

TRUE AND FALSE INDEPENDENCE, part 1 quotes

1) Those among the separated Remnant people of today who favor the position of independence at all times and under any circumstances will try to support this extreme view by quoting this statement:

“God’s work cannot be done without a spirit of independence.” Signs of the Times, December 23, 1889.

Those among us who favor the position of no independence for any reason will try to support this extreme view by quoting this statement:

“We are living amid the perils of the last days, and if we have a spirit of self-sufficiency and independence, we shall be exposed to the wiles of Satan and be overcome.” Testimonies, vol 3, p 66.

We see on the one hand that God’s work cannot be done without independence, and yet on the other hand if we are independent then we shall be overcome by the wiles of Satan. Is there a contradiction between these two testimonies? No, there is perfect harmony in all the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy because it is the same Holy Spirit who inspired both. So then how can we harmonize these two seemingly different quotes? These two quotes are speaking of two different forms of independence — one true and the other false.

2) The true form of independence is:

“Individual independence and individual power are the qualities now needed.” Testimonies, vol 3, p 496.

The false form of independence is:

“Followers of Jesus Christ will not act independently one of another.” Testimonies, vol 5, p 534.

“Now, please stop walking in this unsanctified independence and self-confidence, for it will prove your ruin unless you see the evil and repent of it...if you choose to make your own plans and go independently you will not have the Lord to go with you.” Manuscript Releases, vol 20, p 119-120.

These quotes reveal that there is a true form of independence that is holy and sanctified and which God approves of, and there is also a false form of independence that is unholy and unsanctified which God condemns. This means that those favoring independence at all times are following the false and unholy form of independence which God condemns. And those favoring no independence for any reason are also following a false belief. The truth is that God would have all His Remnant people maintain personal independence, while avoiding acting independent of one another. And the main reason why Satan has been so successful in creating all kinds of problems among our separated Remnant people and home churches worldwide is because we do not understand the clear distinction between these true and false forms of independence!

“The angels of God are in our world, and satanic agencies are here also. I am permitted to see the inclination of certain ones to follow their own strong traits of character. If they refuse to yoke up with others who have had a long experience in the work, they will become blinded by self-confidence, not discerning between the false and the true.” Testimonies to Ministers, p 501.

3) THE TRUE FORM OF INDEPENDENCE

The true form of independence which heaven approves of is briefly stated in the following inspired principles: That we are an independent agent who is responsible to God for our own actions and spiritual life — no one else can be blamed if we lose heaven. We are responsible to God to do our own personal study — no one else is to study for us. We are responsible to think for ourselves — we are not to be the shadow or rubber stamp of any person. While we are to ask for advice from others of experience, we are responsible to follow our own convictions — no one else is to be conscience for us. We are responsible to help ourselves — no one else is required to help when we are able. We are responsible for the performance of the work given us to do — no one else can be blamed if it does not get done. We are responsible for our own daily maintenance — no one owes us anything. We are responsible to maintain our integrity, moral righteousness, and obligations in the various affairs of life. And we are responsible to stand for God, His honor, and His truth regardless of the consequences. (List with references provided at this link: <http://www.LightMinistries.com/SDA/True-Independence.pdf>).

4) This form of true independence is founded upon love to God and then love of one another ahead of self, and if followed it will lead to our complete sanctification and eternal life.

“...God's law is given to men as a hedge, a shield. Whoever accepts its principles is preserved from evil. Fidelity to God involves fidelity to man. Thus the law guards the rights, the individuality, of every human being. It restrains the superior from oppression, and the subordinate from disobedience. It ensures man's well-being, both for this world and for the world to come. To the obedient it is the pledge of eternal life, for it expresses the principles that endure forever.” Education, p 76-77.

The fruits borne by following this kind of unselfish holy independence are trust, confidence, fellowship, harmony, unity, order, and peace, and all these are founded upon love. So following this God approved form of true independence will produce unity!

“God desires His people to be disciplined and brought into harmony, that they may see eye to eye. This does not mean that they are to yield up their individuality. Individuality should not be sacrificed, but it should be refined and elevated.” Pacific Union Recorder, December 5, 1901.

“There is at work a wheel within a wheel. Apparently the complication of machinery is so intricate that man can see only a complete entanglement. But the divine hand, as seen by the prophet Ezekiel, is placed upon the wheels, and every part moves in complete harmony, each doing its specified work, yet with individual freedom of action.” Bible Commentary, vol 4, p 1161.

Now how can we be truly independent and yet be truly united together at the same time?

“A life consecrated to the service of God will be developed and beautified in its individuality. No person can sink his individuality in that of another, but we are all, as individuals, to be grafted into the one parent stock, and there is to be unity in diversity. The great Master Artist has not made two leaves of the same tree precisely alike; so His creative power does not give to all minds the same likeness. They are created to live through ceaseless ages, and there is to be complete unity, mind blending with mind; but no two are to be of the same mold.” Mind, Character and Personality, vol 2, p 426.

“Unity in diversity is God's plan. Among the followers of Christ there is to be the blending of diverse elements, one adapted to the other, and each to do its special work for God. Every individual has his place in the filling up of one great plan bearing the stamp of Christ's image....One is fitted to do a certain work, another has a different work for which he is adapted, another has a still different line; but each is to be the complement of the others....The Spirit of God, working in and through the diverse elements, will produce harmony of action....There is to be only one master spirit--the Spirit of Him who is infinite in wisdom, and in whom all the diverse elements meet in beautiful, matchless unity.” Our High Calling, p 169.

5) THE FALSE FORM OF INDEPENDENCE

The false and unholy form of independence which heaven condemns is briefly stated in the following principles: That we are responsible to God alone — no responsibility needs to be shown toward our fellow brethren. We are responsible to God alone for our actions — no one can hold us responsible, or correct, or censure, or discipline us for what we do, even if our actions are wrong and adversely affect our fellow brethren. We are responsible to spiritually unite with God alone — no one is to visibly unite with one another in church or in a working capacity. We are responsible to believe and teach what we want to — regardless of what our fellow brethren agree is truth. We are responsible to follow our own way and do not need to seek or follow the counsel of others of experience. And we are responsible to center our interests in our own work — regardless of the work and interests of our brethren. (List with references provided at this link: <http://www.LightMinistries.com/SDA/False-Independence.pdf>)

6) This false and unsanctified form of independence also centers around us as individuals, but in a selfish and self-exalted manner, which adversely affects others. This form of unholy independence, which is founded upon love of self and its exaltation above all others, heaven highly condemns, and if followed it will lead to our complete selfishness, corruption and eternal death.

“Satan has blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment; and unless every soul shall repent of this their sin, this unsanctified independence that is doing insult to the Spirit of God, they will walk in darkness. I will remove the candlestick out of his place except they repent and be converted, that I should heal them. They have obscured their spiritual eyesight. They would not that God should manifest His Spirit and His power...**They walk in the sparks of their own kindling**, and unless they repent, they shall lie down in sorrow.” Manuscript Releases, vol 3, p 191-192.

The fruits borne by this unsanctified independence are hate, distrust, envy, jealousy, dissension, disorder, division, strife, and rebellion, and all these are founded upon selfishness.

“The evils of self-esteem and an unsanctified independence, which most impair our usefulness, and which will prove our ruin if not overcome, spring from selfishness.” Testimonies, vol 5, p 29.

This unsanctified form of independence can be traced directly back to the first great rebel in heaven — Lucifer — who exhibited an independence which placed his own will and desires first and foremost in his thoughts, feelings, and actions, and placed God and others last or even unthought of.

“...Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will.” Desire of Ages, p 762.

“The fallen angel whom God had made covering cherub, was ruined by his selfish, independent will...Lucifer abode not in the truth. He fell from his integrity. Let everyone learn the lesson which he should learn from this wonderful history.” Sabbath School Worker, March 1, 1893.

7) The Devil spread his unsanctified form of independence throughout the heavenly hosts, and it ended up deceiving 1/3 of all the heavenly angels! These deceived angels then broke up all the unity and harmony in heaven and fought along with Lucifer in warring against God and His will, and they were all cast out of heaven (see Revelation 12:4, 7-9)! The Devil then brought these same rebellious unholy independent principles down to earth to tempt mankind to follow it.

Satan's original lie to Eve was based upon these same principles of unsanctified independence (see Youth's Instructor, July 1, 1897), and sadly both Adam and Eve chose to follow it. But it did not stop there. Not only was this rebellious independence manifested by Lucifer, 1/3 of the angels, and Adam and Eve, but was also manifested by Cain (Signs of the Times, December 16, 1886); Pharaoh (Youth's Instructor, November 30, 1993); king Saul (Signs of the Times, June 1, 1888); the king of Babylon (Youth's Instructor, March 28, 1905); the prodigal son (see Signs of the Times, January 29, 1894), Judas Iscariot (Signs of the Times, June 5, 1884); and it is manifested today by all Laodiceans (Review and Herald, April 1, 1890). And it will continue to be manifested by many of our separated Remnant people and will cause their downfall and loss of heaven, unless they can clearly distinguish between these true and false forms of independence and then choose to follow only the true form!

“Satan understands that success will only attend unity of action. He well knows that independence, self-exaltation, and pride caused him to lose paradise, and he is constantly tempting others to rebel against order and discipline that they may share his fate.” Signs of the Times, July 29, 1880.

8) Those who follow the unsanctified form of independence are especially against any call for a visible unity of each separated Remnant believer with each other. Even though this visible unity is based upon one biblical faith with Christ as our Head under the principles of truth found in John 17, Matthew 18 and with Gospel Order established to guard and protect this unity, yet they continue to oppose it claiming that it will restrict their religious liberty and rightful independence. Yet this excuse of avoiding unity for the sake of liberty and independence is just a well-disguised deception of the Devil himself!

“Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality, that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These deceived souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is in God's order for them to strike out for themselves and choose their own course, independent of their brethren.” Testimonies, vol 1, p 650.