Christ is formed in us. We are, thereby, made partakers of the Divine nature, made fit for heaven and made partakers of that holiness without which no man can see the Lord.

Every year I travel to a foreign country preaching the gospel of Christ. I have crossed the borders of our nation north, south, east and west many times. Whenever you leave this country and cross into another, three things are required.

- (1) You must have a birth certificate to prove your citizenship.
- (2) You must have a visa from the country receiving you.
- (3) You must have a clean record, no criminal record.

Soon I will leave this land of sorrow and sin. I hope to enter into the bliss and glory of heaven. I hope to stand forever accepted as a citizen of the New Jerusalem. Here is the basis of my hope.

- **A BIRTH CERTIFICATE** — The Lord God has given me a new nature (2 Corinthians 5:17). There is in me a new man, created of God in righteousness and true holiness.
- **A VISA** — I Have a right to enter into heaven itself by the blood of Christ, because I am robed in his righteousness. God says, “*It must be perfect to be accepted,*” and in Christ I am perfect! He has made me perfectly righteous before God!
- **A CLEAR RECORD** — Jesus Christ has purged away all my sins with his own precious blood. Therefore God will never charge me with any sin (Romans 4:8). When I stand before God and he searches the books for iniquity and sin under my name, he will find none (Jeremiah 50:20).  
— **DO YOU HAVE WHAT GOD REQUIRES?**

### **“A PECULIAR PEOPLE”**

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Fourth, the Lord God has distinguished us from all the rest of Adam's fallen race by making us "*a peculiar people.*" Christ the Lord "*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 word translated "*peculiar*" in the New Testament does not mean "odd, strange or eccentric." It means "possessed, encircled and protected." Every blood bought sinner is God's possession, his purchased possession, distinctly encircled and protected by him, as the apple of his eye!

(Exodus 19:5-6) "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: (6) And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

## **THE REASON**

Now, here's the reason for God's great grace upon us. — "*That ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 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.*"

The words "*show forth*" literally mean "to publish." In other words, the very reason why God has saved you and me is that we may, upon the basis of grace experienced, publish his praises, the praises of the triune God!

- In His Glorious Person
- In His Wondrous Predestination
- In His Great Redemption
- In His Marvelous Grace
- In His Mysterious Providence
- In His Grand Restitution

Amen.