

3. Know Your Enemy: The World!

The devil is not alone in opposing the Believer in Christ. He is aided by two allies dedicated to oppose our desire to glorify our **Lord Jesus Christ**. They are **the World**, a *System of Beliefs opposed to God*, and **the Sin Nature**, which is *the remnant of our 'Old Man' still residing in our Flesh*, which we will study in the *next Lesson*!

In the *previous Lesson*, we considered our situation behind enemy lines. Here, *satan* has established his own kingdom, the **World System** opposed to the One True God, over which he rules as a god ... blinding and enslaving *all* who live within it, save for the *children of Light* who walk in **God's Kingdom**.

The World

Romans 12:2

*"And do not be conformed to this world,
but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,"*

How does the World pressure us to conform? _____

List various Worldly values/ideals we are pressured to accept:

What makes the Apostle Paul's advice the most effective way to counteract the World's pressure for us to conform?

Deuteronomy 18:9

*"When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you,
you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things
of those nations.*

Why did Moses give the Israelites the above advice? _____

In his quest to be like God, *satan* created the **World System**, a *counterfeit* of God's Kingdom designed to provide the things that people seek to live a *fulfilling* life: **Security, Self-Worth** and **Significance**. But it's all an *illusion*. It instead offers *False Security, False Self-Worth* and *False Significance*, for in the end, this World is subject to *decay* and *death*.

The Apostle Paul, well aware that the Christians in Rome were at the centre of the 1st century World and vulnerable to the World's *deception*, exhorts the Believers there in his letter to them.

Romans 12:2 (Observations)

Circle what they must *not* be.
Underline how they should be transformed instead.

The Greek word translated '*conformed*', presents the picture of something being pressed in a mold so that it emerges in the very shape and likeness that the mold is designed to make. **The World** is the shape into which *satan's* Mold is pressuring everyone. In our time, the shape may be what is '*politically correct*', or *morally convenient*. **Christians** will almost always find themselves at odds to the currently acceptable and popular values, and unless they have *renewed* their minds, they will find themselves unable to resist the pressure to conform.

Most people tend to be **conformists**, not wanting to '*rock the boat*' or '*cause trouble*.' But God wants His children to be '**transformists**', *agents of change* toward a **Godly** way of living and thinking!

Just prior to entering the *Promised Land*, **Moses** gives the following advice.

Deuteronomy 18:9 (Observations)
Underline what Moses advised them.

The cultural practices of '*those nations*' included *child sacrifice, divination, witchcraft, fortune telling, sorcery, casting of spells, spiritism and necromancy*. Basically, *satanism, devil worship or luciferianism*.

In this World, you are either in *satan's kingdom* or *God's*. **There is no in between!** The Apostle Paul makes that clear when he reminds the Believers in Ephesus ...

Ephesians 2:1-2

1 **"And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,**
2 **in which you formerly walked**
according to the course of this world,
according to the prince of the power of the air,
of the spirit that is now working
in the sons of disobedience."

How were we 'dead' in our 'trespasses and sins'? _____

What does the Apostle Paul mean when he says we 'walked
according to the course of this world'? _____

What does the Apostle Paul mean when he says we 'walked ...
according to the prince of the power of the air'? _____

Ephesians 2:4-6

4 **But God, being rich in mercy,**
because of His great love with which He loved us
5 **even when we were dead in our transgressions,**
made us alive together with Christ
(by grace you have been saved),
6 **and raised us up with Him,**
and seated us with Him in the heavenly places
in Christ Jesus,

What is God's ultimate solution to satan's World? _____

If I asked you if you have ever been a follower of satan, most would say, 'No way!' But according to the Apostle Paul, we may very well have been.

Ephesians 2:1-2 (Observations)

Circle what we were in our '*trespasses and sins*'.

Circle according to what we '*formerly walked*'. (*two things*)

Underline where *satan's 'spirit'* is now working.

The Apostle Paul teaches that before we were '*born again*' by **God's Spirit**, we were '*dead*' as far as God was concerned, and unable to comprehend nor communicate with Him as surely as a corpse can comprehend or communicate with the living. We were cut off from God, and walking in the *world of satan*, according to *his* will and *his* spirit, and **against God's**.

We were completely without hope apart from God's mercy. The World was our home and the course we followed, indulging in its lusts, if not fleshly, then certainly in our minds and hearts. And thus we were objects of **God's wrath**, destined for *eternal punishment*, with no way out.

Then a lifeline was thrown our way called the **Love of God** through **Christ Jesus**, and we grabbed on to **Hope**.

Ephesians 2:4-6 (Observations)

v4

Circle how God is described.

Underline why He is described so.

v5

Underline what we were even when God loved us.

Circle what God did to us with Christ.

Circle how we are 'saved'.

v6

Circle what God did to us with Christ.

Underline where God seated us.

This is one of my favorite passages in Scripture! It details how *God saves us from satan's grasp* by **transferring** anyone who **believes in Jesus** and is *sick of living an empty life of sin ... into His glorious Kingdom!* And this, **not because of any thing we have done**, but completely by **God's Grace through our faith** in what **Christ has done for us! Amen!**

So what should our attitude be toward the World? The *Apostle John* gives us the answer ... *and more!*

1 John 2:15-17

- 15 "Do not love the world nor the things in the world.
"If anyone loves the world,
the love of the Father is not in him.
- 16 "For all that is in the world,
the lust of the flesh and
the lust of the eyes and
the boastful pride of life,
is not from the Father,
but is from the world.
- 17 "The world is passing away,
and also its lusts;
but the one who does the will of God
lives forever."

Why does the Apostle John command us not to love the World?

List examples of the following:

'the lust of the flesh': _____

'the lust of the eyes': _____

'the boastful pride of life': _____

What is significant about the fact that 'the World is passing away'?

What is significant about the truth that the 'one who does the will of God lives forever' in light of the World passing away?

1 John 2:15-17 (Observations)

v15

Underline what we are *not* to do.

Circle what is *not* in us if we love the World.

v16

Circle the *three* things in the World.

Circle from where they are *not*.

v17

Underline what is happening to the World.

Circle what else is passing away.

Underline *who* will live forever.

All three words translated '*love*' in verse 15 come from the Greek word '*agape*' which describes how people value, or cherish, things or persons. It is in the *imperative mood* which labels it as a *command*. Whereas we often see **Love** as a *feeling*, Scripture most often describes it as **a choice** we make in light of the Truth of God's Word.

We are commanded *not* to love the World, primarily because it is *fleeting*. Why treasure something so *temporal* when God provides that which is *eternal*! Sure, the World offers us *pleasure* and all manner of things that cater to our *egos*, but in the end, **everything** in the World will *disappear* as surely and as quickly as an ice cube on the hot desert sand.

Those who seek to find their *significance, security and self-esteem* solely in the things of this World will inevitably be disappointed, for those *things* will eventually **pass away** taking with them our *hopes*, our *self-worth* and our *reasons for living*.



**"He is No Fool
Who Gives
What He Cannot Keep,
To Gain
What He Cannot Lose."
Jim Elliot**



Application

Review this Lesson and Answer the Following:

1. Describe The World and why we should never Love it.

2. What Specific Things Will You Do to Apply What you Have Learned?
