

Outcasts of the World

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Introduction: Do You Feel Like an Outcast?

- A. Young people in school, desperate to be liked and accepted, sometimes feel like outcasts.
 - 1. There is a great temptation for young people to make compromises of what is right in order to fit in and belong.
 - 2. Being rejected by their peers, teased, harassed, bullied brings can bring great sadness to such a degree that there is a desire to escape from it all.
- B. Christians *should* feel like outcasts of the world.
 - 1. The challenges of our youth can serve as life lessons, teaching us how to be strong in the Lord and true to our convictions.
 - 2. Life as a Christian will always mean life as an outcast of the world!

I. Ways in Which Christians Are Treated as Outcasts.

- A. Regarded as strange, hurtful things are spoken of you for abstaining from sin.
 - 1. When you refuse to take part in sin, people will take notice and view you as strange, peculiar, or weird (**1 Pet. 4:3-4**).
 - 2. Instead of examining their own lives, they feel threatened and cover up their fear by ridiculing you *as if* something was wrong with you!
- B. Excluded by others (**Luke 6:22; cf. John 16:2**).
 - 1. Everyone likes to feel like they belong, that they fit in, and our accepted.
 - 2. For Christ sake, you will be spurned and shunned by others, even to the point that they may refuse to acknowledge your existence!
 - 3. Living for Christ will in many cases result in the loss of friendships.
- C. Opposed by family members / relatives (**Mat. 10:34-39**).
 - 1. Your stand for the Lord may be put to the test in your own home!
 - 2. Often God's standards conflict with family traditions and lifestyles
 - 3. You may be made to feel like "the black sheep" of the family in which your "family reunions" are never the same!
- D. Your own brethren may even "cast you out" for doing what is right. (**Isa. 66:5**).
 - 1. Sometimes persecution can come from our own brethren, "*false brethren*" (**2 Cor. 11:26**), who have gone back into the world.
 - 2. They're more interested in knowledge of the world than the Scriptures (**1 Tim. 6:20-21**) and call you a troublemaker for following the Bible *only*.

II. Why are Christians Outcasts?

- A. The world hates Christians just as they did Christ.
 - 1. If we are truly disciples of Jesus, then we will experience the same kind of treatment Jesus received from the world – *hatred!* (**Mat. 10:24-25; John 15:18-20**).
 - 2. "*Friendship with the world*" (and fellowship with God) is impossible (**Jas. 4:4**); thus we must not seek popularity, prestige, or prominence.

- B. The world hates us because we belong to Christ, not the world.
 - 1. Much like a clique or “the in crowd” at school, if you don’t belong to the group, then you are hated, ridiculed, and persecuted.
 - 2. Disciples are chosen by Christ to be outcasts – chosen “*out of the world*” to be set apart from the world (**John 15:19**).
 - 3. We cannot leave this world, yet we make the choice to not be of the world (**John 17:14-16**).
 - 4. We *choose to listen to the words of God* instead of the spirit that is in the world (**1 John 4:4-6**).
- C. We are outcasts because we refuse to conform to this world.
 - 1. The way we think (**Phil. 4:8**), speak (**Mt. 12:33-37**), clothe ourselves (**1 Tim 2:9**), and the way we behave is contrary to the world (**Phil. 2:14-16**).
 - 2. By refusing to conform to this world (**Rom. 12:2**), you set yourself apart and open yourself up to close scrutiny and criticism.
 - 3. The Christian must keep themselves from being “spotted” by the world by its immoral filth and pollution (**James 1:27b; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1**).

III. Don’t Be Afraid to be an Outcast.

- A. Fear can prevent us from taking a stand for the Lord (e.g., **John 9:18-23**).
 - 1. Afraid of being the outcast of society, rejected by our family, friends, and neighbors, we keep silent, “mind our own business,” or compromise.
 - 2. Fear to confess Jesus or stand for what is right can cost us our souls! (**Mat. 10:32-33; Rev. 21:8**).
- B. There is a great reward in Heaven for those who are “cast out” for Christ’s sake!
 - 1. Rather than sorrow or cower in fear, let us “leap for joy” when we are viewed as the outcasts of the world! (**Luke 6:22-23; Mat. 5:10-12**).
 - 2. Gladly, we live life as exiles on the earth, knowing that this life is not all there is and our home in Heaven with God awaits us (**Heb. 11:13-16**).
 - 3. We must keep a spiritual focus and the long term goal to go to Heaven everyday, lest we get discouraged (**Rom. 8:18**).

Conclusion: Let Us rejoice when we are treated as Outcasts of the World. Such Treatment by the World is an Indication that we are Like Christ!