

REVISITING THE BELIEVER'S POSITIONAL RICHES IN CHRIST

Part XIX: Applying The Truth That Believers Are A Chosen Generation, A Holy Nation, A Peculiar People (1 Peter 2:9)

I. Introduction

- A. When anyone comes to faith in Christ, he comes to learn that his whole orientation in life has shifted: he is no longer an integral part of the world about him, but he thinks in an "other worldly" manner that becomes more and more pronounced as he grows in his relationship with Christ.
- B. This "other worldly" orientation causes tension between the believer and the lost world, what initially may make the believer feel uncomfortable, but Jesus said His people were not of the world since had God chosen them out of it, putting a tension between them and the world to where the world hates them, John 15:18-19.
- C. One of the 33 positional truths the believer possesses the instant he trusts in Christ as Savior is that he is part of a chosen generation, a holy nation and a peculiar people, 1 Peter 2:9. (Lewis S. Chafer, Systematic Theology, vol. III, "Soteriology," p. 251-252) Applying this truth leads to a healthy orientation to God's will that leads to blessing in Him regardless of the tension between the believer and the world (as follows):

II. Applying The Truth That Believers Are A Chosen Generation, A Holy Nation, A Peculiar People.

- A. Peter's first epistle of which 1 Peter 2:9 is a part was written primarily to Hebrew Christians as signaled by Peter's reference to them as the *diaspora* in 1 Peter 1:1, the "dispersed." (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 839) In Peter's time, this word was commonly used of Hebrews who were living outside the land of Israel since they had been dispersed among the Gentile nations, *Ibid.*, p. 838.
- B. Accordingly, the terms "a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people" that Peter uses of his readers in 1 Peter 2:9, when viewed in their Hebrew Old Testament context, take on great significance (as follows):
 1. All three titles listed in 1 Peter 2:9 were used of the Hebrews in various passages of the Old Testament:
 - a. The title "a chosen generation" (KJV) recalls God's reference to the people of Israel in Isaiah 43:20 where Israel was told that she was selected by God in His gracious love above all the other peoples of the world to be blessed by Him that they might show forth His praises.
 - b. Peter's reference to his readers being "a holy nation" recalls Deuteronomy 7:5-6 where Israel was to be separated from Gentile idolatry in her worship of God alone. (ESV footnotes)
 - c. Then, Peter's reference to his readers as "a peculiar people" recalls Exodus 19:5 where God likened Israel to a treasured possession were the nation to obey His laws. (ESV margin notes)
 2. Thus, the "responsibility once solely trusted to the nation Israel has now, during this Age of Grace, been given to the church." (*Ibid.*, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 845) **Note: this does NOT mean that the Church replaces Israel in God's plan as is taught in Amillennialism, for God will yet work with Israel again, literally fulfilling His Abrahamic Covenant to her, Romans 11:26-27.** However, Christians in the Church era have been chosen by God above all other people groups to function (a) separate from sin and (b) obedient to God's Word (c) to be blessed by God and (d) thus to show forth His praises.
- C. However, Peter in 1 Peter 2:9 **deepened** the *application* of the Old Testament terms "chosen generation, holy nation" and "peculiar people:" the Hebrew people of God in the Old Testament were to show forth God's praises in general, but believers in the Church are to "show forth the praises of him **who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**" In other words, Christians in the Church era are to live separate from sin, obedient to God's Word so as to be blessed of Him and to proclaim God's praises as part of "a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people" **with a FOCUS on God's GRACIOUS SALVATION of them!**

Lesson: As believers in Christ in the dispensation of the Church, we have been saved FROM deep spiritual darkness in the world so as to become separate from sin, obedient to God's Word to enjoy His blessing so that we might proclaim the PRAISE of God's UNMERITED FAVOR in MOVING us OUT OF the world and to Himself. We are to LET our UNIQUENESS SHINE, NOT RESIST our God-endowed, otherworldly characteristic, for it creates a witnessing TENSION with the world. Thus, we are to function to the praise of God's grace!

Application: (1) Since God has made us Christians (1) to exist and live SEPARATE from the ungodly world around us, may we YIELD to God's working in us and NOT RESIST that ORIENTATION, expressing the praise of God's grace toward us in Christ! (2) We will face persecution from the world because our distinctiveness critiques the world around us of its sin, making it angry at us (John 15:18-22), but we are not to be offended over this reality

(John 16:1-4). Rather, we are to continue to show forth the praises of God Who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light as a testimony of God's salvation to the needy world around us, 1 Peter 2:9!