

Words of Truth

The World Is Not Our Standard

By: Brian A. Yeager

The world is wicked (I John 5:19). Jesus died to deliver us from the world, not to give us to the world (Galatians 1:4). One thing every Christian should know early on in their development in Christ is this: *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"* (Romans 12:1-2).

In choosing to serve the Lord and not conform to the world, we also have to learn not to be deceived into thinking we cannot be influenced by the world (I Corinthians 15:33). Consider what Jesus told Peter, James, and John: *"Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak"* (Mark 14:38).

Realizing that the world is evil and that we can be influenced by evil is important for our salvation. That is why the warnings are recorded for us in the Scriptures. We need to realize that we have to be in the world, but we are not supposed to be of the world (John 17:14). The separation between the two comes down to doing the will of the Lord or not (I John 3:8-10). The influence of this world we live in is all around us. We face ungodliness at work, schools, government, entertainment, etc. Through those means, the world tries to influence us in causing us to think that sinful things really are not all that bad. Let's consider a few things in our study that the world is currently trying to promote as "good" when God says otherwise.

Some Things That Are Of This World, But Not Of God

In our country alcohol is very popular. Here in El Paso, the act of drinking alcohol is a large part of the culture. We all know that the Scriptures clearly speak out against alcohol in both moderation and excess (Proverbs 20:1, Proverbs 21:17, Proverbs 23:20-21, Proverbs 23:29-35, Proverbs 31:4-5, Isaiah 5:11, Isaiah 5:22, Isaiah 28:7-8, Hosea 4:11, Luke 21:33-34, Romans 13:13, I Corinthians 6:9-10, and Titus 2:1-6). The Lord, under the Law of Moses, showed His disdain for alcohol is so great as He even instructed not giving it to one's neighbor (Habakkuk 2:15). There is nothing good about alcohol.

In recent elections marijuana was legalized as an acceptable recreational drug in some states. The word of God does not specifically name modern drugs. The word of God does not say "don't use marijuana" or even "don't use cocaine". What the word of God does command is that we be sober minded (I Thessalonians 5:6-8, I Peter 1:13-16, I Peter 4:7, and I Peter 5:8). Therefore, the faithful of God will not use that which alters our thinking recreationally.

The world has been hard at work to undermine the roles of men and women both in the home and without. The word of God is very clear. Woman was created to be a helper to man (Genesis 2:18-25). God's stand on the matter did not change under the perfect law of liberty. He still says that man is head over the woman (I Corinthians 11:3). This is true within the home (Ephesians 5:22-33) and without (I Timothy 2:11-15).

In speaking of the home, the world is also hard at work in telling us that marriage is not a lifelong covenant. Again, the popular view of the world is not in accordance with the will of God. God demands that, with only one exception, marriages are not to be broken (Matthew 19:3-12, Romans 7:1-6, and I Corinthians 7:9-10).

The world is also attacking the home by keeping children from ever being born. The world teaches that children can be mistakes that can be aborted. How could anyone, ever, excuse murder in any way. God certainly does not excuse murder (Revelation 21:8). However, the world will argue that until a child is born he or she is not really a child. The world will call unborn children a "fetus". God says that human life begins in the womb (Genesis 25:21-22, Exodus 21:22, II Samuel 11:5, Job 3:3, Matthew 1:23, Matthew 24:19, and Luke 1:41). When a woman aborts a pregnancy, she is committing murder! We all know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him (I John 3:15). However, the world plays a game of dishonesty as they change terms and make excuses for their sins.

The world says that being dishonest is acceptable. Liars are often encouraged to be such. Politicians are known and excused as liars. Law enforcement officers regularly lie to get people to confess to crimes. School teachers lie by teaching unlawful things such as homosexuality being normal and that the world came into existence rather than being created. On and on we could go. What we need to remind ourselves of, as Christians, is that God is NEVER okay with us being dishonest (Proverbs 6:16-19, Proverbs 19:5, Proverbs 19:9, Acts 5:1-10, Romans 12:17, and Ephesians 4:25).

I mentioned the subject matter of homosexuality in the paragraph above, so let's address that really quickly as well. Sexual relations are only lawful between a lawfully married man with his wife (I Corinthians 7:1-5). God has specifically spoken against same sex relationships throughout the Scriptures (Genesis 18:16-19:25, Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, I Corinthians 6:9-10, II Peter 2:6, and Jude 1:7). The world says this is okay, God does NOT!

Conclusion

We have only covered a few examples of ways the world is accepting things that we should not. Many more things could be written, but we should be able to figure out much of that on our own. Plain and simple, as Christians, we are to do all things by the authority of our Lord (Colossians 3:17). What the world calls acceptable does not change that. Our thinking should not be influenced by the world. Every one of our thoughts need to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (II Corinthians 10:5). When you choose whether or not you will love the things of God or the things of the world, take the time to consider the end of what you are going to hold dear (I John 2:15-17).