

Truths God Expects Us to Know and Practice (4)

The Christian is Not of This World

Introduction

- A. The believer has three enemies -- our fleshly nature (Rom. 7:14-25); the Devil (I Peter 5:8,9); and the sinful world system (I John 2:15-17).
- B. In all of these areas where we are so vulnerable, the Lord Jesus has come to be our Deliverer.
- C. We must keep in mind that the deliverance provided for us has to do with the inner transformation of the person. Too often we equate separation from the world as only an outward conformity to certain rules.

I. The Meaning of the Term "World."

- A. The explanation in Ephesians 2:2,3.

Wherein in time past ye walked (lived) according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air ... in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind

- 1. All of us have a past in which we lived according to the world. This is a way of life characterized by satisfying the "lusts and desires of the flesh and mind."
- 2. These verses remind us that Satan has had a lot to do with building the world system about us. We have been taught to seek our own selfish way of life. We have been programmed to live sinfully in such a way that we are under Satanic control.

- B. The explanation in I John 2:15-17.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

- 1. The world is characterized by the sinful desires of our "fleshly nature," "visual and mental pleasures," and "pride." Each of us know the power of these desires is beyond human control and even our comprehension.
- 2. The world, with all its desires, is highly temporary. It is evident that its lusts have a deceptive attraction. No one has ever found satisfaction in such a way of life.

II. The Warnings Regarding the World.

A. Living in harmony with the world will "choke" the Word of God. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word and he become unfruitful. Matthew 13:22

Comment: We cannot live according to the priorities, goals, methods, and pleasures of the world and escape the effects. By such a life we introduce hindrances into our walk with God and the result is we become more and more unfruitful.

B. Living in harmony with the world will make us an enemy of God.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4

Comment: To be friendly with the world is to seek its approval, to find our delight in its ways, and to live compatibly with its ways. The verses reminds us that when we do we violate our relationship with God and become likened to an adulterer. How can we live in harmony with that way of life which crucified the Lord Jesus?

III. The Divine Provision Regarding the Word.

A. The provision of the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

Who (the Lord Jesus) gave himself for us, that he might deliver us from this present evil world . . . Galatians 1:4

Comment: In His work of redemption Jesus Christ broke the bondage the world has over us through sin and Satan.

B. The provision of the new birth.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John 15:9

Comment: When the work of redemption was applied to us in the new birth we were taken out of this world. We are now "strangers" and "pilgrims" in regard to this world.

IV. The Exhortation Regarding the World.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:1,2

Comment: To be "conformed" is to be shaped like another. We are here told not to allow the world to bring us into its bondage. Only as we surrender to God and live in harmony with the Bible can we be free.