**27.01.2018 - ESCAPING THE WORLD’S WAYS**

***“Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. . . He who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like foliage”. Proverbs 11:4, 28.***

***“Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”. John 16:33.***

***“The prince of this world…has nothing in me”. John 14:30.***

The title of our study this week is carefully worded and we need to understand what it means:

*‘Escaping’* implies that we are in bondage and need to be delivered.

We are to escape from *‘the world’s ways’*. We are not asked to escape from ‘the world’.

We therefore need to differentiate between *‘the world’s ways’* and *‘the world’*.

The New Testament Greek word for ‘world’ is the word *‘kosmos’*.

It has 2 meanings:

1. A harmonious order or arrangement (of a constitution or government e.g. God’s kingdom, Satan’s kingdom).
2. Adornment. Luke 21:5, Rev 21:2, 1 Pet 3:3.

When the New Testament writers used the word, they used it in 3 contexts:

1. The material universe, planet earth. Acts 17:14, John 1:10.
2. The inhabitants of planet earth. In this context, ‘Kosmos’ is used in 2 ways:
3. All the world. John 3:16, John 1:10, John 17:21.
4. The race of fallen men, alienated from God and hostile to Him. Hebrews 11:38, John 14:17, 27; John 15:18.
5. The World system or order that is governed by Satan. Worldly affairs, riches, goods, pleasures, advantages, which though we know are transitory, nevertheless seduce us away from God.

*‘world affairs, the aggregate of things earthly…the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments riches, advantages, pleasures, etc, which although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ’. Strong’s Concordance.*

**It is the last of these (the world order and its ways that are governed by Satan) that our lesson is concerned with.**

a. ‘Things that are in the world’. 1 John 2:15.

b. ‘The world’s goods’. 1 John 3:17.

c. ‘Gain the whole world and forfeit his life’. Matthew 16:26.

d. ‘Worldly lusts’. Titus 2:12.

e. ‘The spirit of the world’, ‘the wisdom of this world’, ‘the fashion of this world’. 1 Corinthians 2:12; 3:19; 7:31.

f. ‘The corruption that is in the world’. 2 Peter 1:4.

g. ‘The lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father, but of the world’. 1 John 2:16.

h. The Christian is to keep himself ‘unspotted from the world’. James 1:27.

**Satan is the mind behind the system:**

After the Fall of man, Satan became the Ruler of this world. He has set up a world system or order that is completely contrary to the will of God. It is a system that is hostile to the laws of God; that rules by force and not by love. And all human beings born into this world as sons of Adam are born with minds alienated from God.

*The ‘world knew not God...’ 1 Cor 1:21...’hated Christ’. John 15:16...cannot receive the Spirit of Truth. John 14:17...’its works are evil. John 7:7 and ‘friendship with the world is enmity with God’. James 4:4.*

Satan is the mind behind the system. He is the Prince of this world. John 12:31, 14:30 and 16:11. He is ‘*in the world’. 1 John 4:4,* andhis rule holds sway over his subjects, the citizens of planet earth.

*“The whole world lies in the evil one”. 1 John 5:19.* He is the “*world ruler of this darkness – the ‘kosmokrator’”. Ephesians 6:12.*

**Since the Fall, when man chose to live apart from God, mankind is alienated and hostile to God (unless men and women choose to respond to the gospel).**

**We are called to be good stewards of this planet, and to love its inhabitants as God does. We are to live among them as light and salt and by our witness draw men and women to God.**

*“You are the light of the world”. Matthew 5:14.*

*“I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world”. John 17:15, 16.*

*“Become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in-the-midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world”. Philippians 2:15.*

*“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us”. 2 Corinthians 5:20.*

**How do we escape the lifestyle of a world that is under the rule of Satan?**

**We must first recognise that we are no longer citizens of Satan’s kingdom; no longer citizens of this world. We are therefore not governed by its principles.**

We have believed and received Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. And God Himself has delivered us from the kingdom of darkness to His kingdom of light. He has delivered us from the bondage of sin. All this has been done for us through the mighty death of Christ.

*“Let us give thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:12-14.*

*“And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm.” Deuteronomy 15:5.*

*“You are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption (deliverance).” 1 Corinthians 1:30.*

A citizen of God’s kingdom of light recognises that:

1. He does not belong to Satan’s kingdom; God has delivered him from sin and death to righteousness and eternal life. *‘Our citizenship is in heaven…’. Philippians 3:20.*
2. The values of God’s kingdom and Satan’s kingdom CANNOT co-exist…”*Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” James 4:4.*
3. Satan’s kingdom has the sentence of death upon it, and therefore, everything that the world offers has the sentence of death upon it…” *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” 1 John 2:17.*

**Escaping the ways of the World**

*“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.” John 1:5 (NLT).*

*“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” 1 John 5:4, 5.*

God has delivered us from sin and death; He does not deliver us from the world. He wants us to live in it and be witnesses for Him. But He does want us to overcome the world, to escape its ways. And though we no longer desire to sin, Satan uses worldliness as a method of taking our eyes off Jesus.

Our only hope of escaping the principles of the world is to live in a faith relationship with Jesus; a faith relationship that is a response to His unconditional, unchanging, self-giving love. All those who have a living faith relationship with Christ will overcome the world.

This living faith relationship with Christ acknowledges:

1. That Christ alone is worthy of worship; not self nor Satan…. ”Y*ou shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve’. Matthew 4:10.*
2. That Christ alone is worthy of our service. He is Lord of my life, not self or Satan.
3. That I must be a student of the written Word, which in turn will lead me to the Living Word, Christ Jesus… “*Thy word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” Psalm 119:11. “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12.*
4. Christ must dwell in my heart through the in-dwelling Spirit*. “And I will pray to the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” John 14:16, 17.*
5. I must surrender to the leading of the Spirit, so that He is not just present, but also that He is powerful in my life.

*“For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you*

*will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” Romans 8:13, 14.*

*“Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27.*

This continual relationship between Christ and me will lead to a permanent change in my attitude to the world; I live in it but am no longer attached to it. Its principles, its desires and its goals are no longer mine. Instead of worldliness, I seek only godliness. My life is a life of praise and confident communication (prayer) with God. Like Jesus, Satan will have nothing in me (John 14:30) because I am born of God and live totally surrendered to His will.

*“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.” Philippians 4:8.*

*“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.” 1 John 5:19-21.*

*"Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14.*

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Fade, fade, each earthly joy;
Jesus is mine.
Break every tender tie;
Jesus is mine.
Dark is the wilderness,
Earth has no resting place,
Jesus alone can bless;
Jesus is mine.

Tempt not my soul away;
Jesus is mine.
Here would I ever stay;
Jesus is mine.
Perishing things of clay,
Born but for one brief day,
Pass from my heart away;
Jesus is mine.

Farewell, ye dreams of night;
Jesus is mine.
Lost in this dawning bright,
Jesus is mine.
All that my soul has tried
Left but a dismal void;
Jesus has satisfied;
Jesus is mine.

*Catherine Bonar*

God Bless.

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