

SATAN'S WORLD SYSTEM

1. Definitions.

a. κόσμος.

(1) “At least three general senses attach to [the expression κόσμος]. (1) The material earth as a creation of God (Ac 17:24). (2) The inhabitants of the world. These are the ones whom God loved and for whom Christ died (Jn 3:16). (3) The institutions of men as set up independent of God and headed by Satan, that is, the satanic system organized upon principles of self, greed, armament, and commercialism. This is the world that God does not love and the believer is warned against loving (1 Jn 2:15-17). The word κόσμος is used 176 times in all.”¹

(2) *BDAG*:

(a) “[T]he sum total of everything here and now, *the world, the (orderly) universe, in philosophical usage*” (*BDAG*, 561).

(b) “[T]he sum total of all beings above the level of the animals, *the world*” (*BDAG*, 561).

(c) “[P]lanet earth as a place of inhabitation, *the world*” (*BDAG*, 561).

(d) “[H]umanity in general, *the world*” (*BDAG*, 562).

(e) “[T]he system of human existence in its many aspects, ...*the world, and everything that belongs to it, appears as that which is hostile to God, i.e. lost in sin, wholly at odds w. anything divine, ruined and depraved*” (*BDAG*, 562).

b. αἰών: “a segment of time as a particular unit of history, *age*” (*BDAG*, 32).

(1) **Ro 12:2** 2 Do not be conformed to this age (τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ) but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the desire of God, what is good, acceptable, and perfect.

(2) **2 Co 4:4** 4 In their case the god of this age (αἰῶν) has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of God.

(3) **Eph 2:1-2** 1 You were dead because of the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked according to the age of this world (τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου), following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

(4) 2 Ti 4.10

(5) The age (of which Satan is god) means “all that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at anytime current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitute a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral, atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitable to exhale—all this is included in the *aion*, which is ... the subtle informing spirit of the *kosmos*, or world of men who are living alienated apart from God.”²

c. Quotes.

¹ Lewis S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 7:311.

² R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (London: Kegan Paul, 1886), 218.

- (1) “What is the world? ... To Cromwell it was, as he told his daughter, ‘whatever cooleth thine affection after Christ.’ Bunyan gave his definition of the world in his picture of Vanity Fair. Milton likened the world to an obscuring mist—a fog that renders dim and indistinct the great realities and vitalities of life. It is an atmosphere that chills the finest delicacies and sensibilities of the soul. It is too subtle and too elusive to be judged by external appearances.”³
- (2) “[T]he cosmos world is that system organized by Satan, headed by Satan, and run by Satan, which leaves God out and is a rival to Him.”⁴
- (3) “The unbelieving world or domination system is under Satan’s sway, being held captive to his schemes. He blinds those in the domination system (2 Co 4:4). They are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1-3) and are slaves to his tactics and nature (Ga 4:3, 9). For a season Satan and his hosts are allowed to continue to exert authority here on earth in his domain of darkness (Col 1:13; Eph 2:1-3).”⁵

2. Key Passage.

- a. **Jn 15:18-21** 18 If the world (ὁ κόσμος) hates you, know that it has hated me [Jesus] before it hated you. 19 If you were from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), the world would love you as its own. But because you are not from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), but I chose you out of the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you: A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. 21 But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him [the Father] who sent me.

3. Ruler: Satan.

- a. **Mt 4:8-9** 8 The devil took [Jesus] to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the *world* and their glory. 9 And he said to him, All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.
(1) Jesus doesn’t refute Satan’s ability to give him the kingdoms of the world.
- b. **Jn 12:31** 31 Now is the judgment of this *world* (κόσμου τούτου). Now will the ruler of this *world* (ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου) be cast out.
- c. **Jn 16:11** 11 ...Concerning judgment, because the ruler of this *world* is judged.
- d. **2 Co 4:3-4** 3 Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case *the god of this age* (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah....
- e. **Eph 2:1-2** 1 You were dead because of your offences and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the age (τὸν αἰῶνα) of this world (κόσμος), according to *the prince of the power of the air* [Satan], of the spirit (πνεῦμα) that is now operating (ἐνεργέω, pres.) in the sons [and daughters] of disobedience [unbelievers].

³ Frank W. Boreham, *A Handful of Stars*, 14-15.

⁴ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 172-173.

⁵ A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey* (Baker Book Group, 2004), [].

- f. **1 Jn 5:19** 19 We [believers] know that we are [sourced] from God, and that the whole world (ὁ κόσμος ὅλος) lies (κεῖμαι⁶) in *the evil one* (ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ).
- (1) Satan's rule over the world system is total and pervasive.
- g. Comments.
- (1) Satan stole rulership of the world from man in Ge 3.
- (2) Satan's okay with us not realising he is ruling the world.
- (a) "The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist."⁷
- (3) In our age of atheism, secular humanism, and expressive individualism, few will admit they are being ruled by a fallen angel.
- (4) Satan's rule over this world is temporarily permitted by God.

4. Subjects: All Unbelievers.

- a. All unbelievers, whether they admit it or not:
- (1) Are energised by Satan.
- (a) **Eph 2:1-2** 1 You were dead because of the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked according to the age of this world (τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου), following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working (ἐνεργέω, pres.) in the sons of disobedience.
- 1) ἐνεργέω: "to put one's capabilities into operation, work, be at work, be active, operate, be effective" (*BDAG*, 335).
- (b) This energy works alike in immoral sinners (Ro 1:18-32), moral sinners (Ro 2:1-16), and religious sinners (Ro 2:17-29).
- (2) Lie in the power of Satan.
- (a) **1 Jn 5:19** 19 We [believers] know that we are [sourced] from God, and that the whole world (ὁ κόσμος ὅλος) lies (κεῖμαι⁸) in the evil one (ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ).
- b. Comments.
- (1) It is only the church that does not lie in the power of the evil one. This makes us very special.
- (a) **2 Th 2:6-7** 6 And you know what is restraining him [the antimessiah] now so that he may be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains [the Spirit] it will do so [through the church] until he [the Spirit] is out of the way.
- (2) We may live practically as subjects of Satan's world system, even though we were transferred positionally to the kingdom of God's Son.
- (a) **Col 1:13-14** 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- (3) We must be careful how we speak with unbelievers about the truths above.

⁶ Pres. mid. ind.

⁷ The character Keyser Soze, in the film *The Usual Suspects* (1995).

⁸ Pres. mid. ind.

5. Spirit.

- (1) **1 Co 2:12** 12 Now we have received not the *spirit* of the world, but the Spirit who is from God....
 - (a) “The (divine) Pneuma stands in contrast to everything that characterizes this age or the finite world gener.” (*BDAG*, 835).
 - (b) The world spirit is that attitude/mindset/viewpoint of the world that opposes God at every turn.
- (2) **Eph 2:1-2** 1 You were dead because of the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked according to the age of this world (τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου), following the prince of the power of the air, the *spirit* [attitude/mindset/viewpoint] that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.
 - (3) “The spirit of the age—any age—is always opposed to the spirit of Christ.”⁹
- b. Independence, rather than dependence.
 - (1) Self-righteousness, pulling up oneself by one’s bootstraps, achievement.
 - (2) “Satan’s aim is to create a system that rivals God’s kingdom but that leaves Him out. It is to promote a counterfeit order. Basically, the cosmos is evil because it is independent of God. It may contain good aspects as well as overtly evil aspects, but its inherent evil lies in its being independent of God and a rival to Him.”¹⁰
- c. Self-focus, rather than others-focus.
 - (1) **Is 14:13-14** 13 You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven. Above the stars [angels] of God I will set my throne on high. I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north. 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself like the Most High (יִיָּצֵן).
 - (2) Selfishness is the prevailing philosophy of the world.
- d. Pride, rather than humility.
 - (1) **1 Jn 2:16** 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου).
- e. Present-focus, rather than future-focus.
 - (1) **Mt 6:19-21** 19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
 - (2) “Thus Satan seeks to achieve his purposes by trying to change our priorities (self first) and our perspective (here and now more important). In reality the truth is that God is first and eternity most important.”¹¹
 - (3) “Instant gratification.”
 - (4) Satan wants us to lose the plot, to narrow our vision rather than to broaden it.

⁹ Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*, 322.

¹⁰ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 173.

¹¹ Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 173-74.

6. Doctrine.

- a. **Ga 4:3-9** 3 We also, when we were children, were being (imperf.) enslaved (perf. pass.) under the *fundamental principles/elemental spirits of the world* (ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου). ...8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. 9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless *fundamental principles/elemental spirits (στοιχεῖα) of the world*, whose slaves you want to be once more?
- (1) στοιχεῖα: “[B]asic components of someth., *elements*...of substances underlying the natural world, the basic *elements* fr. which everything in the world is made and of which it is composed...of things that constitute the foundation of learning, *fundamental principles*...transcendent powers that are in control over events in this world, *elements, elemental spirits*. The mng. of στ. in τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου Gal 4:3; Col 2:8, 20...and τὰ ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα Gal 4:9 is much disputed” (BDAG, 946).
 - (2) Unbelievers are *always* enslaved by fundamental principles pushed out by Satan.
 - (3) Believers are *sometimes* enslaved by these same fundamental principles.
 - (4) These fundamental principles are weak (ἀσθενής) and worthless (πτωχός).
 - (a) ἀσθενής: “pert. to experiencing some incapacity or limitation, *weak*...of relative ineffectiveness, whether external or inward *weak, feeble, ineffectual*” (BDAG, 142-43).
 - (b) πτωχός: “lacking in spiritual worth...pert. to being extremely inferior in quality, *miserable, shabby*” (BDAG, 896).
 - (5) They do not produce holiness, blessing, life, the fruit of the Spirit, or human flourishing.
- b. **Col 2:20-3:3** 20 If with Messiah you died to the *fundamental principles/elemental spirits of the world* (ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων τοῦ κόσμου), why, as if you were still living in the world (ἐν κόσμῳ), do you submit to regulations— 21 Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to *human precepts and teachings*? 23 These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion, asceticism, and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh. 1 If then you have been raised with Messiah, seek the things that are above, where Messiah is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Messiah in God.
- (1) We have positionally died to Satan’s fundamental principles (v. 20a).
 - (2) However, we can still choose to live under those principles (v. 20b).
 - (3) Satan’s fundamental principles can promote either:
 - (a) Moral or religious legalism (vv. 20-23; Ro 2:1-29); or
 - (b) Antinomianism (Ro 1:18-32).
 - (4) Satan’s fundamental principles:
 - (a) May appear wise (v. 23a).
 - (b) Are often religious (v. 23b).
 - 1) Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship. It’s not a philosophy or programme, but a person.

- c. **1 Ti 4:1-3** 1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to *deceitful spirits and teachings* (διδασκαλία) *of demons*, 2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, 3 who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.
- (1) διδασκαλία: “that which is taught, *teaching, instruction*” (BDAG, 240).
 - (2) At the end of the church age, many will depart the Christian faith by devoting themselves to demonic teaching (v. 1), promoted through human “liars” (v. 2).
 - (3) Surprisingly, this end times demonic teaching will tend toward legalism, not antinomianism (v. 3), in the areas of:
 - (a) Marriage (i.e., to reduce overpopulation and advance the LGBTQ agenda?).
 - (b) Diet (i.e., to reduce carbon emissions and save the planet?).
 - (c) Three Ms will be attacked: men, marriage, and meat. :)
- d. **1 Jn 4:1-6** 1 Beloved, do not believe every *spirit*, but test the *spirits* to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world (εἰς τὸν κόσμον). 2 By this you know the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Messiah has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every *spirit* that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the *spirit of the antimesiah*, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already (νῦν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ...ἤδη). ...5 They are from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου). Therefore they speak from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us. Whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the *spirit of error*.
- (1) Satanic doctrine is promoted by false prophets, of whom there are many (v. 1).
 - (2) False prophets are known by whether their confession about Jesus is accurate (vv. 2-3).
 - (3) False prophets promote the spirit of the antimesiah, which is already in the world (v. 3).
 - (a) **2 Th 2:3-4** 3 Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness [antimesiah] is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.
 - (4) False prophets and their doctrine originate from the world (v. 5a).
 - (5) The world listens to these false prophets (v. 5b).
 - (6) Because we originate from God, we are not to listen to them (v. 6a).
 - (7) We must learn to recognise the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error (v. 6b).
- e. Comments.
- (1) Satan’s world system is pervasive and unavoidable.
 - (2) Every day, we and our children are entering a war zone.
 - (3) The home needs to be a fortress. If we allow Satanic propaganda in our own home and on our own wireless devices, we will lose.

7. Propaganda.

a. Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (1928).¹²

- (1) “The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. We are governed, our minds molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. This is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized. Vast numbers of human beings must cooperate in this manner if they are to live together as a smoothly functioning society. ...[W]e are dominated by the relatively small number of persons—a trifling fraction of our hundred and twenty million—who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses.”¹³
- (2) “We have voluntarily agreed to let an invisible government sift the data and high-spot the outstanding issue so that our field of choice shall be narrowed to practical proportions. From our leaders and the media they use to reach the public, we accept the evidence and the demarcation of issues bearing upon public question; from some ethical teacher, be it a minister, a favorite essayist, or merely prevailing opinion, we accept a standardized code of social conduct to which we conform most of the time.”¹⁴
- (3) “Whatever of social importance is done today, whether in politics, finance, manufacture, agriculture, charity, education, or other fields, must be done with the help of propaganda. Propaganda is the executive arm of the invisible government. Universal literacy was supposed to educate the common man to control his environment. Once he could read and write he would have a mind fit to rule. So ran the democratic doctrine. But instead of a mind, universal literacy has given him rubber stamps, rubber stamps inked with advertising slogans, with editorials, with published scientific data, with the trivialities of the tabloids and the platitudes of history, but quite innocent of original thought. Each man’s rubber stamps are the duplicates of millions of others, so that when those millions are exposed to the same stimuli, all received identical imprints. It may seem an exaggeration to say that the American public gets most of its ideas in this wholesale fashion. The mechanism by which ideas are disseminated on a large scale is propaganda, in the broad sense of an organized effort to spread a particular belief or doctrine.”¹⁵
- (4) “Propaganda becomes vicious and reprehensive only when its authors consciously and deliberately disseminate what they know to be lies, or when they aim at effects which they know to be prejudicial to the common good.”¹⁶

¹² Edward Bernays was Sigmund Freud’s nephew.

¹³ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 356-366.

¹⁴ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 376-80.

¹⁵ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 477-86.

¹⁶ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 510-12.

- (5) “Propaganda does exist on all sides of us, and it does change our mental pictures of the world.”¹⁷
- (6) “There are invisible rulers who control the destinies of millions. It is not generally realized to what extent the words and actions of our most influential public men are dictated by shrewd persons operating behind the scenes. Now, what is still more important, the extent to which our thoughts and habits are modified by authorities. In some departments of our daily life, in which we imagine ourselves free agents, we are ruled by dictators exercising great power.”¹⁸
- (7) “If you can influence the leaders, either with or without their conscious cooperation, you automatically influence the group which they sway.”¹⁹
- (8) “It was the amusement business—first the circus and the medicine show, then the theater—which taught the rudiments of advertising to industry and commerce.”²⁰
- (9) “No serious sociologist any longer believes that the voice of the people expresses any divine or specially wise and lofty idea. The voice of the people expresses the mind of the people, and that mind is made up for it by the group leaders in whom it believes and by those persons who understand the manipulation of public opinion. It is composed of inherited prejudices and symbols and clichés and verbal formulas supplied to them by the leaders. Fortunately, the sincere and gifted politician is able, by the instrument of propaganda, to mold and form the will of the people.”²¹
- (10) “Propaganda is accustoming the public to change and progress.”²²
- (11) “The American motion picture is the greatest unconscious carrier of propaganda in the world today. It is a great distributor for ideas and opinions.”²³
- (12) “Undoubtedly the public is becoming aware of the methods which are being used to mold its opinions and habits. If the public is better informed about the processes of its life, it will be so much the more receptive to reasonable appeals to its own interests. No matter how sophisticated, how cynical the public may become about publicity methods, it must respond to the basic appeals, because it will always need food, crave amusement, long for beauty, respond to leadership.”²⁴

b. Comments.

- (1) Modern technology is an efficient medium for spreading the gospel, but it is also an efficient medium for spreading Satanic propaganda.

¹⁷ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 559-66.

¹⁸ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 644-52.

¹⁹ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 796-97.

²⁰ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 1255-56.

²¹ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 1270-75.

²² Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 1908-09.

²³ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 1979-81.

²⁴ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, Kindle Locations 2007-11.

- (2) We need discernment.
- (a) **Pr 14:8** 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to *discern* his way....
- (b) **Ro 12:2** 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may *discern* what is the desire of God, what is good, acceptable, and perfect.
- (c) **Php 1:9-10** 9 And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all *discernment*, 10 so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Messiah....

8. Dominant Expressions.

	 SECULARISM	 MARXISM	 POSTMODERNISM	 NEW SPIRITUALITY	 ISLAM	 CHRISTIANITY
 THEOLOGY	Atheism	Atheism	Theological Suspicion	Pantheism	Monotheism	Trinitarian Monotheism
 PHILOSOPHY	Materialism & Naturalism	Dialectical Materialism	Anti-Realism	Spiritual Monism	Dualism	Dualism
 ETHICS	Moral Relativism or Utilitarianism	Proletariat Morality	Cultural Relativism	Karma	Divine Command Theory	Agape
 BIOLOGY	Neo-Darwinism	Punctuated Equilibrium	Anti-Essentialism	Spiritual Evolution	Special Creation	Special Creation
 PSYCHOLOGY	Mind/Body Monism (Self-Actualization)	Mind/Body Monism (Classical Conditioning)	Decentered Self	Mind/Body Monism (Transcendental)	Mind/Body Dualism (Urbain)	Mind/Body Dualism (Edwin)
 SOCIOLOGY	Personal Autonomy	Proletariat Society	Social Constructionism	Collective Consciousness	Ummah	Sphere Sovereignty
 LAW	Legal Positivism	Proletariat Law	Critical Legal Studies	Self-Law	Shariah Law	Natural Law
 POLITICS	Progressivism	Statism	Political Pessimism or Liberalism	Autarchy	Islamic Theocracy	Subsidiarity
 ECONOMICS	Economic Interventionism	Socialism	Economic Interventionism	Universal Enlightened Production	Shariah Economics	Biblical Stewardship
 HISTORY	Social Progress	Historical Materialism	Historical Revisionism	Evolutionary Godhood	Pan-Islam	Redemptive Narrative

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9. War.²⁵

- a. **Ps 2:1-3** 1 Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Yahweh and against his Messiah saying, 3 Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.
- (1) Under Satan's sway, the nations have chosen to reject God's rule.
- (2) History is essentially a vertical story, not a horizontal story. Man versus God is the fundamental problem, not man versus man, or China versus the United States.
- b. **Jn 15:18-21** 18 If the world (ὁ κόσμος) hates you, know that it has hated me [Jesus] before it hated you. 19 If you were from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), the world would love you as its own. But because you are not from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), but I

²⁵ See *Antithesis* and *Spiritual Warfare*.

chose you out of the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου), therefore the world hates you. 20

Remember the word that I said to you: A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. 21 But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know (οἶδα, perf.) him [the Father] who sent me.

- (1) The world hates us and is at war with us (vv. 18-19).
 - (2) The world persecuted Jesus, and it will also persecute us (v. 20).
 - (3) The reason is the world does not know God the Father (v. 21).
- c. **Eph 6:12** 12 For we [believers] do not wrestle (πάλη) against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers powers over this darkness (πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκούτου τούτου), against the spiritual beings of evil in the heavenly places (πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις).
- (1) πάλη: “engagement in a challenging contest (orig. ‘wrestling’ Il. 23, 635 al., then of fights or battles Aeschyl., Ch. 866; Eur., Heracl. 159) *struggle against*, fig. ext. (Longus 3, 19, 2 of love; Philo, Sobr. 65 πρὸς πάθη π., here w. wrestling imagery), of Christians’ fight against powers of darkness” (BDAG, 752).
 - (2) Our ultimate opponents are the spiritual beings of evil in the heavens.
- d. Comments.
- (1) We must not expect the world to love us or our message. Be prepared to be unpopular.

10. Dangers.

- a. Forgetting our new identity in Jesus.
- b. Walking in the customs of the world.
 - (1) **1 Sa 8:4-7** 4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together, came to Samuel at Ramah 5 and said to him, Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us *like all the nations*. 6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed to Yahweh. 7 And Yahweh said to Samuel, Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.
 - (2) **1 Sa 8:19-20** 19 But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, No! But there shall be a king over us, 20 that we also may be *like all the nations*....
 - (3) **2 Ki 17:7-8** 7 And this occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against Yahweh their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods 8 and *walked in the customs of the nations* whom Yahweh drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had practiced.
 - (4) “[A] great part of Christians live and die slaves to the customs and temper of the world.”²⁶

²⁶ William Law, *A Serious Call*, 196.

- (5) “We cannot assume that because we are Christians in the full biblical sense, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, automatically we shall be free from the influence of what surrounds us.”²⁷
- (6) “Our culture seeks to catechise us.”²⁸
- c. Losing our saltiness.
 - (1) **Mt 5:13** 13 You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.
 - (a) If we become tasteless salt, we are good for nothing. Only if we remain salty are we useful to God in the midst of Satan’s world system.
 - (2) “The church in many instances is more worldly than the world.”²⁹
 - (3) “Protestantism has largely divested itself of the transcendent and has become almost indistinguishable from the surrounding culture.”³⁰
 - (a) We must not lose our distinctiveness.
 - (4) “When there is no distinction in conduct between Christians and non-Christians—for example in the practice of corruption and greed, or sexual promiscuity, or rate of divorce, or relapse to pre-Christian religious practice, or attitudes towards people of other races, or consumerist lifestyles, or social prejudice—then the world is right to wonder if our Christianity makes any difference at all.”³¹
- d. Putting our light under a basket.
 - (1) **Mt 5:14-15** 14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.
- e. Being choked by the cares of this age.
 - (1) **Mt 13:22** 22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the age (ἡ μέριμνα τοῦ αἰῶνος) and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
 - (2) “A life, in which the love of the world is predominant, is incompatible with that dignified and edifying piety, which should be the distinguishing characteristic of the sacred Ministry. It is this spirit of piety alone, that can insure to us utility. For what aptness to teach can be exercised or nourished, where the taste, time, talents, and activity are devoted to secular and self-indulgent engagements?”³²
 - (3) Modern technology is choking many of us.
- f. Being carried about by every wind of doctrine.
 - (1) **Eph 4:14** 14 ...So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

²⁷ Francis A. Schaeffer, *The God Who Is There*, 152.

²⁸ John Stonestreet.

²⁹ Eugene Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*.

³⁰ Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*, 238.

³¹ Lausanne Movement, *The Cape Town Commitment* (2011).

³² Charles Bridges, *The Christian Ministry*, Kindle Locations 1606-1611.

- (2) Many parents are watching their teens get tossed to and fro by the winds of LGBTQ doctrine, cultural marxism, postmodernism, etc. These movements sound so good and loving, but they are fundamentally flawed and at odds with biblical Christianity.
- (c) The Christian “must understand what confronts him antagonistically in his own moment of history. Otherwise he simply becomes a useless museum piece and not a living warrior for Jesus Christ. The orthodox Christian has paid a very heavy price, both in the defense and communication of the gospel, for his failure to think and act as an educated person understanding and at war with the uniformity of our modern culture.”³³
- (d) “It isn’t too long before what goes on out there effects what goes on in here.”³⁴
- g. Friendship with the world.
- (1) **Jas 4:4** 4 You adulterous people! Do you not know the *friendship with the world* (ἡ φιλία τοῦ κόσμου) is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a *friend of the world* (φίλος...τοῦ κόσμου) makes himself an enemy of God.
- (2) **1 Ki 11:1-8** 1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which Yahweh had said to the people of Israel, You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. *Solomon clung to these in love.* 3 He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. *And his wives turned away his heart.* 4 For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to Yahweh his God, as was the heart of David his father. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6 So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and did not wholly follow Yahweh, as David his father had done. 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. 8 And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.
- (3) “[N]o people are to be reckoned Christians in reality who in their hearts and tempers belong to this world.”³⁵
- (4) “We must...be so far from considering the world as in a state of less enmity and opposition to Christianity that it was in the first times of the Gospel, that we must guard against it as a greater and more dangerous enemy now than it was in those times. It is a greater enemy, because it has greater power over Christians by its favors, riches, honors, rewards, and protection, than it had by the fire and fury of its persecutions. It is a more dangerous enemy by having lost its appearance of enmity.”³⁶

³³ Francis A. Schaeffer, *The God Who Is There*, 28.

³⁴ Geoff Smith.

³⁵ William Law, *A Serious Call*, 199.

³⁶ William Law, *A Serious Call*, 204-05.

- (5) “The church’s relation to the world must be war. Dialogue is the great metaphor of decline and defeat.”
- (a) Can there be a dialogue between God and Satan. Can a peace treaty be signed between them? Can we synthesise the teachings of the church and the teachings of the world into a third way? We must reject the dialectic of G. W. F. Hegel. We live in a world of antithesis, not synthesis.
- h. Loving the things in the world.
- (1) **1 Jn 2:15** 15 Do not love (ἀγαπάω, pres.) the world or the things in the world (τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ). If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
- (a) John isn’t speaking here of the world of men but of Satan’s world system.
- 1) **Jn 3:16** 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son....
- 2) “The world of God’s good creation has become the world of human and satanic rebellion against God. We are commanded not to love that world of sinful desire, greed, and human pride. We confess with sorrow that exactly those marks of worldliness so often disfigure our Christian presence and deny our gospel witness. ... We commit ourselves afresh not to flirt with the fallen world and its transient passions, but to love the whole world as God loves it.”³⁷
- (b) We cannot simultaneously love God and Satan’s world system.
- 1) **Mt 6:24** 24 No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

11. Our Gameplan.

- a. We are to understand the world has been crucified to us through the cross.
- (1) **Ga 6:14** 14 May it never be that I would boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Messiah, through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.
- (2) **Col 1:13-14** 13 [God the Father] rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.
- b. We are to seek the city that is to come.
- (1) **He 13:14** 14 For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.
- (2) “Christians are not distinguished from the rest of humanity by country, language, or custom. For nowhere do they live in cities of their own, nor do they speak some unusual dialect, nor do they practice an eccentric life-style. This teaching of theirs has not been discovered by the thought and reflection of ingenious men, nor do they promote any human doctrine, as some do. But while they live in both Greek and barbarian cities, as each one’s lot was cast, and follow the local customs in dress and food and other aspects of life, at the same time they demonstrate the remarkable and admittedly unusual character of their own citizenship. They live in their own countries, but only as aliens; they participate in everything as citizens, and endure everything as foreigners. Every foreign country is their fatherland, and every fatherland is foreign. They marry like everyone else, and have children, but they do not expose their offspring. They

³⁷ Lausanne Movement, *The Cape Town Commitment* (2011).

share their food but not their wives. They are ‘in the flesh,’ but they do not live ‘according to the flesh.’ They live on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. They obey the established laws; indeed in their private lives they transcend the laws. They love everyone, and by everyone they are persecuted. They are unknown, yet they are condemned; they are put to death, yet they are brought to life. They are poor, yet they make many rich; they are in need of everything, yet they abound in everything. They are dishonoured, yet they are glorified in their dishonour; they are slandered, yet they are vindicated. They are cursed, yet they bless; they are insulted, yet they offer respect. When they do good, they are punished as evildoers; when they are punished, they rejoice as though brought to life. By the Jews they are assaulted as foreigners, and by the Greeks they are persecuted, yet those who hate them are unable to give a reason for their hostility. In a word, what the soul is to the body, Christians are to the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians throughout the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, but is not of the body; likewise Christians dwell in the world, but are not of the world. The soul, which is invisible, is confined in the body, which is visible; in the same way, Christians are recognized as being in the world, and yet their religion remains invisible. The flesh hates the soul and wages war against it, even though it has suffered no wrong, because it is hindered from indulging in its pleasures; so also the world hates the Christians, even though it has suffered no wrong, because they set themselves against its pleasures. The soul loves the flesh that hates it, and its members, and Christians love those who hate them. The soul is enclosed in the body, but it holds the body together; and though Christians are detained in the world as if in a prison, they in fact hold the world together. The soul, which is immortal, lives in a mortal dwelling; similarly Christians live as strangers amidst perishable things, while waiting for the imperishable in heaven. The soul, when poorly treated with respect to food and drink, becomes all the better; and so Christians when punished daily increase more and more. Such is the important position to which God has appointed them, and it is not right for them to decline it.”³⁸

- (3) “If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who abolished the Slave Trade, all left their mark on Earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth ‘thrown in’: aim at earth and you will get neither.”³⁹

c. We are to remain in the world.

- (1) **Jn 17:11-18** 11 And I [Jesus] am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. ...15 I [Jesus] do not ask that you take them out of the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου) but that you keep them from the evil one. ...18 As

³⁸ *The Epistle to Diognetus*, 5-6.

³⁹ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 134.

you sent me into the world (εἰς τὸν κόσμον), so I have sent them into the world (εἰς τὸν κόσμον).

- (2) **1 Co 5:9-10** 9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— 10 not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, because then you would need to go out of the world.
 - (3) “[S]eeing that the besetting sin of European missionaries is the love of administration, I wish to suggest that this tendency to separate converts into groups apart from the native life around them is not without its dangers and disadvantages, and to point out that St. Paul rather laid stress upon a spiritual separation than upon a physical separation from an idolatrous society.”⁴⁰
- d. We are to keep ourselves unstained from the world.
- (1) **Ja 1:27** 27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.
 - (2) “The biblical norm requires that we renounce this kind of socialization. In the societies described in the Old Testament, the people of God who withdrew from the practices of an idolatrous society were called the remnant. In the New Testament the believers in Christ were urged to live as pilgrims, strangers, and exiles in the midst of an evil society (1 Pet. 2:11; Heb. 11:13). Christians, thus, are to be subversives refusing to conform to the norms of their surroundings. Far from allying themselves with the ‘best’ of the dominant culture, they must recognize that what is thought to be best is so only by comparison with a set of standards that is unacceptable. The appropriate response to the dominant culture, then, is to refuse subservience to it, to reject the domination of its norms, to withdraw support selectively from all institutions that base their activities on the idolatries that control American life. In short, to rebel.”⁴¹
- e. We are to be transformed by the renewal of our minds.
- (1) **Ro 12:2** 2 Do not be conformed to this age (τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ) but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the desire of God, what is good, acceptable, and perfect.
 - (2) “[Y]ou must unlearn all those notions which you have been all your life learning from this corrupt spirit of the world.”⁴²
 - (3) “Worldliness is what makes sin look normal and righteousness seem odd.”⁴³
 - (a) We are to get our moral standards from Scripture, not from the culture around us.
 - (4) “Every time you take the earth standpoint—think as men think, talk as men talk, look as men look—you take a place below the powers of darkness. The mastery of them depends upon your spirit abiding in the place above them...God’s

⁴⁰ Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*, 94.

⁴¹ Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*, 312.

⁴² William Law, *A Serious Call*, 197.

⁴³ David Wells.

outlook, God's view, God's thought, God's plan, God's ways, by abiding with Christ in God."⁴⁴

- f. We are to be salt and light.
- (1) **Mt 5:13-16** 13 You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
 - (2) "Get used to different."⁴⁵ Swim upstream.
 - (3) "Jesus prayed we will be different *from* the world *for* the sake of the world, so that we may be world changers."
 - (4) "The church did the most for world when the church was the least like the world."⁴⁶
 - (5) "Christ takes us out of the world to send us into the world."⁴⁷
 - (a) Christ takes the world out of us so that we may be his ambassadors to the world.
- g. We are to be ambassadors for Jesus.
- (1) **2 Co 5:20** 20 Therefore, we are *ambassadors* for Messiah, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Messiah, be reconciled to God.
 - (2) **Eph 6:20** 20 ...I [Paul] am an *ambassador* in chains....
 - (3) **2 Ti 2:25-26** 25 ...[I]n humility educating those in opposition, if perhaps God might give them a change of mind (μετάνοια) into an knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of the truth, 26 and that they might come to their senses again out of the trap of the devil, having been captured alive by him for his desire.
 - (4) Are we ambassadors of Jesus to the world or ambassadors of the world to the church?
 - (5) Practically, this means evangelism, apologetics, and biblical worldview advocacy.
- h. We are to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.
- (1) **Mt 10:16** 16 Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.
- i. We are to destroy arguments raised against the knowledge of God.
- (1) **2 Co 10:3-5** 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments (λογισμός) and every lofty opinion (ὑψώμα) raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Messiah....

⁴⁴ James Frazier, missionary to China.

⁴⁵ The Chosen.

⁴⁶ G. Campbell Morgan.

⁴⁷ Adoniram J. Gordon.

- (a) λογισμός: “the product of a cognitive process, calculation, reasoning, reflection, thought in our lit. in pl. W. έννοιαι thoughts and sentiments... sophistries” (BDAG, 598).
- (b) ὑψωμα: “that which postures arrogantly, *arrogance*, πᾶν ὑψωμα ἐπαιρόμενον *everything that rises up*, prob.=*all pride (every proud obstacle NRSV) that rises up against it*.... But Chrysost. ...explains it by using πύργωμα, which would mean someth. like ‘towering fortress’” (BDAG, 1046).
- (2) “The Christian is to resist the spirit of the world. But when we say this, we must understand that the world-spirit does not always take the same form. So the Christian must resist the spirit of the world in the form it takes in his own generation. If he does not do this, he is not resisting the spirit of the world at all. This is especially so for our generation, as the forces at work against us are of such a total nature. It is our generation of Christians more than any other who need to heed these words attributed to Martin Luther: ‘If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battlefield besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point.’”⁴⁸
- (3) “The will of God is not something you add to your life. It’s a course you choose. You either line yourself up with the Son of God...or you capitulate to the principle which governs the rest of the world.”⁴⁹
- j. We are to be firm and resolute.
- (1) **Jn 16:33** 33 In the world you [disciples] will have tribulation. But take heart (θαρσέω, aor.). I have overcome (νικάω, perf. act.) the world.
- (a) θαρσέω: “to be firm or resolute in the face of danger or adverse circumstances, *be enheartened, be courageous*” (BDAG, 444).
- (2) “Stand up for me against world opinion and I’ll stand up for you before my Father in heaven. If you turn tail and run, do you think I’ll cover for you?”⁵⁰
- k. We are to enjoy God’s world.
- (1) **1 Ti 6:17** 17 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

12. Defeat.

- a. **Da 2:34-35** 34 As you [Nebuchadnezzar] looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors. And the wind

⁴⁸ Francis A. Schaeffer, *The God Who Is There*, 27.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Elliot, quoted in Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 12.

⁵⁰ Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), Mt 10:32-33.

- carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.
- b. **Da 2:44** 44 And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever....
 - c. **1 Co 15:24-26** 24 Then comes the end, when [Jesus] hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when he has abolished all rule, all authority, and power. 25 For [Jesus] must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
 - (1) Jesus will put all his enemies under his feet and then hand over the kingdom to the Father.
 - d. **1 Jn 2:17** 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires....
 - (1) The world and its sinful desires are passing away.
 - e. **1 Jn 3:8** 8 The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.
 - f. **1 Jn 5:4-5** 4 Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is the one who overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
 - (1) Every believer overcomes the world through the Christian faith.
 - g. **Re 17-19.**
 - h. Quotes.
 - (1) “Enemy-occupied territory—that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed, you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage.”⁵¹
 - (2) “God has landed on this enemy-occupied world in human form.”⁵²
 - (3) “Why is God landing in this enemy-occupied world in disguise and starting a sort of secret society to undermine the devil? Why is He not landing in force, invading it? Is it that He is not strong enough? Well, Christians think He is going to land in force; we do not know when. But we can guess why He is delaying. He wants to give us the chance of joining His side freely.”⁵³

⁵¹ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 46.

⁵² C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 53.

⁵³ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 64-65.

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