

# Glad Tidings

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

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## In the world, but not of the world

(Jerry Fite)

**B**efore departing this world, Jesus prayed His apostles would remain in this world while His Father protected them from the evil one. As confirming ambassadors, the apostles had a work to accomplish. They were to preach the saving gospel of Christ to the lost world in sin. While remaining in the world to accomplish this task, the apostles were to continue being diligent in being not like the world (*cf. John 17:14-15*). The Christian on earth today can sum up this reality by resolving, “while in the world, I will not be like the world.”

We know in accomplishing this goal, we must not “love the world” with its fleshly appeals (*1 Jn. 2:15-16*). Believing God is able to “keep us from stumbling,” we strive to “keep ourselves in the Love of God” by building ourselves up in a most holy “faith,” and through “prayer” (*Jude 1: 24, 20-21*).

David, in his prayerful fourth Psalm, provides greater insight into distinguishing between the life of believers and that of the world. Being steadfast in prayer is a distinguishing mark. David opens with his prayerful plea for God to “Answer me when I call... and have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer”

(*Psalm 4:1*). David is praying with confidence that “the Lord will hear him” when he calls, and has “set him at large” by lifting his burden when he was “in distress” (*Psalm 4:3; Psalm 4:1*). How many of this world have this ongoing relationship with God in prayer?

Many of this world do not mind lying about others to tear people down they do not like. David felt this reality, being the object of false accusations: “*Oh ye sons of men, how long shall my glory be turned into dishonor? How long will ye love vanity, and seek after falsehood?*” (*Psalm 4:2*). David was living the life of righteousness according to God’s standard. Approaching God honestly and with humility, David addressed the Lord as the “*God of his righteousness*” (*Psalm 4:1*). The world would rather tear down the godly righteous, than rise up to God’s holy standard. Lying is the Devil’s way of keeping those of the world in darkness while destroying the influence of the godly. Being not of this world means you will “lie” not at all...period. (*Colossians 3:9*).

People of the world who do not believe in God despairingly ask, “Who will show us any good?” Atheists can only look

to self, or humanity in general for good. David quickly responds to worldly despair by imploring, “*Jehovah, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us*” (*Psalm 4:6*). Believers know it is God who gives life and breath to all on earth, including all good things (*Acts 17:25; James 1:17*). All things, like the food we eat, God gives to sustain us on earth. He gives the rains from heaven and fruitful seasons to enjoy (*Acts 14:17*). But there is something else the believer receives that supersedes a bountiful harvest. David puts it this way in his talk with God in prayer: “*Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than they have when their gain and their new wine are increased*” (*Psalms 4:7*).

The believer, who is not of this world, knows it is God who gives us material blessings. But the believer has a spiritual bonus: a joy of gladness greater than a bountiful harvest.

A final characteristic distinguishing those who live in the world, but not of the world is in *Psalm 4:8*. You will not hear the following confident declaration from those who are of this world: David declares, “*In peace will I lay me down to sleep; for thou Jehovah, alone makest me dwell in safety.*”