

The World and the Successful Christian life

Introduction

A. From the Scripture the Christian understands that he may be the object of temptation and opposition from his sinful nature, from the world about him, and also from Satan his enemy.

B. The term "world" is used in a number of ways in the Bible. In this study we are concerned with the use of the word whereby it designates a way of life which is primarily self-seeking and as such is opposed to genuine faith and holiness.

I. The Meaning of the Term "World".

Wherein in time past ye walked (lived) according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation (daily life) in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Eph. 2:2,3

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 for ever. I John 2:15-17

Observation: Here the term "world" is defined by such words as "self-seeking", "idolatrous", "selfish", "sensual" and "pride".* It is also important to recognize that this world of lust is under the control of Satan and is in the process of passing away*

II. The Believer's Relationship to the World.

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 15:19

I have given them Thy Word and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. John 17:14,16

Observation: The believer has been chosen by Jesus Christ and separated from the world. We have been given a new motivation in love for God, a new nature in the new birth, and a new goal of life, namely, the glory of God.

III. The Divine Provision Regarding the World.

... In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. John 16:33

Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father. Gal: 1:4

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. Gal. 6:14

Observation: That which separates the believer from the world system is the work of Jesus Christ. The Cross of Calvary stands between the Christian and the world. Therefore, the Christian has the ability given to him in his salvation to live free from the demands of the world.

IV. The Exhortation Regarding the World.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye 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

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world. James 1:27

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world I John 2:15

Observation: These verses state what the believer must do every day: choose not to be involved in the world. We must daily make the decision of faith to be free from selfishness, sensuality and pride.

V. The Warning Regarding the World.

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 becometh unfruitful. Matthew 13:22

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. I Cor. 11:32

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

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Ephesians 6:12

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. I John 2:17

Observations:

1. One cannot live according to the patters of the world and not be encumbered by its "care" • This burden will "choke" the Word and rob us of fruitfulness.
2. God has made every provision, even chastening, to keep us from the damage the world could do to us. When we choose to cooperate with the world we are working against the will and provision of God.
3. For a believer to live a worldly life is to allow Satan, in some measure, to dictate in his life. He is describe as an adulterer before God.
4. The desires, satisfactions and even the world itself is temporary. It is an illusion to believe that fulfillment comes by worldliness.