



CHAPTER TWO

Becoming Separatists

Following Christ, No Matter the Cost

GRANDPA'S QUESTION

Have you ever had to choose between doing what is easy and doing what is right?

MEMORY VERSE

Luke 14:27, "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

A Difficult Decision

Sometimes in life, young people, we are forced to make difficult decisions. In our last chapter, we learned that England in the early 1600s was a nation where the government and the church were too closely connected.

Many Christians loved God and wanted to honor Him. However, some believers became convinced that certain practices of the Church of England were not fully consistent with the teachings of Scripture.

They had an important decision to make:
Should they remain quiet to avoid trouble, or
should they follow what they believed God
was teaching them through His Word?



For a group of believers in a small English village called Scrooby, this was not just a disagreement. It was a matter of conscience. They believed that Christ—not a king, government, or church official—was the true Head of the Church. Because of this conviction, they became known as Separatists.

What does the word “Separatist” mean?

A Separatist was a person who believed that separation from the established Church of England was necessary in order to worship God according to Scripture.

The Pilgrims did not separate because they disliked people. They did not separate because they wanted rebellion. They separated because they believed they needed to obey God faithfully.

Their question was, “How can we best honor Christ and follow His Word?” They were convinced according to Scripture, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1, 2).



★ NARRATION BREAK

What did the word Separatist mean?

Why did they separate?

The Separatists believed several biblical principles were important:

1 Christ Is the Head of the Church

They believed no earthly king or religious figure like a pope had the authority to replace Christ as the ultimate leader of God's people.

BIBLE CONNECTION

Colossians 1:18, "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence."

2 Scripture Is the Final Authority

The Separatists believed the Bible should guide faith and worship. They wanted churches to follow the teachings of Scripture rather than simply follow traditions.

BIBLE CONNECTION

Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Believers Should Worship Together as a Covenant Community

The Pilgrims believed the church was not just a building or a government organization. It was a community of believers committed to following, worshipping, and serving Christ together.

★ NARRATION BREAK

What did the Separatists believe about the church?



The Scrooby Congregation

Many of the future Pilgrims belonged to a congregation that met secretly in Scrooby, England. They were under constant watch. During their worship services, they had trusted men of the congregation who would serve as watchmen.

While families worshiped inside, these men would keep watch outside. Their responsibility was to:

- ◆ Look for anyone approaching who might interrupt the meeting.
- ◆ Warn the congregation if authorities were nearby.
- ◆ Help protect the families who had gathered to worship.

Imagine that today, grandchildren. Inside were parents teaching their children about God. Outside were men acting as a security team to stand guard so those families could worship peacefully. These watchmen were not protecting a building. They were protecting a gathering of believers who wanted to know, love, and serve Jesus.



Some of its important leaders included: John Robinson, a wise pastor who taught humility, biblical study, and faithfulness. William Brewster, a respected church elder who helped lead the congregation. William Bradford, a young man who would later become governor of Plymouth Colony and record their story in *Of Plymouth Plantation*.

These men were not seeking power or wealth. They were seeking to be faithful to our Lord and His teachings.

★ NARRATION BREAK

Why did the Scrooby church need watchmen?



The Cost of Conviction

Throughout church history and even in some parts of the world today, God's people face danger, persecution, and even death to follow Jesus. Choosing to become Separatists put them in harm's way.

The government expected people to attend the Church of England. Those who refused could face:

- ◆ Fines
- ◆ Imprisonment
- ◆ Loss of property
- ◆ Public criticism
- ◆ Being watched by authorities



The Pilgrims discovered that following God sometimes requires courage.

BIBLE CONNECTION

Revelation 12:11, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” To overcome the Evil One, courage is a much needed and necessary virtue.

C. S. Lewis speaking of courage stated, “Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.” The testing point for the Pilgrims is would they obey God or man? Would they please God or man?

FROM GOVERNOR BRADFORD'S JOURNAL

William Bradford later described their decision, “They shook off this yoke and made choice of a better way.”

WHAT BRADFORD MEANT

The Separatists believed they were leaving behind human rules that troubled their consciences so they could pursue a simpler, more biblical way of worship. They were not leaving because the journey would be easy. They knew it would be difficult. They simply believed obedience to God was worth the sacrifice.



★ NARRATION BREAK

What did Separatists lose for their faith?





William Brewster, A Faithful Shepherd

William Brewster was one of the oldest and most respected members of the Pilgrim congregation. He served as an elder and helped encourage the believers during some of their most difficult days.

He had been involved in government service, but he chose to leave a comfortable position because he believed following Christ was more important than personal success. Brewster carried his faith with him through every hardship. When the Pilgrims finally arrived in America, he became one of the spiritual leaders of Plymouth Colony.



HISTORY CORNER

They were not looking for a new country, at least not yet. At first, the Pilgrims were not trying to create a new nation. They were not planning to overthrow England. They were simply looking for a place where they could worship God faithfully. Their journey began with a spiritual desire. God would later use that desire to help shape history.

PROVIDENCE CORNER

Sometimes God begins a great work with a small step of faith. The Separatists did not know:

- ◆ They would cross the Atlantic Ocean.
- ◆ They would establish Plymouth Colony.
- ◆ Their story would inspire future generations.
- ◆ Their ideas would influence America's understanding of liberty.



They only knew one thing. They wanted to follow God. Think about it, young people. What small act of faithfulness today might God use in your life for something much bigger in the future?

Virtues to Remember

Conviction

Knowing what is right and standing firm.

Humility

Being willing to learn and follow God's truth no matter where it leads.

Courage

Courage is not an absence of fear, but doing what is right in spite of our fears.

Faithfulness

Remaining committed to God through hardship.

Words to Know

Separatist

A Christian who believed it was necessary to separate from the Church of England to worship according to Scripture.

Conscience

The inner sense that helps a person recognize right and wrong.

Covenant

A serious agreement or promise made before God.

Authority

The right or power to give direction or make decisions.

Elder

A spiritual leader in a Christian congregation.

Fun Facts

- ◆ The Separatists were sometimes called “Saints” because they viewed themselves as a community committed to holy living.
- ◆ The Pilgrim congregation originally met secretly because their gatherings could bring punishment.
- ◆ William Bradford was only a young man when he joined the Separatist movement, but he would later become one of America’s most important early historians.
- ◆ The Pilgrims’ desire for religious liberty would later influence discussions about freedom of religion in America.

MEMORY VERSE

Philippians 1:29, “For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”





You finished Chapter Two!

Becoming Separatists: following Christ, no matter the cost.

- 1 Many of the future Pilgrims belonged to a congregation that met secretly in _____, England.
- 2 During their worship services, trusted men of the congregation would serve as _____.
- 3 William _____ was one of the oldest and most respected members of the Pilgrim congregation.
- 4 A Christian who believed it was necessary to separate from the Church of England to worship according to Scripture was a _____.
- 5 The inner sense that helps a person recognize right and wrong is called _____.
- 6 A serious agreement or promise made before God is a _____.
- 7 The right or power to give direction or make decisions is called _____.
- 8 A spiritual leader in a Christian congregation is an _____.
- 9 William Bradford would later become one of America's most important early _____.
- 10 Our memory verse says, "And whoever does not bear his _____ and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

You Be the Judge

Decide together, then write your reason in your own words.

- 1** At a restaurant, some people at the next table laugh when your family bows to pray before eating. Your family keeps praying anyway.

Which virtue? Is it right? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why?

- 2** A boy decides to stop going to church because his friends tease him about it.

Which virtue? Is it right? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why?

- 3** Your older sister shows you a verse that proves you were wrong about something. You listen and change your mind.

Which virtue? Is it right? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Why?

LOOK BACK

- 1** In 1603, King James I became king of
- 2** Those who wanted to reform the Church of England from within her became known as the
- 3** Thanking God in both joyful and difficult seasons is called

★ NARRATION BREAK

Why did the Separatists choose a harder way?

Family Discussion

Talk these through together before you write. There is no hurry.

1 • Why did the Separatists believe following God's Word was worth hardship?

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2 • What is the difference between disagreeing with someone and disrespecting someone?

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3 • Why did the Pilgrims believe Jesus was the true Head of the Church?

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4 • Have you ever had to choose between what was easy and what was right?

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5 • How can our family practice courage and faithfulness today?

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FOR THE PARENT OR TEACHER

Question two matters most. Help the child find words for disagreeing with someone kindly.

The Courage Test

Create a family discussion using examples:

☐ A friend wants you to cheat on a test.

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☐ Someone is being treated unfairly.

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☐ You are afraid to admit a mistake.

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☐ You know the right thing but others disagree.

.....

Ask: "What would faithfulness look like in this situation?"

Copywork

Copy the memory verse in your best handwriting. Take your time.

Luke 14:27, "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

Grandpa's Thoughts

My dear grandchildren,

The Pilgrims teach us that courage does not mean you are never afraid. Courage means something is more important than your fear.

For the Pilgrims, obedience to God was more important than comfort. They lost homes. They lost security. They faced persecution. But they gained something they valued even more—the freedom to worship God according to their conscience and the Bible.

Remember this important lesson: Convictions are revealed when they cost us something. The Pilgrims' journey to the New World began long before they stepped onto the Mayflower. Like Daniel in the Lion's Den, before he faced that trial, he committed to consecrate his life to God in a pagan captivity.

For them both, it all began when they made a decision in their hearts: "We will follow God wherever He leads." And those decisions changed the course of history forever.

