

PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)

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The World System

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Introduction

Sometimes we talk about “overcoming the world” or not “loving the world”, but do we really understand what we are saying? Or has our understanding been corrupted by “worldly” thinking? The idea of the “world system” and what that means scripturally is the focus of this month's Present Truth Teaching Letter.

Different Worlds

One of the most often quoted scriptures is John 3:16, “For God so loved the world . . .”; yet John told us

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (1 John 2:15 NASB)

How is it that God can love the world but we can't? How is it that loving the world eliminates the love of the Father in us? Obviously, these two scriptures are referring to different “worlds”; that is, that usage of the word “world” has a different meaning in these two verses. John 3:16 is referring to God's love of mankind; whereas, 1 John 2:15 is referring to the “world system” and all that it contains. John goes on to tell us “, , , that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one.” [1 John 5:19]. Jesus referred to the Devil as “the ruler of this world” [John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11]. Paul spoke of the Devil as “the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.” [Ephesians 2:2] and called him “the god of this world” [2 Corinthians 4:4]. The Devil is not the god of this world in the sense of creation but rather in the sense of “an orderly array of systems” which is one of the Greek meanings of “kosmos” which is frequently translated as “world”. In other words, the Devil is the god of the world system; that is, the kingdoms of the world. We have a clear presentation of this when Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. One of the temptations that the Devil presented to Jesus was the rulership over all of the worlds' systems, which he said had been given to him and he could give it to whomever he pleased. Jesus did not contest the Devil's assertion regarding this matter.

And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. (Luke 4:5-6 NASB)

The Devil was offering Jesus a shortcut to ruling the kingdoms of the world. A shortcut that would avoid the cross if He would only worship him. Of course, the Lord was obedient to the Father and didn't fall for the deceptive temptation of the Enemy. In the Father's plan Jesus would rule the kingdoms of the world as the Father's appointed King.

Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." (Revelation 11:15 NASB)

The outcome is pre-determined by the Father for in the end there will be only one Kingdom and that is the Kingdom of God.

Birth of the World System

In the Garden when the serpent tempted Eve, his words appealed to something that was inherent in man.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. (Genesis 3:6 NASB)

There were three things about the forbidden tree that appealed to Eve:

1. good for food;
2. delight to the eyes; and
3. desirable to make one wise.

Since this worked so well on Eve, the Enemy built these three attributes into his construction of the world system. By the time that John wrote his epistles, he was able to say that all that is in the world could be summed up by three attributes.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. (1 John 2:16 NASB)

When Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden because of their disobedience, they faced reality in a different way than they had lived in the Garden. They had to preserve themselves, protect themselves and provide for themselves. In the Garden these things were not a concern. God preserved, protected and provided for Adam and Eve. After being put out they became independent of God and needed to make their own way in these three areas, which became the primary motivators for the world system.

The world system is the domain of darkness; however, we have been rescued from the kingdom of darkness and transferred to the Kingdom of God.

For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, (Colossians 1:13 NASB)

As we are transformed by the renewing of our minds [**Romans 12:2**], the world system is taken out of us. As this process occurs we must address the three areas of preserving, protecting, and providing because they are not the way of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus addressed each of these areas:

"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. (Luke 9:24 NASB)

And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not worry about *your* life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. (Luke 12:22 NASB)

"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. (Revelation 12:11 NASB)

Overcoming

In the letters to the seven Churches in Revelation, the promise is always made to those who overcome. I have heard some teachers talk about this as if it only applies to those who are fighting the Antichrist at the end. That is not the case, We are all to be overcomers and there are three areas in which we must gain the victory.

We are to overcome 1) the devil, 2) the flesh, and 3) the world. Jesus has done His part in these three areas and now we have to learn to do ours. He has defeated the devil and has given us authority over all the power of the enemy [**Luke 10:19**]. He has poured out on us His Holy Spirit so that we can walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh [**Galatians 5:16**]. He has overcome the world so that we might have peace in our tribulations [**John 16:33**].

We need to remember that without faith it is impossible to please God.

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. (1 John 5:4 NASB)

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