

Love Of The World

The New Testament teaches that to be a follower of Jesus Christ it is necessary that a person turns their back on the world and have **no** fellowship with it.

Jesus Christ drew a sharp contrast between the Kingdom of God and this world and said that no-one could be at the same time a lover of both.

John 18:36 [NIV] *“Jesus said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.’”*

Jesus Christ was the King of a world that came from heaven, the Kingdom of God.

John 8:23 [NIV] *“But he continued, ‘You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.’”*

The world that Jesus Christ was **not** a part of was “*kōsmōs*” the Greek word translated “world” meaning orderly arrangement or adornment by implication its inhabitants.

We find this to be taught by the apostles. [**Romans 12:2; Galatians 1:3-5**]

This proves why we should separate ourselves from world’s way of living life.

James 4:4 [NIV] *“You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred towards God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”*

To be a friend of this world and its way of life is to become an enemy of the Creator God, Jesus Christ.

1 John 2:15-17 [NIV] *“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world, the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does, comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives for ever.”*

What the world offers is short-lived, eternal life is found **only** within the Creator God’s spirit world.

The question of the Christian and this world is not simple.

Before we can be sure of our relationship with something we must be sure we know what it is.

The fact is that two worlds coexist around us and with both we are to have two relationships.

One world the Creator God made out of nothing, the other humans made by taking the materials that came from God and fashioning them into a moral caricature of the original.

Both of these worlds have been affected by sinning human beings but only one has been subject to certain moral laws by the Creator God.

The non-moral, non-intelligent creation usually called “*nature*” has been injured by the moral and spiritual collapse of humanity, the beings for whom it was created. [**Genesis 1:26**]

Our relationship with this physical world around us was defined by the Creator God from the very beginning of human life.

Genesis 2:15 [NIV] *“The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”*

We are to work with it and take care of it, humans from the very beginning have failed to fulfil this command.

Romans 8:22-23 [NIV] *“We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”*

All of creation is groaning with the pain of physical decay, having fallen from its original perfect state because of sinning humanity.

Romans 1:20 [NIV] *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”*

The perfect, harmonious physical creation and its sacrificial undertone was intended to point us towards the very perfect sacrificial love of our Creator God. Also show His great power and wisdom.

Yet human thought and erroneous teaching of evolution has suppressed the truth about a Creator God.

[Please download and study the articles on this website under the sub-heading ‘*Evolution*’]

We are to love this wonderful physical creation provided we understand that it is a gift from God and **not** confuse it with God Himself, as some people have.

Deuteronomy 4:15-19 [NIV] *“You saw no form of any kind the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire. Therefore watch yourselves very carefully, so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, whether formed like a man or a woman, or like any animal on earth or any bird that flies in the air, or like any creature that moves along the ground or any fish in the waters below. And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars, all the heavenly array, do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the LORD your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven.”*

The children of Israel fresh out of pagan Egypt were warned **not** to worship this physical creation as the Egyptians did.

The created world is to be prized for its usefulness, loved for its beauty and esteemed as the gift of the Creator God for His potential children.

This love would appear to be altogether in accord with the spirit of the Psalms and the prophets and though there is less emphasis upon nature, in the New Testament much appreciation of natural things may be found also.

What then is that world which we are warned by Jesus Christ and the apostles?

The world whose friendship constitutes spiritual adultery, the love that stands in opposition to the love for God.

No Christian need fail to recognise this world, provided they want to know what it is and where it is located.

Following are some infallible marks of identification:

Unbelief –

Wherever people refuse to come under the authority of the inspired Holy Scriptures, the Christian Bible, there is found the world we are to avoid.

Any religion without the Son of God, Jesus Christ, at its centre is a worldly religion.

To have fellowship with those who live in such unbelief is to love this world.

The Christian's communion should be with other Christians.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 [NIV] *“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.’”*

With unbelief comes darkness, the deception that Satan has as yet been allowed to impose on the vast majority of human beings. [**Revelation 12:9**]

Impenitence –

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 [NIV] *“yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.”*

The people of the world will readily admit that they are sinners but their lack of sorrow that leads to repentance, distinguishes them from Christians.

The Christian mourns over their sin and the Holy Spirit in them will lead them to repentance. [**Romans 2:4; John 16:8**]

The worldly person will shrug off their sin and continue in it.

Godless philosophies –

The worldly person lives by a creed whether they know it or not, and we can judge that person by the fruits of that creed in their lives.

The worldly person accepts the sufficiency of this physical life and makes **no** provision for any future beyond it.

The worldly person esteems the physical above the spiritual, that is time above eternity.

The worldly person esteems the pleasing of other human beings above pleasing the Creator God they do **not** believe exists. [**Psalms 14:1**]

The worldly person holds sin to be relatively harmless and believes pleasure to be an end in itself.

These worldly philosophies can even be accepted and held by people who consider themselves as religious people.

Externalism –

The worldly person lives for what they find in the world around them.

The true Christian lives for what is in their mind and human spirit, as they prepare, guided by the Holy Spirit, for a Kingdom that is **not** of this world but of the world to come.

Galatians 5:16-17 [NIV] *“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.”*

There is a continual conflict between the work of the Holy Spirit and our human nature.

The worldly person gives into the human nature and the “*fruits*” that produces are listed in God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

Galatians 5:19-21 [NIV] *“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

A person with such “*fruits*” in their lives are **not** only worldly but will **not** inherit the Kingdom of God, that is the created family of God with eternal life.

To sum up worldliness –

Whoever promotes self, cheapens quality of life and starves the human spirit of spiritual growth.

Whoever hopes without any Biblical grounds for hope.

Whoever adopts current moral standards, whoever follows the way of the majority of people whether it is right or wrong.

Whoever indulges in the pleasures of the flesh to make bearable the secret thoughts in the back of their mind of death and judgement.

Such people are part of the world true Christians are to avoid.

With such an avoidance of this world we find a paradox in God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

John 3:16-21 [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”*

God loves the “*kōsmōs*” that is the inhabitants of the earth.

So great is this love that God was willing to allow His only Son to go through the agony and humiliation of the crucifixion.

How come?

Genesis 1:26-27 [King James] *“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”*

All human beings are created in the very “*image*” of God, that is a shadow of the real thing.

Created to become like Him in character, meaning of the word “*likeness*.”

2 Peter 3:9 [NIV] *“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*

It is the Creator God’s wish that all human beings should come to repentance and through the work of the Holy Spirit in them develop the “*fruits*” of the Holy Spirit that is the very character of the Creator God.

John 17:14-17 [NIV] *“I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”*

Christians are to remain in the world but **not** to be a part of it, set apart by the way they live.

Matthew 5:13-16 [NIV] *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

This is the reason we are to remain in this world, **not** physically isolate ourselves from it.

Revelation 12:9-11 [NIV] *“The great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: ‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.’”*

Christians are to overcome the influence of Satan in the world by preaching the Good News of what God has done for all humanity through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ and the example of their own way of living as disciples of Jesus Christ.

This witness by true Christians will **not** be without personal sacrifice.