

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXXI

November 14, 2021

No. 47

## Me Against The World

By (Jerry Fite)

**J**ohn writes, “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world... (I John 2:15)*”. The Christian must develop a healthy attitude towards the world. It is negative: “love not the world;” but it is positive for our spiritual health. John is not saying we should not love people who live in the world. Certainly John, led by the Holy Spirit, would not contradict God who “*so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son*” so all the people of the world could be saved (*John 3:16*). The “world” denotes other concepts than people who make up the world.

John has two other facets of the world in mind. First, we are not to favorably regard the world’s philosophy. For example, we must not get caught up in thinking that this life is all there is. If so, we will “*eat, and drink, for tomorrow we die*” (*I Corinthians 15:32*). We will compromise tomorrow’s promises for today’s pleasures. Second, we are not to love “*the things*” that are in the world. John does not focus on specific “things” such as money jewelry, or cars, but on our attitude toward things that are in the world: “*...the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life*” (*I John 2:16*). Anything that attracts our desirous eyes, glitters with the promise of satisfying

fleshly lusts, or strokes our pride to make us feel important are not the things we should love. If so, “*the love of the Father*” is not in us (*I John 2:15*).

James puts it this way: “*...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever thereof would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God*” (*James 4:4*). Following the worldly philosophy of warring to obtain or selfishly spend possessions to satisfy one’s own pleasures is forsaking God’s headship. James labels those who have bought in to this world’s philosophy as “*ye adulteresses...*” (*James 4:4*). The Christian cannot be faithful to God and at the same time be friends with or love the world.

Refusing to love or have a favorable regard for the world, we will ground ourselves to fulfill other responsibilities regarding “the world.” We are not to be “*fashioned according to this world*” and are to “*keep oneself unspotted from the world*” (*Romans 12:2, James 1:27*). We must maintain a healthy respect for this present world. It forms an inviting mold conforming us to its own thinking. As it molds our thoughts, it blemishes our souls.

A big red warning sign reading: “**Beware Of The World**” should continually occupy a prominent place in our minds, so we do not wander too close to the staining grasp of this world.

We must do more than just love “not” - we must fill our minds with the wisdom of God. We must “renew our minds” (*Romans 12:2*). It is paramount to think on what is “*...pure, lovely, of good report, and virtuous...*” (*Philippians 4:8*). This spiritual “transformation” manifests a distinctive change. As a caterpillar changes into a beautiful butterfly, the Christian manifests a beautiful change from this world’s corrupting mold.

We cannot just sit back thinking the Holy Spirit will take over living our lives for us, for God expects us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. The Spirit offers to lead us by His Word, but we must follow His prescriptive wisdom (*cf. Romans 8:14*). “*It is written...*” grounded our Lord’s mind when he faced temptation (*Matthew 4:4,7,10*). Are we stronger than He? The daily refreshing of our minds in reading God’s Word will place our feet in a strong defensive posture to resist the Devil’s wily and persistence onslaughts.