

Peculiar People

Richard Soule

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

— 1 Peter 2:9 (KJV)

Revised 2002

www.peculiarpeoplenovel.com
Dick@peculiarpress.com

© 1997 Richard M. Soule
All Rights Reserved

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture is printed in *italic boldface* and is cited in the Notes section at the back of the book.

Acknowledgements

It seems appropriate to offer a few acknowledgements to people who have in some way contributed to this work. First and foremost, of course, I am grateful to God for giving me the inspiration for the story and the ability to carry it through. I am convinced that major sections of the book were delivered by the Holy Spirit.

Among the people who have played a role are:

- Vicki Beck, who painstakingly proofread the book, finding most, if not all, of the silly errors and offered many words of encouragement.
- Chuck and DruAnn Williams, Bill and Laura Long, Don and Suzie Schultz, Ed and Mary Davis, Wayne and Donna Collins, Ted Matthews, Julie McAlister, and Lynne Cisney, whose supportive feedback has been very gratifying.
- Joe and Vicki Hoffman, who led my wife and me to the Lord 16 years ago, and who remain dear friends.

This book is dedicated to my wife, Jo Jayne, who labors tirelessly with too little reward to provide me with the opportunity to do things like writing this book. Her dedication to her family is a wonderful example to those around her, and many of the portrayals of sensitive acts by women in the book describe her. As a result, the romance contained within the story is, in a very real sense, a love letter to her.

Introductory Notes

Peculiar People is a story of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Most of the characters in the book do not know Jesus when you first encounter them. Consequently, they are still enslaved by sin, and I write frankly (but not graphically) about those sins. As a result, I consider this an adult book, although the behaviors described are generally tamer than one would find on virtually any television show.

The major characters are flawed, as we all are, and even those who surrender their lives to Christ sometimes continue to fall short of God's hopes for them. This is because I wanted the characters in Peculiar People to be realistic—in other words, to be like you and me. I sincerely hope that no reader is offended by the actions of any of the characters, whether fictional or biblical, but I do hope you are shocked. I believe one of the biggest problems in our world is our casual acceptance of sin.

In the back of the book I have included four tables:

- A listing of some of the events in the story—which are biblical, extrabiblical, and fictional
- A listing of the characters in the book, primarily organized by their principle locale
- An annotated bibliography of the books I read in researching and writing Peculiar People—if there are specific incidents or themes, which intrigue you, I suggest you refer to some of these books.
- References to the biblical quotes in the story

I believe you will find Peculiar People to be engaging, instructive, amusing, disturbing, and ultimately inspiring. I hope you enjoy it, but most of all, I hope it touches you in some way.

Incidentally, the book title comes from the King James translation of 1 Peter 2:9. The phrase **ἔθνος ἁγίου πνεύματος** (laos ice peripoiesis) literally means "a people of possession."



Additional maps and other resources can be viewed at www.peculiarpeoplenovel.com



For more information about the early church and its relevance in today's world, visit www.peculiarpeoplenovel.com and subscribe to the free newsletter, *Ekklesia Then & Now*