



You're Out of this World!

Often whenever I speak the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11) with religious people they will respond with “You’re out of your mind if you believe that!” Well I don’t know about that, but I do know that Jesus offers everyone eternal life (John 3:16) but the very words of Jesus in this famous verse make salvation conditional. Jesus said, “*whosoever believes*” and that is a conditional statement in the sense of not believing gets you nowhere near heaven, nowhere near eternal life with God and Christ. That is to say, we must submit to God's will in every area of our lives. We must seek to please God and abstain from every form of evil (1 Thess. 5:22) and “*Fight the good fight of faith*” (1 Tim. 6:12) which every child of God faces. We are to “*contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3) What are we contending for? What are we fighting against?

Let’s see: “*15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*” (1 John 2:15-17). John says, “*For all that is in the world...is not of the Father*”. Ok, so we fight against anything and everything that is not of the Father.

When John used the word, “world” he used the Greek word kosmos which means “primary order, arrangement, ornament, adornment. The present condition of human affairs, in alienation from and opposition to God” (W.E. Vine). In John 8:23 we read, “*And He said to them, “You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world”*” Jesus not only claimed that they were of this world, but that they were from beneath. When He said, “*from beneath*” He was saying that when they, you, live according to the standard of the world, you are “*of the Devil*”, that is under his influence. Living by the standard of this world means by the teaching of men, not that of God. It means you listen to, hear, and allow what others say into your heart to such a point that the word of God becomes faint, secondary, and even unheard. Those who live their lives by the world's standards are of the Devil! It's that simple.

Philippians 3:20 “*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*” Every child of God, that is every person who has Heard (John 6:45): Believed that Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24); Repented / turned from sin (Mark 13:3, 5); Confessed Jesus before men (Matt. 10:32); Has been baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2:28; 22:16); and Lives Faithfully (Rev. 2:10), is assured that their citizenship is in Heaven, not in this world. Thus, Christians can say of Christians, “You’re out of this world.” Not physically of course, but spiritually. We know that we are only here for a time (James 4:14) and while we’re here we can live in this world for the good and glory of God. We are not commanded to abstain from this physical world, but we are commanded to abstain from the present conditions created by sin humanity loves and accepts. All the activities or practices that are rooted in worldliness, that is in opposition to God. It is in this sense that Christians are “out of this world.” Again, John wrote, “*For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world*” (1 John 2:16). In this are the three characteristics of the world from which we are to abstain.

First John spoke of the **Lust of The Eyes**: The word “lust” comes from the Greek word epithumia, which



“Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.”

denotes “desire, craving, longing—specifically, desire for what is forbidden, lust,” “The word is used is used of a good desire in Luke 22:15; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thess. 2:17 only. Everywhere else it has a bad sense” [Thayer’s]. Eye comes from the Greek word ophthalmos, and “refers to those evil desires which are ready to express themselves in bodily activity” (W.E. Vine). The eye itself is a marvelous creation. God in His wisdom gave us this gift so that we could see what He made and know He is, without excuse (Rom. 1:20). Although our eyes may be a “principle avenue of temptation,” we know that this was not God’s purpose for the Bible plainly teaches us that God tempts no man (James 1:13). Let’s take advice from Jesus (Matt. 5:29). God showed us what happened to king David when David let his eyes look upon Bathsheba. The lust of his eyes led him into committing such transgressions as adultery and murder (2 Sam. 11:2-5), and make no mistake, king David had a choice for later he wrote, “*I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel; My [c]heart also instructs me in the night*

seasons. **8 I have set the Lord always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved**” (Psa. 16:7-8). You can be like David and set the Lord always before you by keeping your eyes pure from sinful images. Jesus taught, *“The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is [a]good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is [b]bad, your body also is full of darkness”* (Luke 11:34). It’s up to you what you do with your eyes.

John also speaks of the **Lust of The Flesh**: Here, like before, it is used in the context of those evil desires that are ready to express themselves in bodily activity. “Lust of the flesh then is desire within man that leads him to participate in some bodily exercise that is sinful (e.g., adultery, smoking, gluttony, etc.). Eve was taken by the lust of the flesh, or the desire to fulfil her fleshly appetite when she saw that the fruit was good for food (Gen. 3:6). Paul wrote, *“Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh”* (Gal. 5:16). John wrote, *“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin”* (1 John 1:7). But we must as the Hebrew writer says, *“...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the [a]author and [b]finisher of our faith...”* (Heb. 12:1-2). Strive to abstain from any sin that might hinder you or get in your way, keeping you from pleasing God.

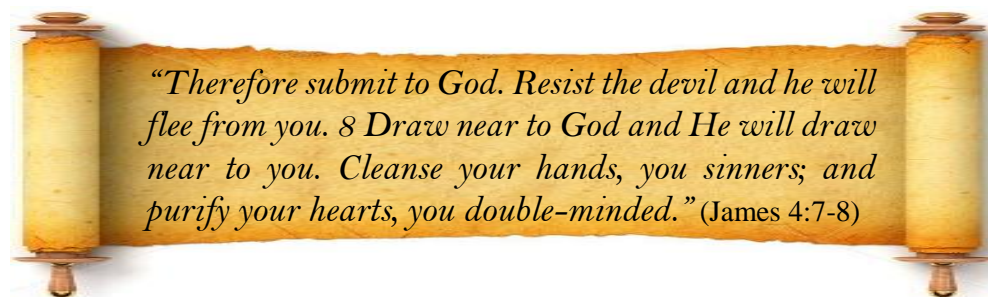
Last is the **Pride of Life**: In Matthew 19 is a record of a rich young ruler who came to Jesus asking *“Good[d] Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”* (v.16). In verse 17 Jesus said, *“But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments”* then listed a few of them. Hearing them, the young man said, *“All these things I have kept [g]from my youth. What do I still lack?”* (v.20). Jesus replied, *“If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me”* (v.21). But the rich man went away sad because he had many possessions (v.22). This rich young ruler may have kept up with the moral laws of Moses, but his eye was not single, his love of money, and possessions, was stronger than his desired relationship to Christ. Jesus said that it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it would be for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven (v.24). Why? With all the material wealth it is easy to think, “I made my fortune myself.” Read Luke 12:13-21 and remember, he who lays up treasure for himself is not rich toward God.

Jesus, Our Best Example: In Matthew 4 we are told the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil (v.1). After fasting for forty days, Jesus was tempted to turn rock into bread, appealing to the Lord's hunger; but Jesus replied, *“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’”* (v.4); Lust of the flesh. Devil tried tempting Him through the lust of the eyes showing Him all the kingdoms of the earth (v.8). Then tried to appeal to the Lord’s pride by suggesting that He jump off the cliff. But the Devil was not successful. There were two things that the Lord did that we should remember to do. (1) Jesus said, *“It is written”* and (2) He rebuked the Devil saying, *“Away with you, Satan!”* The Devil left Jesus because he has no power in face of the scripture, and the commands of God. When we are tempted, we can resist the temptation and turn to God’s word for our strength and guide (Psa. 119:105-106). His word is the armor with which we fight the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life (Eph. 6:10-20).

Remember, as Christians God has not left you without hope. He promises us that no temptation will overtake us, but that He will provide a means of escaping (1 Cor. 10:17).

In Love

Dave Scarpino



“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” (James 4:7-8)