

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

“Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord.” You are not of this fallen world. You have been redeemed from it. You wait here now, expectantly, hopefully, longing to be taken up out of this place of decay and death, this vale of tears.

So what part has a believer with an unbeliever? St. Paul writes “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” He does not say “don’t speak to unbelievers.” Christ works through His Church in this fallen world. But there is a difference between evangelism and having fellowship with lawlessness.

There is a difference between speaking Christ to unbelievers and being one with them. Christ charged the Eleven to make disciples of all nations. But He did not charge them to become yoked with unbelievers. For what communion has light with darkness?

The admonition of the Apostle should cause each of us to ask ourselves: Do I look much like the world looks? Is it immediately evident from my language and my conduct and my dress that I am a child of God? Or to those around me do I seem a lot like the rest of the world?

The words you use, the ideologies you advance, the shows you watch, the friends you keep, the movies you see, the web sites

you visit, the things you do, do they mark you as one redeemed of Christ?

Or have you been so much a part of the fallen world that in word and deed you are indiscernible from those who reject God? Have you become yoked with unbelievers? Repent, lest you be tempted to go astray, for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

Repent, for the Apostle speaks the very command of God: “Come out from among them and be separate”, says the Lord. Narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. So it is with you, you who Christ has redeemed. You are not of the world. You are reborn.

Your kingdom is not of this world, for His kingdom is not. His kingdom is in heaven. He died for all, that you who live should live no longer for yourselves, but for Him who died for you and rose again.

God has reconciled you to Himself through Christ Jesus. This He does through Ministry of Reconciliation. In this saving Ministry, God reconciles the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.

In Christ your sins are not imputed to you. Your sins, all your sins, even the sin of assimilating to this fallen world, is forgiven. Believing in Christ, baptized into Him, you are set apart from the world, called out of the world to walk in the Light.

So you are a wanderer, a stranger and a pilgrim here, a subject of a heavenly Master traversing the paths of this fallen world on your way to heaven. But you are not alone. You have the company of the Holy Church, the blessed Communion of your fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and sons and daughters in the faith.

And more, you are One with the heavenly host, the Church in Glory, and with the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, and of the noble army of Martyrs. For like them, God is a Father to you, and you are His sons and daughters. He is your God, and you are His chosen, redeemed people.

God keeps you on the way with His Word and Sacraments. He fills you with His Spirit, that you be led into the paths that please Him. He places His hedge of angels about you to protect you. He hears your prayers. And through His Holy Church He brings others to faith in Christ, by grace, to join you in your earthly pilgrimage.

Thanks be to God, you are reconciled to Him in Christ. You are the Body of the one true Head, the Church of Christ. And so you eat His Body this day, and drink His Blood. You partake of this Divine Meal, this Holy Supper, as beloved

children of God and coheirs of Christ. By this Eucharist your transgressions are pardoned, and God sees you as dear child, for He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that you might become the righteousness of God in Him.

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