

1. THE “WORLD”

Principle – Faithfully following Christ will automatically set you apart from the world.

Key Scripture:

1 John 2:15-16 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.

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an **enemy** of God.

John 15:18-20 If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.

Comment

The “world” here refers to the way the fallen world around us operates –it is under the control of Satan and organised against God and righteousness. Whether we like it or not, we will not fit into the fallen world around us if we are living in a way that pleases God.

The things of the “world” fall into 3 basic categories – the temptations that come from the fact that we live in physical bodies (eg gluttony, sexual sin), those that come from coveting things in the world around us (eg possessions, wealth) and those that feed our pride (status, popularity, power).

Scripture tells us that mature Christians will be respected by the unsaved (eg 1 Tim 3:7), but we cannot be comfortable in the world and comfortable with God at the same time.

Application in daily life??

- ◆ If our lifestyle and values do not have some tensions with the way the world “does business”, beware – God tells us that it is impossible to please him while we are undistinguishable from the world around us!
- ◆ Avoid the temptation of thinking that we can minimise persecution by being part of our self-indulgent, sexually promiscuous, money and power worshipping society and still retain a powerful, blessed, Christian life.
- ◆ Accept that an obedient Christian life will make us different to the world in many aspects of our lives. Learn to enjoy the testimony there is in being different!

What is your example in this area –is God’s approval more important than the world’s approval – or vice-versa??