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LOVE NOT THE WORLD

#163

Contents

The World Passeth Away.....	1
The Scriptures and the World	4
The Christian and the World.....	8
Love Not the World	11
The Saint and the World	13
What Art Thou?	21
Which World Am I a Citizen Of?	24

THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY

Horatius Bonar

The things that are seen are temporal. Ours is a dying world, and here we have no continuing city. But a few years,—it may be less,—and all things here are changed. But a few years,—it may be less,—and the Lord shall have come, and the last trumpet shall have sounded, and the great sentence shall have been pronounced upon each of the sons of men.

There is a world that passeth not away. It is fair and glorious. It is called "the inheritance in light." It is bright with the love of God, and with the joy of heaven. "The Lamb is the light thereof." Its gates are of pearl; they are always open. And as we tell men of this wondrous city, we tell them to enter in.

The Book of Revelation tells us the story of earth's vanity: "A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee. And no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee" (18:21,22).

Such is the day that is coming on the world, and such is the doom overhanging earth,—a doom dimly foreshadowed by the sad commercial disasters that have often sent sorrow into so many hearts, and desolation into so many homes.

An old minister—now two hundred years since—lay dying. His fourscore years were well-nigh completed. He had been tossed on many a wave, from England to America, from America to England, again from England to America. At Boston he lay dying, full of faith and love. The evening before his death, as he lay all but speechless, his daughter asked him how it was with him. He lifted up his dying hands, and with his dying lips simply said, "Vanishing things, vanishing things!" We repeat his solemn words, and, pointing to the world, with all the vanities on which vain man sets his heart, say, "Vanishing things!"

"The world passeth away." This is our message.

Like a dream of the night. We lie down to rest; we fall asleep; we dream; we awake at morn; and lo, all is fled that in our dream seemed so stable and so pleasant! So hastes the world away. O child of mortality, have you no brighter world beyond?

Like the mist of the morning. The night brings down the mists upon the hills,—the vapor covers the valleys; the sun rises, all has passed off,—hill and vale are clear. So the world passeth off, and is seen no more. O man, will you embrace a world like this? Will you lie down upon a mist, and say, This is my home?

Like a shadow. There is nothing more unreal than a shadow. It has no substance, no being. It is dark, it is a figure, it has motion, that is all! Such is the world. O man will you chase a shadow? What will a shadow do for you?

Like a wave of the sea. It rises, falls, and is seen no more. Such is the history of a wave. Such is the story of the world. O man will you make a wave your portion? Have you no better pillow on which to lay your wearied head than this? A poor world this for human heart to love, for an immortal soul to be filled with!

Like a rainbow. The sun throws its colors on a cloud, and for a few minutes all is brilliant. But the cloud shifts, and the brilliance is all gone. Such is the world. With all its beauty and brightness; with all its honors and pleasures; with all its mirth and madness; with all its pomp and luxury; with all its revelry and riot; with all its hopes and flatteries; with all its love and laughter; with all its songs and splendor; with all its gems and gold,—it vanishes. And the cloud that knew the rainbow knows it no more. O man, is a passing world like this all that you have for an inheritance?

Like a flower. Beautiful, very beautiful; fragrant, very fragrant, are the summer flowers. But they wither away. So fades the world from before our eyes. While we are looking at it, and admiring it, behold, it is gone! No trace is left of all its loveliness but a little dust! O man, can you feed on flowers? Can you dote on that which is but for an hour? You were made for eternity; and only that which is eternal can be your portion or your resting place. The things that perish with the using only mock your longings. They cannot fill you; and even if they filled, they cannot abide. Mortality is written on all things here; immortality belongs only to the world to come,—to that new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Like a ship at sea. With all its sails set, and a fresh breeze blowing, the vessel comes into sight, passes before our eye in the distance, and then disappears. So comes, so goes, so vanishes away this present world, with all that it contains. A few hours within sight, then gone! The wide sea o'er which it sailed as calm or as stormy as before; no trace anywhere of all the life or motion or beauty which was passing over it! O man, is that vanishing world thy only dwelling-place? Are all thy treasures, thy hopes, thy joys laid up there? Where will all these be when thou goest down to the tomb? Or where wilt thou be when these things leave thee, and thou art stripped of

all the inheritance which thou art ever to have for eternity? It is a poor heritage at the best, and its short duration makes it poorer still. Oh, choose the better part, which shall not be taken from thee!

Like a tent in the desert. They who have travelled over the Arabian sands know what this means. At sunset a little speck of white seems to rise out of the barren waste. It is a traveller's tent. At sunrise it disappears. Both it and its inhabitant are gone. The wilderness is as lonely as before. Such is the world. To-day it shows itself; to-morrow it disappears. O man, born of a woman, is that thy stay and thy home? Wilt thou say of it, "This is my rest," when we tell you that there is a rest, an everlasting rest, remaining for the people of God?

THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY. This is the message from heaven. All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field.

THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY. But God ever liveth. He is from everlasting to everlasting; the King eternal and immortal.

THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY. But man is immortal. Eternity lies before each son of Adam as the duration of his lifetime. In light or in darkness for ever! In joy or in sorrow for ever!

THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY. What then? This is the question that so deeply concerns man. If the world is to vanish away, and man is to live for ever, of what importance is it to know where and what we are to be for ever! A celebrated physician, trying to cheer a desponding patient, said to him, "Treat life as a plaything." It was wretched counsel. For life is no plaything, and time is no child's toy, to be flung away. Life here is the beginning of the life which has no end; and time is but the gateway of eternity.

What then? Thou must, O man, make sure of a home in that world into which thou art so soon to pass. Thou must not pass out of this tent without making sure of the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. When thou hast done this thou canst lie down upon thy deathbed in peace. Till thou hast done this, thou canst neither live nor die in peace. One who had lived a worldly life at last lay down to die; and when about to pass away he uttered these terrible words, "I am dying, and I don't know where I am going." Another in similar circumstances cried out, "I am within an hour of eternity and all is dark." O man of earth, it is time to awake!

"How can I make sure?" you ask. God has long since answered that question, and His answer is recorded for all ages: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! I have never done anything else," you say. If that be really true, then, as the Lord liveth, thou art a saved man. But is it really so? Has thy life been the life of a saved man? No, verily. It has been a life wholly given to vanity. Then as the Lord God of Israel liveth, and as thy soul liveth, thou hast not believed, and thou art not yet saved.

"Have I then no work to work in this great matter of my pardon?" None. What work canst thou work? What work of shine can buy forgiveness, or make thee fit for the Divine favor? What work has God bidden thee work in order to obtain salvation? None. His Word is very plain, and easy to be understood: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom 4:5).

There is but one work by which a man can be saved. That work is not shine, but the work of the Son of God. That work is finished,—neither to be taken from nor added to,—perfect through all ages,—and presented by Himself to you, that you may avail yourself of it and be saved.

"And is that work available for me just as I am?" It is. God has brought it to your door; and your only way of honouring it is by accepting it for yourself, and taking it as the one basis of your eternal hope. We honour the Father when we consent to be saved entirely by the finished work of His Son; and we honour the Son when we

consent to take His one finished work in the room of all our works; and we honour the Holy Spirit, whose office is to glorify Christ, when we hear what He saith to us concerning that work finished "once for all" upon the cross.

Forgiveness is through the man Christ Jesus, who is Son of God as well as Son of man! This is our message. Forgiveness through the one work of sin-bearing which He accomplished for sinners upon earth. Forgiveness to the worst and wickedest, to the farthest off from God whom this earth contains. Forgiveness of the largest, fullest, completest kind; without stint, or exception, or condition, or the possibility of revocation! Forgiveness free and undeserved,—free as the love of God, free as the gift of His beloved Son. Forgiveness ungrudged and unrestrained,—whole-hearted and joyful, as the forgiveness of the father falling on the neck of the prodigal! Forgiveness simply in believing; for, "by Him all that believe are justified from all things."

Could salvation be made more free? Could forgiveness be brought nearer? Could God in any way more fully show His earnest desire that you should not be lost, but saved,—that you should not die, but live?

In the cross there is salvation—nowhere else. No failure of this world's hopes can quench the hope which it reveals. It shines brightest in the evil day. In the day of darkening prospects, of thickening sorrows, of heavy burdens, of pressing cares,—when friends depart, when riches fly away, when disease oppresses us, when poverty knocks at our door,—then the cross shines out, and tells us of a light beyond this world's darkness, the Light of Him who is the light of the world.

Taken from: How Shall I Go To God? Available in booklet format.

THE SCRIPTURES AND THE WORLD

Arthur W. Pink

Not a little is written to the Christian in the New Testament about "the world" and his attitude towards it. Its real nature is plainly defined, and the believer is solemnly warned against it. God's holy Word is a light from heaven, shining here "in a dark place" (2 Peter 1:19). Its Divine rays exhibit things in their true colours, penetrating and exposing the false veneer and glamour by which many objects are cloaked. That world upon which so much labour is bestowed and money spent, and which is so highly extolled and admired by its blinded dupes, is declared to be "the enemy of God;" therefore are His children forbidden to be "conformed" to it and to have their affections set upon it.

The present phase of our subject is by no means the least important of those that have already been before us, and the serious reader will do well to seek Divine grace to measure himself or herself by it. One of the exhortations which God has addressed to His children is, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2), and it behooves each one of them honestly and diligently to examine himself so as to discover whether or not this be the case with him. Nor are we to be content with an increase of mere head-knowledge of Scripture: what we need to be most concerned about is our practical growth, our experimental conformity to the image of Christ. And one point at which we may test ourselves is, Does my reading and study of God's Word make me less worldly?

1. Discern the True Characteristics of the World. We profit from the Word when our eyes are opened to discern the true character of the world. One of the poets wrote, "God's in His Heaven—all's right with the world." From one stand point that is blessedly true, but from another it is radically wrong, for "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19) but it is only as the heart is supernaturally enlightened by the Holy Spirit that

we are enabled to perceive that which is highly esteemed among men is really "abomination in the sight of god" (Luke 16:15). It is much to be thankful for when the soul is able to see that the "world" is a gigantic fraud, a hollow bauble, a vile thing, which must one day be burned up.

Before we go farther, let us define that "world" which the Christian is forbidden to love. There are few words found upon the pages of Holy Writ used with a greater variety of meanings than this one. Yet careful attention to the context will usually determine its scope. The "world" is a system or order of things, complete in itself. No foreign element is suffered to intrude, or if it does it is speedily accommodated or assimilated to itself. The "world" is fallen human nature acting itself out in the human family, fashioning the framework of human society in accord with its own tendencies. It is the organized kingdom of the "carnal mind" which is "enmity against God" and which is "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). Wherever the "carnal mind" is, there is "the world;" so that worldliness is the world without God.

2. An Enemy to Be Resisted and Overcome. We profit from the Word when we learn that the world is an enemy to be resisted and overcome. The Christian is bidden to "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12), which implies that there are foes to be met and vanquished. As there is the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—so also there is an evil trinity—the flesh, the world, and the devil. The child of God is called unto a mortal combat with them; "mortal" we say, for either they will destroy him or he will get the victory over them. Settle it, then, in your mind, my reader, that the world is a deadly enemy, and if you do not vanquish it in your heart then you are no child of God, for it is written "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4).

Out of many, the following reason may be given as to why the world must be "overcome." First, all its alluring objects tend to divert the attention and alienate the affections of the soul from God. Necessarily so, for it is the tendency of things seen to turn the heart away from things unseen. Second, the spirit of the world is diametrically opposed to the Spirit of Christ, therefore did the apostle write, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God" (1 Cor. 2:12). The Son of God came into the world, but "the world knew Him not" (John 1:10), therefore did its "princes" and rulers crucify Him (1 Cor. 2:8). Third, its concerns and cares are hostile to a devout and heavenly life. Christians, like the rest of mankind, are required by God to labour six days in the week; but while so employed they need to be constantly on their guard, lest covetous interests govern them rather than the performance of duty. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). Naught but a God-given faith can overcome the world. But as the heart is occupied with invisible yet eternal realities, it is delivered from the corrupting influence of worldly objects. The eyes of faith discern the things of sense in their real colours, and see that they are empty and vain, and not worthy to be compared with the great and glorious objects of eternity. A felt sense of the perfections and presence of God makes the world appear less than nothing. When the Christian views the Divine Redeemer dying for his sins, living to intercede for his perseverance, reigning and overruling things for his final salvation, he exclaims, "there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee" And how is it with you, dear reader? You may cordially assent to what has just been said in the last paragraph, but how is it with you actually? Do the things which are so highly valued by the unregenerate charm and enthrall you? Take away from the worldling those things in which he delights, and he is wretched: is this so with you? Or, are your present joy and satisfaction found in objects which can never be taken from you? Treat not these questions lightly, we beseech you, but ponder them seriously in the presence of God. The honest answer to them will be an index to the real state of your soul, and will indicate whether or not you are deceived into supposing yourself to be "a new creature in Christ Jesus."

3. Christ Died to Deliver Us. We profit from the Word when we learn that Christ died to deliver us from "this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4). The Son of God came here not only to "fulfill" the requirements of the law (Matt. 5:17), to "destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8), to deliver us "from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:10), to save us from our sins (Matt. 1:21), but also to free us from the bondage of this world, to deliver the soul from its enthralling influence. This was foreshadowed of old in God's dealings with Israel. They were slaves in Egypt,

and "Egypt" is a figure of the world. They were in cruel bondage, spending their time in "making bricks" for Pharaoh. They were unable to free themselves. But Jehovah, by His mighty power, emancipated them, and brought them forth out of the "iron furnace." Thus does Christ with His own. He breaks the power of the world over their hearts. He makes them independent of it, that they neither court its favours nor fear its frowns.

Christ gave Himself a sacrifice for the sins of His people that, in consequence thereof, they might be delivered from the damning power and governing influence of all that is evil in this present world: from Satan, who is its prince; from the lusts which predominate in it; from the vain conversation of the men who belong to it. Now the Holy Spirit indwelling the saints co-operates with Christ in this blessed work. He turns their thoughts and affections away from earthly things to heavenly. By the working of His power, He frees from the demoralizing influence which surrounds us, and conforms to the heavenly standard. And as the Christian grows in grace he recognizes this, and acts accordingly. He seeks yet fuller deliverance from this "present evil world," and begs God to free him from it completely. That which once charmed him now nauseates. He longs for the time when he shall be taken out of this scene where his blessed Lord is so grievously dishonoured.

4. Our Hearts Are Weaned From the World. We profit from the Word when our hearts are weaned from it. "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world" (2 John 2:15). "What the stumbling block is to the traveller in the way, the weight to the runner, the lime twigs to the bird in its flight, so is the love of the world to a Christian in his course—either wholly diverting him from, greatly enticing him in, or forcibly turning him out of it" (Nash. Hardy, 1660). The truth is that until the heart be purged from this corruption the ear will be deaf to Divine instruction. Not until we are lifted above the things of time and sense can we be subdued unto obedience to God. Heavenly Truth glides off a carnal mind as water from a spherical body.

The world has turned its back upon Christ, and though His name is professed in many places, yet will it have nothing to do with Him. All the desires and designs of worldlings are for the gratification of self. Let their aims and pursuits be as varied as they may, self being supreme, everything is subordinated to the pleasing thereof. Now Christians are in the world, and cannot get out of it; they have to live their Lord's appointed time in it. While here they have to earn their living, support their families, and attend to their worldly business. But they are forbidden to love the world, as though it could make them happy. Their "treasure" and "portion" are to be found elsewhere.

The world appeals to every instinct of fallen man. It contains a thousand objects to charm him: they attract his attention, the attention creates a desire for and love of them, and insensibly yet surely they make deeper and deeper impressions on his heart. It has the same fatal influence on all classes. But attractive and appealing as its varied objects may be, all the pursuits and pleasures of the world are designed and adopted to promote the happiness of this life only—therefore, "what shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The Christian is taught by the Spirit, and through His presenting of Christ before the soul his thoughts are diverted from the world. Just as a little child will readily drop a dirty object when something more pleasing is offered to it, so the heart which is in communion with God will say, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord... and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

5. Walk in Separation from the World. We profit from the Word when we walk in separation from the world "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). Such a verse as this ought to search every one of us through and through, and make us tremble. How can I fraternize with or seek my pleasure in that which condemned the Son of God? If I do, that at once identifies me with His enemies. Oh, my reader, make no mistake upon this point. It is written, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15).

Of old it was said of the people of God that they "shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Num. 23:9). Surely the disparity of character and conduct, the desires and pursuits, which distinguish

the regenerate from the unregenerate must separate the one from the other. We who profess to have our citizenship in another world, to be guided by another Spirit, to be directed by another rule, and to be journeying to another country, cannot go arm in arm with those who despise all such things! Then let everything in and about us exhibit the character of Christian pilgrims. May we indeed be "men wondered at" (Zech. 3:8) because "not conformed to this world" (Rom 12:2).

6. Evoke the Hatred of the World. We profit from the Word when we evoke the hatred of the world. What pains are taken in the world to save appearances and keep up a seemly and good state! Its conventionalities and civilities, its courtesies and charities, are so many contrivances to give an air of respectability to it. So too its churches and cathedrals, its priests and prelates are needed to gloss over the corruption which seethes beneath the surface. And to make good weight "Christianity" is added, and the holy name of Christ is taken upon the lips of thousands of those who have never taken His "yoke" upon them. Of them God says, "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me" (Matt. 15:8).

And what is to be the attitude of all real Christians toward such? The answer of Scripture is plain: "from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5). "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (2 Cor. 6:17). And what will follow when this Divine command is obeyed? Why, then we shall prove the truth of those words of Christ's: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19). Which "world" is specifically in view here? Let the previous verse answer: "If the world hate you, ye know it hated Me before it hated you." What "world" hated Christ and hounded Him to death? The religious world, those who pretended to be most zealous for God's glory. So it is now. Let the Christian turn his back upon a Christ-dishonouring Christendom, and his fiercest foes and most relentless and unscrupulous enemies will be those who claim to be Christians themselves! But "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you,— for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad" (Matt. 5:11,12). Ah, my brother, it is a healthy sign, a sure mark that you are profiting from the Word, when the religious world hates you. But if, on the other hand, you still have a "good standing" in the "churches" or "assemblies" there is grave reason to fear that you love the praise of men more than that of God!

7. Elevated above the World. We profit from the Word when we are elevated above the world. First above its customs and fashions. The worldling is a slave to the prevailing habits and styles of the day. Not so the one who is walking with God: his chief concern is to be "conformed to the image of His Son." Second, above its cares and sorrows: of old it was said of the saints that they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had "in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Heb. 10:34). Third, above its temptations: what attraction has the glare and glitter of the world for those who are "delighting themselves in the Lord?" None whatever. Fourth, above its opinions and approvals. Have you learned to be independent of and defy the world? If your whole heart is set upon pleasing God, you will be quite unconcerned about the frowns of the godless.

Now, my reader, do you really wish to measure yourself by the contents of this article? Then seek honest answers to the following questions. First, what are the objects before your mind in times of recreation? What do your thoughts most run upon? Second, what are the objects of your choice? When you have to decide how to spend an evening or the Sabbath afternoon, what do you select? Third, which occasions you the most sorrow, the loss of earthly things, or lack of communion with God? Which causes greater grief (or chagrin), the spoiling of your plans or the coldness of your heart to Christ? Fourth, what is your favourite topic of conversation? Do you hanker after the news of the day, or to meet with those who talk of the "altogether lovely" One? Fifth, do your "good intentions" materialize, or are they nothing but empty dreams? Are you spending more or less time than formerly on your knees? Is the Word sweeter to your taste, or has your soul lost its relish for it?

Available in Booklet Format.

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD

I. C. Herendeen

"Love not the world... The world passeth away, and the lust thereof" (1 John 2:15, 17). "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). "Come out from among them, and be ye separate"—2 Corinthians 6:17

The Christian is plagued by three great, powerful and subtle enemies— "the world, the flesh and the devil." They are terrible foes which must be overcome if we are to be saved. However, at this time we will consider but one of these enemies which Scripture warns us not to be "conformed" unto, namely "the world." It is not easy to give a clear definition, but we would, with another, describe it as both "a society and a system." "As a society, it is composed of "the world of the ungodly" (2 Pet 2:5), of "men of the world which have their portion in this life" (Psa 17:14). It is composed only of unregenerate humanity, the Lord having delivered all His people from "this present evil world" ((Sal 1:4). Though still in it, the Christian is no longer of it. As a system, it is under the dominion of Satan who is its "prince" (John 12:31) who regulates its policies and its politics." He is its "god" (2 Cor 4:4) directing its religions. Ephesians 2:2 tells us the unregenerate "walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

Considered morally, the world is synonymous with the kingdom of Satan (Matt 12:26), or the unregenerate part of humanity. It is fallen human nature acting under the influence of the devil. "The spirit of the world is hostile to godliness, dominated by carnal ambition, pride, avarice, self-pleasing and sensuous desires and interests. Its opinions are false, its aims selfish, its pleasures sinful, its influence thoroughly corrupt, its honors an empty bauble" (something showy but worthless). The world is the sphere of rebellion against God; it is away from God and in opposition to Him. Unregenerate persons think only of this world's ways and things to the neglect of "the world to come."

They are always thinking more of earth than of heaven, more of time than eternity, more of the body than of pleasing God. Both the religious and profane world are under the control of Satan in their ways, habits, customs, tastes, practices and aims, and in these things are a great and subtle enemy of our souls. Every one who is a true Christian and determined to please the Lord will be in earnest in renouncing these things, and will earnestly seek to order his life by God's standard, the Holy Scriptures.

The world surrounds us. We have it exhibited on every hand day in and day out. For example, the very immodest and lustful way in which women dress; wearing that which Holy Writ strictly forbids (see Deut 22:5; 1 Tim 2:9) to their shame. Dear friend, if you really love the Lord, see to it that you are not guilty of such forbidden practices. Remember. God's stern command is "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom 12:2), to its wicked ways, customs or fashions. Believers ought to live in marked contrast from it; we ought rather to be "conformable unto His [Christ's] death" (Phil 3:10). Instead of being conformed unto this world we ought to be more and more separated from the world (2 Cor 6:16-18). Its ungodly ways ought to be abhorrent to us, and especially those of the unregenerate professing religious world which "hates" our blessed Saviour (John 15:25), and which "put Him to an open shame" (Heb 6:6).

The world seeks to gratify its lusts with no thought of nor concern for God's will or glory; hence, we must tread the path of separation from it in obedience to Him. It is God's purpose that His people, all His people, should detach their affections and interests completely from the things of this visible and corruptible and perishing order, and "set them upon things above" (Sol 3:2). But as things are now it is hard to detect any line of demarcation between the Christian and the world. As so many deport themselves, it is most difficult if not

impossible to distinguish "him that believeth" from him that "believeth not." It was never contemplated that the Lord's people should make themselves at home here, for their "citizenship is in heaven" (Phil 3:20). God separated Abraham from his people, and "righteous Lot" and his household from the inhabitants of the plain. He carefully separated Israel from the nations, setting them apart by peculiar laws and customs. And in this age He commands His Church to "have no fellowship" with unbelievers, or be "unequally yoked" with them.

In the light of this, what about us? Are we taking a definite stand in this matter? If we are not, why not? Will the Lord accept any of our excuses? He has given us our marching orders when He said we are to "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing [not seeking to avoid] His reproach" (Heb 13:13). Do we think we can mix in our lives the things of this wicked world, and not sin? Impossible! Sin is a serious matter. The very Son of God suffered and died to put it away, yet great numbers posing as Christians are taking an active and prominent part in the world's merry-making and mad scramble after its pleasures, wealth and temporal benefits! In a matter so solemn can we, dare we, afford pretense and trifling! If we really believe these things then let us live and act as though we believe them, and really be what we profess to be. If we do not believe them, then let us quit the miserable pretense of being followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, members of His body. In other words, let us quit being hypocrites and take our Christian profession seriously. He who seeks God must be prepared to make a full surrender of all worldly prospects, pleasures and benefits, and give himself wholly to God. We must be willing to give Him all the affections of our hearts, for His command is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" (Matt 22:37). The world from which the Christian is to detach himself "lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5:19).

It is a sad fact but there are two kinds of "Christians"—the converted and the unconverted, "possessors and professors." The professors are overcome by the love of the world, the cares of the world, the business of the world, the money of the world, the pleasures of the world, the desire to go along with the world, and, alas, the desire to be like the world.

Of course, with all their worldliness, they must be religious and pretend to piety. "They make no objection to any article of belief of the Christian faith, nor do they deliberately choose evil and openly rebel against God. No, for with all their worldliness they hope to get to heaven at last. They think it only proper that they should have a religion of some sort, though they are not too particular what it is just so long as they are religious. But they cannot and do not intend to give up their idols. Religion is very popular with them just so long as it does not interfere with their worldly desires and ambitions... Just so long as they can have their religion and world, too."

When our Lord commanded through Paul to "Come out from among them," He did not mean that the Christian must give up all his worldly callings, his trade, his profession, his business if lawful and according to the Word of God, for then he "must needs go out of the world" (1 Cor 5:10). He did not forbid any should be bankers, farmers, or lawyers, for example. God expects His people not to be idle, but busy "working with his hands the thing that is good" (Eph 4:28). "If any man will not work neither shall he eat" (2 Thess 3:10). We are not to give up any lawful work, but "do with our might whatsoever our hands find to do" (Eccl 9:10), being careful to carry our testimony with us into our business, conducting it in "the fear of the Lord" and to "the glory of God." Neither are we to stand aloof from all intercourse with unconverted people, and refuse their society entirely. Our Lord and His disciples did not; they went to the marriage feast and sat at the Pharisee's table.

Christians are not to be odd, eccentric and strange in their dress, ways of behaviour, conduct or voice. Such things attract notice but are most objectionable, unnatural, and ought to be carefully avoided. To wear clothes of such a color, for instance, or made in such a fashion as that you will be a public spectacle and the object of comment is wrong and dishonoring to the Lord. You may be sure that our Lord and His apostles and their companions dressed and acted as befitted their place and rank in life. It was the Pharisees who "made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments." Why?—"To be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5). True

sanctity (saintliness, holiness, purity) is one thing, and sanctimoniousness (pretended piety, religious hypocrisy) is another.

As Christians we must beware of being swallowed up and absorbed in the affairs of this world. Whatever we be, banker, farmer or lawyer, we will, of course, strive to do our duty and to do it well. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men" (Sol 3:23). But we must take care that we do not permit our work to come between us and Christ. If we find that our temporal affairs are interfering with our Bible reading, prayer and meditation, and encroaching on our Sundays so that we do not have time for the Lord as we ought; we will choose being less rich and prosperous in this world rather than that our souls should not prosper. This may require real self-denial, but it is the way of true separation from the world. We are to be "temperate in all things" (1 Cor 9:25), even in things lawful. Anything that takes up too much of our time and attention so that we do not have sufficient time for the things of the Lord is to be eschewed. We are to "seek first the kingdom of God" (Matt 6:33).

We are also commanded to "redeem the time, because the days are evil" (Eph 5:16). This means that we are to buy up our opportunities and invest them for eternity. Every moment of free time is to be used to the best advantage and not in idleness or other ways to no profit for the time to come. The divine fiat is, "Give attendance to reading" (1 Tim 4:13). This commandment is to be obeyed, not ignored. We should make ourselves very familiar with the Word, and also "hide" it in our hearts (Psa 119:11). For this we should set apart a portion of each day for reading and meditating on the Holy Scriptures. In addition, we should read with diligence and care for good books on the Bible written by accredited authors whom God has gifted to be teachers of His flock. If we plead lack of time then let us see that we make time, for we always have time for what we really want to do. Paul wrote Timothy requesting him: "...when thou comest, bring... the books, and especially the parchments" (2 Tim 4:13).

Of course it is no easy thing to "come out from" the world. It requires a constant struggle and exertion, incessant conflict and self-denial. To come decidedly out from the ways of the world and be unmistakably separate requires a real determination. But if our heart is right everything else will be right in time. We should set before our minds every day as grand realities, which they are, the matter of our soul's eternal welfare: God, Christ, heaven, hell, death, judgment to come and eternity. Let us remind ourselves that what we do not see is just as real as what we do see, and ten thousand times more important. Armed with this faith we will regard this world as a mere shadow compared with the reality of "the world to come." We will disdain its praise or blame, its enmity or rewards. Moses "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure of Egypt" and so "he forsook Egypt;" for "he endured as seeing him who is invisible" (Heb 11:26). Dear friends, "the time is short;" "the end of all things is at hand," the shadows are lengthening, the sun has nearly gone down. "The night cometh when no man can work" (John 9:4). The judgment will soon be set and "the books opened." Are you ready for the great Judgment Day? Let us awake and "come out from the world" while "it is called today." In a little while the things as we now see them will have passed away—no more "eating and drinking, feasting and frolicking, making and getting again" (James 4:13). If these are the things our hearts have been set upon and we have pursued so ardently, what will we do when all have passed away forever? How could we ever think of being happy in heaven, a place of holiness and where worldliness has no place whatever!

O friends, consider these things more seriously than you have ever done before. Awake while there is yet time and "set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth" (sol 3:2). Persevere in your separation from the world and be a most decided Christian. You will never regret having lived too holy and too separated a life.

Available in tract format.

LOVE NOT THE WORLD

L. R. Shelton, Jr.

Dear friend, a false gospel is sweeping our land, and has swept like wild fire through Christendom in these last decades, damning more souls to hell than seemingly any other of Satan's subtle lies; and I've come again to warn you of this FALSE GOSPEL OF CARNAL CHRISTIANITY. In our past messages, we have been showing the fruits that grow on the tree of this false gospel as they are described in 11 Tim. 3:1-7. We have seen from v. 5 that these fruits are manifested in the lives of those who have a "form of godliness, but deny the power thereof;" so these are not worldlings, but professors, converts of this false gospel that deny the power of the grace of God to break the power of sin. Consequently, their fruits are the fruits of the flesh, for they have never been born again of the Spirit of God. We have seen first that their behavior is all wrong, described by the words and expressions: "blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, traitors, and heady." Second, their opinion is all wrong, described under the words and expressions: "boasters, proud, high-minded, and despisers of those that are good." Third, their affection is all wrong, described by the words and expressions: "without natural affection, lovers of their own selves, covetous, and lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

It is this last expression—THEIR AFFECTION IS ALL WRONG that we wish to consider today: "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God," the last fruit given in 11 Tim. 3:4 of this false gospel of carnal Christianity. And I say, what a sad commentary upon the poor, deceived, so-called "carnal Christian," to believe that he can be saved, that he can be a child of God, an heir of heaven, and yet love pleasures more than he loves God! Matthew 6:21 tells us, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also;" and my friend, if your treasure is this world and its pleasures, then your heart is not right with God, and you cannot bring forth fruit unto perfection! You see, we are told in Luke 8:14 that when the seed, the Word of God, is sown among thorns, it is choked with cares, with riches and the pleasures of this life, and therefore cannot bring forth fruit unto life or unto perfection.

Now what kind of pleasures are these that men are said to be lovers of, more than the lovers of God? My friend, these are sensual pleasures and vain amusements; this is clearly brought out in Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, and in the Amplified Translation of the Bible. This being so, we need to define the word "sensual" and see how it is used in the Word of God. Follow us now!

The word "sensual" means "fleshly, carnal, self-indulgent, worldly, lewd, sexual, promiscuous in sin, glutton, epicurean, lustful, immoral, and unrestrained lust;" in other words, everything that appeals to the fallen nature of man that would satisfy his depraved heart. And this is said to be the fruit of the carnal Christian gospel—lovers of sensual pleasure more than lovers of God—for these very people who have and practice this love of sensual pleasure, and who love the things of the flesh more than God, are told that they are saved and going to heaven because they have made a profession of faith sometime in their life! But II Tim. 3:5 not only tells us that these poor, deceived souls have a form of godliness (they think they are saved), and that their lives deny the power of the Gospel of the grace of God to save them from the power of sin, but that we must turn away from such, lest we be drawn into the same deception with them!

Dear friend, if you live in and love sensual pleasures more than you love God, no matter what you profess, you are dead—spiritually dead while you live, and therefore you are an enemy of God and a stranger to grace and the holy ways of the Lord, for without holiness, "no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). One of the strongest portions of Scripture against you is found in James 4:1-4, where you are called "adulterers and adulteresses," and enemies of the living God, the Holy God Who hates sin. Listen to God's Word, first in the King James translation as we go verse by verse, and then in the Amplified Version: (v. 1) "From whence come wars and

fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"—"What leads you to strife (discord and feuds) and how do conflicts (quarrels and fightings) originate among you? Do they not arise from your sensual desires that are ever warring in your bodily members?" (v.2) "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not."—"You are jealous and covet [what others have] and your desires go unfulfilled; [so] you become murderers. [To hate is to murder as far as your hearts are concerned.] You burn with envy and anger and are not able to obtain [the gratification, the contentment and the happiness that you seek], so you fight and war. You do not have because you do not ask." (v.3) "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."—" [Or] you do not ask [God for them] and yet fail to receive, because you ask with wrong purpose and evil, selfish motives. Your intention is, [when you get what you desire] to spend it in sensual pleasures. " (v.4) "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."—"You [are like] unfaithful wives [having illicit love affairs with the world] and breaking your marriage vow to God! Do you not know that being the world's friend is being God's enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as an enemy of God."

Now let us apply this to our own hearts, and see if we are lovers of sensual pleasures more than lovers of God (spiritual adulterers and adulteresses), or if we are indeed children of God, by asking the following questions: Do we love to watch and feed upon the majority of programs that are shown on television which appeal only to the sensual, fleshly nature? Do we feed upon the magazines, newspapers and books that appeal to our sensual, fleshly nature? Do we secretly desire to do these things, even though we would not openly do them? Has sin become such a commonplace thing, that we can indulge in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, and go on saying: "All is well with my soul," while we actually remain enemies of God and strangers to the way of grace?

Do we love God and His righteousness and holiness, or do our hearts rebel against the narrow way of self denial and a life of separation from the world? Do we secretly despise the way of grace, the way of repentance, the way of bowing to the authority of God's Word and to the Lordship of Christ? Do we follow after our own will and do our own thing without prayer and waiting upon God for His leadership? Do we love the sexual, lewd, lustful, self-indulgent way of the world; or do we indeed love God and His holiness, and seek to please Him in a life of separation from the world and the things of the world? Let us face these questions, and ask our hearts where we stand before God!

Oh listen to the Word of God! "LOVE NOT THE WORLD, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17). Dear friend, do you love the world, and the things that are in the world? You may ask, "What is the world spoken of here?" Listen! It is the reign or kingdom of the carnal mind, the mind of the ungodly system which is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. You see, wherever that mind prevails, there is the world! It is the "ungodliness and worldly lusts" of Titus 2:12. It is fallen human nature, acting out itself under the influences of the Devil, the god of this ungodly world; and its spirit is hostile to godliness. Why? Because it is dominated by carnal ambition, pride, self-pleasing, and sensuous desires and interests. You see, the principles which govern this world, the powers which operate it, the end which it seeks, all are earthly, sensual, devilish, and not of God and holiness. The opinions of the world are false, its aims are selfish, its pleasures are sinful, its politics are corrupt, its honors are nothing but bubbles and do not last. And since the world is the sphere of rebellion against God, His people are commanded not to love it. They are not to esteem it as their portion or treasure. They are forbidden to set their affections upon it (Col. 3:2).

Listen to me now! To love the world and its sensual pleasures is to give it the first place in our hearts, to idolize it, to make everything else subordinate to the acquisition and enjoyments of it, and to despise whatever comes into competition with it. It is to make its vanities the chief objects of our pursuits, to share its friendships, to

court its smiles, to conform to its ways, and to find our happiness in what it yields in its pleasures. You see, when the world is loved, it possesses and governs the soul, overcoming the conscience and the principles of holiness and the Word of God, for its influence is subtle, powerful, perilous, and leads to damnation and hell!

Listen again to the command: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." You see, one may renounce the world systems that Satan governs as a whole, and yet the heart secretly still clings to some of its parts. No, my friend, it is not sufficient that I just renounce the world, but I should detach my affections from everything which seeks to claim them. I am not to value any object of the world if it hinders the performance of my duties to God, if it dulls my relish for His Word, or chills the spirit of praise and prayer. You see, I am to prefer nothing to spiritual things. I must not delight in anything which would cause me to lessen my esteem of Christ and heavenly things, for I am to love Him supremely; my affections must be set on things above! I may use many of the things that are in the world, but I must not abuse them. I must not put my trust in them; I must not place my happiness in them. In other words, I am to love nothing above God; I am to love nothing equal to God, and I am not to love anything apart from God. And this is the teaching of God's Word!

By the grace of God, I have endeavored to lay before us what it means to be LOVERS OF SENSUAL PLEASURES more than lovers of God, and what it means to love God supremely and not the world which He hates. Now I leave the matter with you: Are you living after the flesh and bearing the fruit of the false gospel of carnal Christianity, or are you living after the Spirit and bearing the fruit of the Spirit, which is Christ-likeness? I leave with you these verses of Scripture found in Romans 8:5-6, 12-13, trusting the Holy Spirit to apply them to our hearts: "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are of the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace... Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: [the death of the unrighteous, the ungodly] but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live"—live eternally with Christ in glory!

Taken from the paperback book—*The True Gospel of Christ vs. The False Gospel of Carnal Christianity*—available from Chapel Library.

THE SAINT AND THE WORLD

John Arndt

"Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.—2 Corinthians 8:9

Thou art required, O man! to die to thyself, thy sin, and the world; and to lead a holy, harmless life, according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This thou art to do, not with a view to merit anything at the hands of God, but from a principle of love to him, who performed and merited all for thee, and died to save thee.

2. Be not deceived: Jesus must be loved by thee, not in word and in tongue, but in deed and truth. "If," says he (John 14:23), "a man love me, he will keep my words;" and so St. John speaks: "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. And, again, the Saviour says: "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:30). To him, indeed, who loves Christ with all his heart, it cannot but be easy to sacrifice the pleasure which earthly vanities afford, and to do that which is good, without constraint. Love renders every burden light that is laid upon us by Jesus; whereas to him that is devoid of this heavenly principle, every act which duty requires is grievous and oppressive. To such a one, every religious exercise is painful and laborious; whereas the man who sincerely loves the Lord Jesus Christ, esteems death itself to be in nowise terrible, when submitted to for his sake. And, therefore, the Apostle says: "Unto you it is

given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1:29): nay, to lay down life itself, whenever that sacrifice is required of us.

3. In order to confirm thy faith, consider the example of Moses, who, "by faith, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt" (Heb. 11:24-26).

4. Consider Daniel, who refused the luxuries of a court, and desired to be fed with pulse and water, resolving "that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank" (Dan. 1:8, 12). He contemned the pleasures of Babylon, that he might attain "the wisdom that is from above" (James 3:17), which dwells only in a heart preserved pure from the pollutions of an unholy world. So, if thou desires" that Christ, the eternal Wisdom, should enter into thy soul, thou must abhor the pleasures of sin. For as Daniel and his companions were made fairer by their sobriety and abstemious life, so be thou firmly assured, that thy soul will appear more beautiful and fair in the sight of God, even as "partaking of the divine nature," if thou escape "the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1:4).

5. Consider, further, the example of St. Paul, who says, "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14); that is, I am dead to the world, and the world is dead to me. Thus are all true Christians in the world, yet not of it. Though they live in it, they do not love it; for they view it as a transient shadow; and its pomps, dignities, and lusts, as vanity and deceit, vexation and disappointment. Hence, they are crucified to the world, though they remain in it; and the world is crucified to them; that is, they desire no mere worldly honor, wealth or joy.

6. How happy is the man who is dead to earthly vanities, and alive to God; separated from the world, and drawn into Christ! How blessed is he into whose heart divine grace is so infused, as wholly to wean it from inferior objects, and exalt it to the fruition of the light and glory of heaven. Such a state is the effect of daily prayer and supplications, without which a true Christian cannot possibly exist

7. Agur prayed to the Lord thus: "Two things, have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die. Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me" (Prov. 30:7, 8). So let the Christian pray: "Two things I desire of thee, O Lord, even these two: that I may die to myself, and to the world." For without the death, it is utterly impossible to be a true Christian. If thou, O Man! thinkest otherwise, thou certainly deceivest thyself, and shalt at last hear from the mouth of Christ that awful sentence, "I know you not" (Matt. 7:23; 25:12).

8. Though to die thus to self and to the world, is, to flesh and blood, a grievous cross, yet will the spirit and the love of Christ eventually triumph over every difficulty. So powerful indeed are these aids, that they enable the true Christian to bear all things for the sake of the Beloved, as a pleasant yoke and easy burden. And although he who lives a life thus mortified, will be hated by the world, yet shall he be loved of God; for the enmity of the world is friendship with him (James 4:4). And the Lord hath himself declared, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19).

9. Those who are dead to the world for the testimony of Jesus, it casts out; but it honors and applauds them who, living in the enjoyment of its pomp and splendor, are its genuine offspring; because they live in the world, and the world liveth in them;

10. In short, that man is not received and commended by the world, but is, on the contrary, cast out of it. in whose heart pride, covetousness, lust, patience; and I will not confess you: you have despised the shame of my cross; and you shall be with shame disowned by me (Mark 8:38). For whoever refuses to live with Christ in

time, cannot expect to live with him in eternity: whoever has not the life of Christ here, shall never have it set forth in him hereafter: and whoever disdains to follow Jesus in the present world, shall never be glorified with him in the world to come.

11. Therefore, O Man! strictly scrutinize thy life, and see whether thou bearest a greater conformity to the life of Christ, or to the life of the devil: for thou must inevitably be united to one or other of these throughout all eternity.

12. If thou art dead to thyself and to they depraved desires within thee, thou wilt find it no hard task to die to the world and its vain allurements which are without thee: and whoever is thus dead to the world, will not love it or the things which it contains; for, "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). Again, how shall his desires any more go out after the world without him, when he is dead to it? Great indeed would be the loss sustained by a lover of the blessed God, were he, in any degree, to yield to the wrath, revenge, and the other corrupt passions of nature, are mortified and restrained. Unto him the world is dead; and he again is dead to the world; he begins to live in Christ, and Christ lives in him; and he will be confessed by the Saviour, as one of his peculiar people, in whom the great design of redemption has been effected. To others, on the contrary, it will be said, "I know you not, as ye, in like manner, knew me not." You have not confessed me before men, but have been ashamed of my life, my meekness, humility, and allurements of the world, and allow it to obtain a share in that affection which should be fixed solely on the Supreme Good. A soul so undecided would soon be entirely vanquished by the blandishments of sin, as was Samson by the charms of Delilah (Judy. 16:6); and would become subject to all that misery and vexation of heart, which invariably attend the love of this world.

13. The love of the world appertains not to the new creature, but to the old: for the world has nothing to bestow but honor and vainglory, riches, pleasures, and carnal desires; in these the "old man" delights. The new man, on the other hand, has no peace except in Christ who is his honor and glory, his riches and his heaven.

14. And as nothing can be conceived of that is greater or more exalted than the image of God renewed in Christ Jesus, so it should be our only concern and care, to render ourselves partakers of this exalted honor; remembering the words of Tauler, "What man, who is possessed of reason, can doubt for a moment, that God can infinitely more rejoice and delight the heart, than the corrupt and indigent creature is capable of doing?"

15. In addition to this, the Scriptures assures us that man was not created for the world's sake, but the world for man's. It was not to pamper his appetite, to heap up riches, or to extend his empire without limits, that man was formed; it was not that he might acquire large estates and possessions, erect palaces, or be gorgeously attired, that he was endued with a soul intelligent and immortal: man was made to be lord of the earth, and not its slave; to subdue, and not to be subdued. He was not to seek his pleasure and enjoyment on earth, however fair and fascinating it might be to a depraved taste: he was not destined to be an heir of this inferior world, nor the possessor of terrestrial treasures, nor to be actuated by any worldly motive whatsoever. Man is to depart hence, as one that dwells on earth as a tenant at will. He was not made for it, and cannot remain in it; he entered it naked, and naked he must quit it again. Many, indeed, are born into the world at the same time; but an equal number, on the other hand, are daily taken out by death; nor can any carry with them even an atom of the treasures which they had accumulated upon earth.

16. Man, then, is but as guest and a pilgrim below; and most obvious it is, that he was not created for this temporal life, and that this world was never designed to be the end of his being. That end is God, and the image of God in Christ Jesus, unto which we are renewed by the Spirit; and we are created for the kingdom of God and for eternal life. These our blessed Redeemer purchased for us, when they had been forfeited by us; and it is his Spirit that regenerates men who had been without God in the world.

17. How unreasonable, therefore, is it in man to fix his affections on temporal objects, when we are assured that the soul is infinitely more noble and more precious than the whole world! How preposterous is it, that he should lavish his time in the pursuit of earthly things, when he is conscious that he was created to bear the image of God in Christ, though the Holy Spirit! Therefore, let us now solemnly repeat what has been before affirmed, namely, that man was not made for the world, but the world for man. The excellency of the image of God in Christ Jesus, is inconceivably great and glorious: so that were all mankind to unite their labor and might, their wealth, their honors, and their all, they could not succeed in restoring even one soul to the possession of this image. It became requisite that Christ himself should die, in order that this divine image which had been utterly defaced by sin, might, through His Spirit, be revived; and that man might again become the temple and house of God through all eternity.

18. This being duly considered, as certainly it ought to be, how is it that man so thoroughly debases his soul as to seek after the things of this world, its honors, its pleasures, lusts, and wealth? He should surely reason with himself, and say: "Shall I, for the sake of a little gold, or for this fading world, or for all the honors and pleasures it can afford me—shall I, for the sake of these, sacrifice my immortal soul, which Christ has redeemed at so infinite a price? God forbid." "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26). Alas! the "whole world," with all its power and glory, could not avail to rescue one soul from eternal destruction; for the soul is immortal, while the world passeth away with all that it contains (1 Cor. 7:31; 1 John 2:17).

The true Christian, who imitates Christ, hates his own life in this world, and forsakes the world.

In order that a man may hate himself, he must, in the first place, cease to love himself; secondly, he must daily die to sin; and, thirdly, maintain a continual warfare with his corrupt nature, or the flesh.

2. There is nothing that more obstructs the everlasting salvation of mankind than self-love. This is not to be understood of that natural love which excites to a due regard to self-preservation, but of that carnal and inordinate affection which influences man to be wholly concerned about himself, without any reference to the Supreme Being, the great Author of life. In this sense the term is used in the present Book. Man was created to love God alone; and since God only is to be loved, it follows that he who loves himself is an idolater, and makes of himself a god. The heart of man rejoices and rests in the object of his affection; and, whatever this be, he is brought by it into bondage, and is devoted to it. Man, in this state, is become a servant, and is deprived of that genuine liberty in the enjoyment of which he was originally created; and in this lapsed and divided state he must serve as many masters as there are objects upon which his affections are placed. But if thy love, O man! be sincerely and simply fixed on God, then thou art subject to no lord but Him; and thou preserves" thy liberty with all the privileges appertaining to it. It becometh thee, therefore, to be very circumspect in thy life and conduct, lest thou shouldst in any degree obstruct the progress of divine love to thy soul. If ever thou desires" to possess God alone, thou must make a surrender of thyself solely to him. If thou lovest and pleases" thyself, instead of loving and pleasing God, then sorrow and fear, sadness and anxiety, will inevitably attend thee; whereas, if thou wholly yieldest thyself unto God, cleaving to him and delighting thyself in him alone, then he will never leave thee nor forsake thee, but remove by his gracious presence all fear and anxiety from thy mind. He, on the other hand, who seeks himself in all situations and in every circumstance, and who incessantly pursues after profit, praise, and lust, can never attain to serenity and peace of mind; for some circumstance there always will be to cross his desires and to disturb his rest. Never, therefore, yield to the belief that an accession of fame, wealth, or honor in this world, is always good and profitable for thee; when, on the contrary, a righteous contempt of all such transient objects, nay, an utter extirpation of our love of them, would be attended with an infinite blessing and advantage.

3. As then, on the one hand, the things of this life, such as praise, riches, and pleasure, are frail, and pass away with the world that supplies them, while, on the other, the love of God endureth forever, it is evident that no satisfaction can be durable that is founded upon the love of self and of earthly objects. Such peace would be

interrupted by every trivial circumstance that occurred; whereas, when the mind is firmly set upon God and upon his love, it cannot fail to be preserved in perfect peace and perpetual serenity amid all the changes of this life. Forsake thou, therefore, all things, and thou shalt, by faith, recover all things again; for never can the lover of himself and of the world find the blessed God.

4. Inordinate self-love is begotten of the world, and not of God; it is earthly, and the chief enemy to "the wisdom which is from above" (James 3:17). This wisdom does not seek the praise and the applause of men; and though in itself "a pearl of great price" (Matt. 13:46), yet appearing with no other recommendation than its own native simplicity, it is but little valued in the world, and, with but few exceptions, is entirely neglected and forgotten; and though there are many who make a boast of this wisdom, yet the gem conceals itself from all who do not desire to apply it in their practice. If, therefore, thou desires" to be possessed of it, O man! lay aside all that human wisdom which "puffeth up" (1 Cor. 8:1), together with thy self-love and self-applause, and then shalt thou exchange thy earthly wisdom, which the world admires, for that which is heavenly and divine. Then, instead of the wisdom of this world, which in its nature is elevated and seeks the applause of men, thou shalt be put in possession of a wisdom which, far from attracting the notice of the world, is despised and rejected by it, but which is, nevertheless, of a divine origin, and of everlasting continuance.

5. It is impossible to love God, until thou abhorrest thyself; that is, until thou art heartily displeased with thyself and with thy sins; until thy own carnal nature is crucified, together with the evil propensities of thy self-will. For the more a man strives to love God, the more he labors to subdue the lusts of the flesh and his sensual appetites; and the more he departs from self and from self-love, by the power of the Spirit of God, the more nearly he approaches, by faith, unto God, and to his divine love. For as inward peace depends on a freedom from desires after the things of this world; so when this peace is once settled in the soul, and the heart has disengaged itself from the ties which bound it to the creature, it returns freely into God, and rests in him alone.

6. Now he who is sincerely disposed to deny himself, must follow, not his own will, but the will of Christ, who has declared, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). As though he had said: "Without the way, no man walketh; without the truth, nothing is known; and without life, no man liveth: therefore, look upon me, who am the way in which it is thy duty to walk, the truth in which thou art called to believe, and the life in which thou art bound to live. I am the unerring way, the infallible truth, and the everlasting life: the way to immortality is through my merit; the truth itself is in my word; and life is through the efficacy of my death; and, therefore, if thou continues" in the way, the truth will guide thee unto eternal life. If thou desires" not to go astray, follow me; if thou wilt know the truth, believe in me; and if thou wouldst possess life everlasting, put thy whole trust in me, who for thy sake have endured the death of the cross."

7. What, indeed, is the safe way, the infallible truth, and the endless life? What, the way, truth, and life, that are more excellent than every other? Surely there is no way, but the holy and precious merits of Christ; no truth, but his eternal word; no life, but a blissful immortality in heaven. If, therefore, O Christian! thou desires" to be raised up into heaven with Christ Jesus, believe in him here, and tread in the footsteps of his humility; this is the safe Way to everlasting glory. If thou wouldst escape the snares of the world, take hold of his Word by faith, and follow the example which he has left for thy imitation; because this is the infallible Truth. And if it be thy wish to live with Christ, then die thou with him and in him unto sin, and become a new creature; for this is Life. Thus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; and he is so, both by his example and by his merit.

8. "Be ye followers of God as dear children" (Eph. 5:1). Let us labor and strive after this one thing; that our lives may resemble the life of Christ. Were there nothing else to confound the false Christian, the example of Christ might effectually and abundantly do it. When we consider that Christ our Lord passed his life in grief and pain, we ought to be ashamed to spend our lives in ease and pleasures. If the soldier forgets his own ease and comfort when he beholds his captain fighting unto death, shalt thou pursue after worldly pleasures and honors, when thy Prince was so ignominiously treated, and, for thy sake, nailed to the cross? Is it not a sign that then thou cost not, in fact, fight under his banner?

9. It is true that, in our day, every one desires to be considered a Christian; but how few are they who imitate the life and deportment of Christ. Had it been the character of a follower of Christ, to aim at the acquisition of honors and possessions, our Lord would never have taught that these are not worthy to be compared with heavenly treasures. Contemplate the life and doctrine of the blessed Jesus, and thou shalt own that nothing can be more opposed than he and the world. Behold that manger and that stable! do they not forcibly evidence a contempt of worldly things? And will the example of Christ lead thee to err from the right way? No! he is the way, and he is the truth; and his life, compared with his doctrine, is the only means to preserve thee from mistake, and to guard thee from the delusions and errors of the world. Since then the Lord hath chosen to enter into his glory by the way of suffering and reproach, why shouldst thou labor to make thy way to hell, through the pomps and vanities of the world? Return, then, O deluded soul! escape from the broad way that leadeth unto death, and in which thy only enjoyment is "the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:25); enter into this safe Way, in which the wayfaring man shall not stray: cordially embrace that Truth which never can deceive: and live in Him who is Life itself. This way is the truth, and this truth is the way. Awful blindness! a worm of the earth would make himself great in the world, when the Lord of glory abased himself to the very dust. O faithful soul! when thy bridegroom moves to meet thee, clothed with humility, come down from the elevation of thy pride and ambition, and descend into the vale of humiliation to meet him, and he will embrace and receive thee with joy.

10. As Abraham quitted his father's house, to go into a land which the Lord was to show him (Gen. 12:1), so quit thou, as a true child of Abraham, the pleasure-house of self-will and self-love, that thou mayest obtain the divine blessing. Self-love biases the judgment, blinds the understanding, disturbs the reason, seduces the will, corrupts the conscience, closes the gates of life, and acknowledges neither God nor neighbor. It banishes virtue; seeks after honors, riches, and pleasures; and, in a word, prefers earth to heaven. He, therefore, who thus "loveth his life, shall lose it; but he that hateth his life" (that is, resists this principle of self-love), "shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:25). Self-love is the root of impenitence, and the cause of damnation. They who are controlled by self-love and self-honor are destitute of humility and a knowledge of sin; consequently, they never can obtain the remission of sin, though they seek it with tears; their tears not being shed because they have offended God, but merely on account of the personal loss which they have sustained.

11. the kingdom of heaven is compared in Scripture to "a pearl of great price;" in order to obtain which, a man sold all that he had (Matt. 13:45, 46). This pearl is God himself, and that eternal life which he has promised, and for the attainment of which every other object must be forsaken. We have an example of this in our Lord Jesus Christ, who descended from heaven not for his own sake, but for thy sake; not for his own profit and advantage, but for shine (Luke 19:10). And wilt thou yet delay to love him who gave himself up unto death for thee?

12. It doubtless is the part of a faithful spouse, to please her husband alone: and art thou desirous of pleasing the world, when thou mayest be espoused unto Christ, the great lover of souls? Forsake therefore and sincerely despise all this is in the world, in order that thou mayest become worthy of the eminent dignity of this spiritual marriage: for if thy love cleave not solely to Christ, it is a corrupt and adulterous love, and not that which a Christian should bear to the Redeemer. For the Christian's love to the Redeemer must possess virgin purity.

13. The law of Moses required that the priest should marry a virgin (Lev. 21:13, 14); and Christ, our High Priest, will espouse only a virgin-soul; one that is attached to nothing that the world can offer, but solely to himself; nay, one that loves not even herself, in comparison with Christ. "If any man come to me," he says, "and hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26).

14. In order to understand what is meant by hating ourselves, we are to remember that we carry about with us "the old man," and are indeed the old man himself; whose nature is to hasten from one sin to another, to love himself, to pursue his own profit and honor, and to indulge his own will and carnal appetite. For the flesh is at all times the same; always considering itself, easily grieved, envious, bitter, covetous, and revengeful. This, O

Man! is what thou doest: these sinful motions proceed from thy heart; this is thy very life, even the life of the old man in thee: and therefore thou must of necessity hate thyself, and shine own natural life, if ever thou desires" to be a disciple of Christ. Whoever loves himself, must love his own pride and avarice, his own wrath and hatred, envy and lying, faithlessness and unrighteousness; and, in short, he must love all the progeny of unholy desires, and a corrupt heart. But if thou desires" to be a Christian indeed, thou must not love, nor excuse, nor palliate thy sins, but thou must hate them, forsake them, and subdue them.

The Inheritance and possessions of Christians are not of this world; they should, therefore, regard themselves as strangers in it, while they make use of earthly things.

"We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." —1 Timothy 6:7, 8

The design of the blessed God in creating temporal things, was that they might supply man's bodily wants; and it is right that they should be used for such a purpose, and be received at the hands of God with gratitude, attended with fear and trembling. In regard to those things which are not absolutely necessary, whether gold and silver, food and raiment, etc., they are left to man in order to prove him; so that from the manner in which he employs these objects, it may be discovered how he stands affected towards God, while possessed of the goods of this world: whether, on the one hand, he will still cleave to God, and in the midst of earthly possessions, keep his eye constantly fixed on those which are to come; or whether, withdrawing his love from God, he will attach himself to this fleeting world, and prefer a fading earthly paradise, to that which is permanent and heavenly.

2. Man is therefore left to his own liberty and choice, in order that he may be judged hereafter according to that which he has chosen here, and thus be without excuse in that day. Agreeably to this principle, it was the solemn declaration of Moses to the people of Israel: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. 30:19).

3. The things of this world are then designed, not to kill us with earthly delight and pleasures, but to be tests and trials of our fidelity. In these trials the fall is very easy, when once we begin to withdraw from God. The pleasures of this world are the fruits of a forbidden tree; of which we are warned by God not to eat, lest our minds going out after them should eventually take delight in them, after the manner of those who know no other pleasures, but such as are derived from earthly objects. These persons, by indulging the flesh, convert meat, drink, and apparel into snares by which they are turned away from God.

4. It certainly is the duty of every true Christian, to esteem himself a stranger and pilgrim in this world; and as bound to use earthly blessings, not as means of satisfying lust or gratifying wantonness, but of supplying his absolute wants and necessities. We ought not to set our affections on these inferior objects, but on Him alone who is able to satisfy them. To do otherwise, is to expose ourselves to dangerous temptations, and with Eve, to eat daily of the forbidden tree. The real Christian is not intent upon worldly concerns, or delicious fare; for his interior eye is directed to that bread which endureth unto eternal life. Nor is he solicitous about fine and fashionable apparel; aspiring rather after robes of divine light, and the raiment of glorified bodies. In short, all things that please the natural man in this world, are, to a true Christian, only so many crosses and temptations, allurements of sin and snares of death, that continually exercise his virtue. Whatever man uses without the fear of God, whatever he applies to the mere gratifying of his flesh, cannot fail to operate as a poison to the soul, however pleasant and salutary it may appear to be to the body. Yet, so far from laboring to know the forbidden tree of worldly pleasures and its various fruits, man gives himself up to a careless and thoughtless state of life, and yields to the lust of the flesh, not considering that this lust is really the forbidden tree.

5. The Christian, on the other hand, uses all things in the fear of God, and as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth; avoiding every kind of excess in meat, drink, apparel, houses, and the other things of this life, lest, by an

improper use of them, he should offend both his Father in heaven, and his fellow-Christians upon earth. He will not so much as gaze on the forbidden tree, in order that he may not be ensnared; but with the eye of faith, he steadfastly beholds the future felicity of the soul, and for the sake of this felicity, refuses to yield to the cravings of corrupt nature. What does it profit the body that in this world it swims in lusts and pleasures, when, after a short period, it must be devoured by worms, and stripped of all its enjoyments! "Naked," says Job, "came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither" (Job 1:21). We bring into the world a naked and infirm, a poor and indigent body; and even this is the spoil of death; for when we pass out of this world we leave it behind us forever.

6. Whatever we enjoy from the time of our birth to the period of our dissolution, is all the bread of mercy and affliction, and designed to supply the bare wants of this mortal life. At the approach of death all is taken from us again, and we depart out of the world poorer than when we entered it. When man enters the world, he brings with him life and a body, and finds the necessary shelter, meat, and drink provided for him; but, after existing a short time, he is, in a moment, bereft of all, and leaves behind him even his body and his life. Consider then, O man! whether there can be anything more wretched and poor, more naked and miserable, than man when he dies, if he be not clothed with Christ's righteousness, and enriched in his God.

7. As, therefore, we are confessedly strangers and pilgrims here, and the hour of dissolution must leave behind us every earthly enjoyment, let us at least, cease to encumber our souls with things which we cannot carry out of this world, and the use of which is restricted to this life only. Is it not a species of madness to heap up riches for a frail body, for a body which we must leave behind us, and which cannot possibly enjoy wealth hereafter? (Luke 12:20,21). Are we ignorant that there is another and a better world, another body and another life, and that, whatever we may appear in the sight of men, we are in the eye of God only strangers and sojourners on the earth? (Psa. 39:12; Lev. 25:23). "Ye are," saith the Lord, "strangers and sojourners with me," that is, "before my eyes, although ye may not remember it."

8. If, then, we are strangers and sojourners, it follows that our country and our home must be elsewhere. This will be most evident to us, if we compare time with eternity, the visible with the invisible world, the earthly tabernacle with the heavenly, and things that are frail and perishing, with those that are lasting and eternal. Such a comparison will afford us a due insight into time and eternity, and lead us to behold with the eye of faith, such things as remain altogether unknown to the unthinking multitude. It is from the want of this consideration, that so many become lax and disorderly in their manners, wallow in the mire of earthly pleasures, and drown themselves in avarice and worldly cares. It is from the want of this reflection, that the major part of mankind, however keen and shrewd in the pursuits of this world, are blind and insensible to the concerns of the immortal soul. They addict themselves so much to this life, as to esteem it to be the most delightful, the best and noblest of all; while the true Christian, on the contrary, accounts it an exile, a vale of tears, a place of misery, a deep and dark prison.

9. Hence it is that those who love this world, and seek their happiness in it, do not excel even the brute creation in wisdom or understanding; and as they live, so they die like beasts (Psa. 49:12, 20). They are totally blind as it respects the inward man; they do not even think of heavenly and eternal things; they never rejoice in God, but only in the low and sordid pleasures afforded by this world. It is in earthly things that they seek their rest and their enjoyment; and having obtained their object after much labor and toil, they sit quietly down and congratulate themselves on their possessions. Wretched, miserable men! blind and insensible to the tremendous concerns of their eternal salvation! here, they lie contentedly in the darkness of ignorance, soon to remove hence to that of death and damnation (Luke 1:79).

10. In order to our better acquaintance with the nature of our pilgrimage here, we should unceasingly consider the example left us by the Redeemer, and earnestly follow him both in his life and doctrine. He hath set us an unerring pattern of universal holiness. He is our captain and our guide; and to his life and manners, our lives and our manners should be conformed. Go thou, therefore, and look unto him; unto him who, when the greatest of

all men, voluntarily chose that life in which nothing of greatness appeared; a life of meanness, poverty, and contempt of honor, wealth, and pleasure, the threefold deity of this world. All these things, to which the world offers sacrifice, the Lord contemned; for he himself said, "He had not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20).

11. Such, likewise, was the character of David; who, before his exaltation to the throne, was poor and despised; and who, when created king, accounted all his regal splendor as nothing compared with eternal life, and the kingdom of God, to which he was called. "How amiable," says he, "are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."—"A day in thy courts is better than a thousand" (Psa. 84). As if he had said, I possess a kingdom, and have people subject to my sway; I possess kingly palaces, and the strong hold of Zion; but what are all these in comparison of thy tabernacle, O Lord of hosts? So, too, Job found comfort in his Redeemer" (Job 19:25).

12. Neither Peter, nor Paul, nor any of the apostles, sought the riches of this life, but directed their attention to those which were laid up in another and better world. Hence they freely espoused the despised life of Christ, walking in his charity, lowliness, and patience; contemning the earth, and triumphing over the world, its snares, and its allurements. They prayed for those who cursed them; they thanked those who reproached them; they blessed those who reviled them (1 Cor. 4:12; Acts 5:41). When they were persecuted, they glorified God; when scourged, they were immovably patient, professing that "through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22); and when slaughtered, they prayed (with Christ their Head), "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34); "lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). Thus were they, on the one hand, dead to all wrath and revenge; to bitterness, ambition, and pride; to the love of the world, and of their own life also; while, on the other, they lived in Christ and in his love, in his meekness and humility, his patience and his resignation. They are, indeed, made alive in Christ by faith, who thus live.

13. To a lover of the world, this excellent way of life is unknown; for with regard to those who do not live in Christ, nor know that the truth is in him, these are still dead in their sins; dead in wrath and hatred, in envy and avarice, in pride and revenge; and as long as they so continue, they are in a state of impenitence, and have not been quickened by faith in Jesus, be their boasting what it may. But the genuine disciples of Christ know it to be a duty to follow the steps of their divine Master (1 Pet. 2:21), and to be conformed to his life, as the supreme and original pattern of all virtue and goodness. In a word, the life of Christ is their exemplar; he himself is their book, whence they derive all solid and substantial learning, as it respects both life and doctrine. Such persons declare with the apostle, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:8). And with holy men of old they unite in saying, "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" Heb. 13:14).

14. If, then, from a review of all these considerations, it evidently appear, as it surely does, that in this world we are strangers and have no abiding place, it follows that we were not created for the sake of earthly things as the ultimate end of our being; but that there remain for us another country and other dwellings, to gain which we ought not to hesitate to sacrifice a hundred worlds, or even life itself. These are subjects upon which the true Christian continually meditates with pleasure; and it is his joy that here he has no continuing city, but is created for life eternal. But how sad is the state of those who, occupied wholly in pursuing the things of this life, lade their souls with a crushing weight of worldly vanities, and thereby expose them to endless perdition.

WHAT ART THOU?

Anonymous

'Tis of no importance to the writer who thou art, but it is of infinite importance to thyself what thou art. Are you, Reader, a sinner on the road to misery; or are you a saint on the road to blessedness? One of these you must be. There are but two masters. Christ and Satan; two roads, the narrow and the broad; two destinations, heaven and hell. As your present and everlasting well-being depend on your character in this world, it is surely of the utmost importance that you ascertain what you are. The matter is momentous. Let conscience reply.

Are you among the number who are madly pursuing the vanities and pleasures of this fleeting world? Are you alive for time, asleep for eternity?

Then you are cultivating Satan's ground, and securing your own destruction.

Whoever is a friend of the world, cannot be the friend of God (Matt. 6:24; James 4:4). Oh, think what is implied in that expression, not to be a friend of God! If not the friend of God, you must be the friend of Satan; but Satan is a hard master. What wages do you expect in such a service? "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Will you serve him now, who will be the companion of, and add to the eternal torment of his followers? What can be said to you, who prefer such a master to Him who is "Emmanuel, God with us" (Matt. 1:23); and who prefer such a service to His which is perfect freedom? You know not what you do. You are heaping up to yourself "wrath against the day of wrath" (Rom. 2:5), standing on the brink of eternal ruin (Psa. 9:17). You cannot escape the eye of omniscience. Do you ever think, when committing sin, that though it may be hid from man, "Thou, God, seest me" (Gen. 16:13)? Ah! I fear not. No language can describe this infatuation; but there is a period fast approaching, when it will be felt in all its tremendous reality.

Remember, you cannot remain long an inhabitant of this world—you are to die. It may be the moment is at hand. "This night thy soul may be required of thee" (Luke 12:20). Yet, after death, you are to exist forever. Forever! Where? Ah, where? If you are living without God, you cannot mistake the place whither you are bound. And can you, without horror and dismay, contemplate that place where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched—where there are weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth? (Mark 9:43-48). Think of such inevitable destruction, and say if you maintain the determination to let others go to heaven, there to enjoy uninterrupted felicity, whilst you, having chosen that in which God delights not, shall be thrust down to hell, to spend your FOREVER in the blackness of darkness (Jude 13). Away with such a wicked and horrific thought! What! An intelligent being preparing, deliberately preparing himself, for everlasting burnings! How tremendously affecting to a serious mind! And all for the pleasures of sin, which last only for a short season.

Does the world never frown upon you, that you so love it? And oh, let me ask you what the world will do for you at death? Will it afford you one shadow of comfort? How often do the agonies of a guilty conscience, on a deathbed, present a specimen of the misery which will be completed in eternity? Think not it will be time enough to relinquish sin, when sickness and death approach. A deathbed may never come to you—you may be hurried to the eternal world without a moment's warning. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). We never read in the Bible that tomorrow will be time enough. Who will presume to say that he will live another day, and do this or that? (Psa. 95:7; Prov. 27:1).

Jehovah hath "no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Hearken to the melting, beseeching expostulations: "Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?" (Ezek. 33:11). "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Yes, God is willing, through the merits and death of Christ, to save all who apply to Him in earnest. Of this you ought not to doubt; look to Calvary's cross for the delightful attestation, that "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Multitudes have already experienced the blessedness of crediting this truth. Still there is room—room in God's vineyard—room in heaven for you. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and there is salvation in no other (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). Haste then to Jesus the refuge of the soul, for the avenger of blood pursues. You are safe in no place, and at no time, but under the covert of redeeming blood. Happy are

they who are in such a state; happy, indeed, is the people whose God is Jehovah. Christ is precious to them, their treasure is in heaven, their hearts are also there. "And when Christ, who is their life, shall appear they shall also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). Happy people in time— happy through eternity. Will you not join the happy, the blessed number? Oh, let there be joy in heaven on your account (Luke 15:7). Is there no feeling awakened within you by the recollection that you have a soul to be saved, and a crown of glory set before you?

Could I tell you the bliss experienced by the children of God, even "in this vale of tears," would it not affect you, to think you are a stranger to the sweets of the Christian religion? You know not what is meant by "the communion of saints." How delightful is it for Zion's children to converse about the things that concern the King, the Lord of Glory, or their own precious immortal souls—to sympathize together with the benighted heathen, or the world lying in wickedness! How animating to bow the knee at the footstool of mercy, and supplicate for pardon and peace for all mankind! How enrapturing to converse regarding the triumphs of the cross—the prosperity of the church—the inroads made on Satan's kingdom, by the daily and hourly accessions to the number of the saved—and the final and universal conquest of light and truth over darkness and error! What contemplations arise in connection with the land of consummate bliss—the Zion above—the new Jerusalem! And oh, how sweetly comforting to have the prospect of meeting hereafter in that land "of cloudless sky," and there rehearsing together the wonders of redeeming mercy! In that land the redeemed shall not love, adore, and praise, as they were wont to do on earth. There, love shall forever glow without the least abatement—admiration shall forever increase—and the most exalted and harmonious songs of praise shall burst forth from ravished hearts, through the endless ages of eternity! There are the white robes—the crown of glory—the palms of victory—the ever delightful worship—the hallelujahs which make heaven's portals ring—and there is to be seen the object of incomparable wonder, to whom this praise belongs—the Man Jesus Christ, on His throne, high and lifted up; and all this blessedness has been provided by infinite love!

What think you, O Reader, of such things? What think you of Christ (Matt. 22:42)? Of what He has done to save sinners? Of what He has gone to prepare for those who love Him? Say, hath not His love a depth and a height, length and a breadth, which passeth all knowledge? (Eph. 3:18-19). Surely there is nothing but Christ and His cause worth living for!

There is a reality in religion, whatever scoffers may say. A present reward is experienced in the keeping of God's commands. "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" (Prov. 3:17). This peace passeth all understanding—it must be enjoyed to be perfectly understood. the world can neither give it nor take it away. You are capable now of becoming an expectant, and at last a partaker of this infinite blessedness. Be entreated to accept of the Saviour, to give yourself up entirely to Him, and undoubtedly you will say, you never knew happiness, real happiness, till you became a possessor of real religion. Come to Christ as you are, wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked (Rev. 3:17). In Him all fulness dwells (Col. 2:9). Trust alone in His blood and righteousness. He has done all that is necessary for your salvation.

Once more, if you are still disposed to remain careless about your soul and eternity, I must cease addressing you, or attempting to delineate your fearful state. Time is given to prepare for eternity; miss this, and you are lost forever. Oh, kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way (Psa. 2:12). Escape for your life—look not behind. Death is approaching—judgment is approaching—Eternity is approaching.

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WHICH WORLD AM I A CITIZEN OF?

John Arndt

Showing that in order to understand the true nature of repentance, we must necessarily know the distinction between the old and the new man; or, how in us Adam must die, and Christ live; or, how in us the old man must die, and the new man live.

"We know this, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin"—Romans 6:6.

In every Christian there is found a twofold man, opposed, like their fruits, to one another. This will more fully appear from the following statement:

Adam Old man, Outward man, Old birth, Flesh, Nature, Reason, Darkness, Tree of Death, Evil fruit, Sin, Damnation, Death, Old Jerusalem, Kingdom of the devil, Seed of the serpent, Natural man, Image of the earthly,

Christ New man. Inward man. New birth. Spirit. Grace. Faith. Light. Tree of life. Good fruit. Righteousness. Salvation. Life. New Jerusalem. Kingdom of God. Seed of God. Spiritual man. Image of the heavenly.

The truth of this statement, the Scriptures, as well as experience, abundantly confirm. The former speak largely of the old man and the new, of the inward and outward man. (See Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:9; 2 Cor. 4:16. They teach also that the Spirit of God is in us: Rom 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 5:5; Eph. 1:13. And likewise Christ, Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 13:5.) Experience, moreover, demonstrates the same. Hither may also be referred that striving and struggling of the flesh and Spirit, from which even the saints are not free (Rom. 7:23). Likewise there belong here the different fruits of the flesh and Spirit reckoned up by St. Paul (Gal. 5:19-23). This point is therefore clearly stated in Scripture, and too certain to be called in question by any Christian. It is the hinge, as it were, on which all the Scripture moves, and the foundation on which the true knowledge of man depends. Out of the same fountain issue true repentance, or the death of Adam, and the life of Christ in us. For no sooner does Adam die in us, but there perishes with him all that is originally derived from him; the old outward man, the old birth, the flesh, nature, corrupt reason, darkness, the tree of death, evil fruits, sin, death, damnation, the seed of the serpent, the natural man, the earthly image, the old Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Satan. But as long as Adam lives, there also live and reign with him the old man, and the carnal birth, the flesh, nature, corrupt reason, darkness, and the whole train of evils before mentioned, bring all comprised under the kingdom of Satan, and subject to damnation, and to the curse everlasting. But if, on the other hand, Christ live in any one, then verily there live and reign with him the new and inward man, the new birth, the Spirit, grace, faith, light, the tree of life, good fruits, righteousness, life, happiness, the seed of God, the spiritual man, the heavenly image, the new Jerusalem, and the kingdom of God. All which proceed from the divine blessing, and tend to eternal salvation. Here is a matter of importance, namely, so to order one's life and conduct, that Christ the new or second Adam, and not the old Adam, may live and reign in us.

2. Therefore it is necessary for a man to watch, to fast, to pray, fight, and strive; and, as St. Paul expresses it, to examine himself if Christ be in him (2 Cor. 13:5). He is to work out his salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12). He is to enter through the strait gate and the narrow way in Christ (Matt. 7:13). That is, man must now hate and deny himself, forsake all (Luke 14:26), and die unto sin (Rom. 6:2). This surely is not to be effected, as the delicate Christians of this age imagine, by any careless and slight application of mind, but by an inward and profound sorrow, contrition, and brokenness of heart, together with groans and tears that cannot be uttered. These inward exercises, and acts of devotion, are most feelingly set forth by David in his Penitential Psalms, which abound with expressions of this nature (Psa.6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143). The apostle calls it a crucifying

of the flesh while the affections and lusts thereof (Gal. 5:24). Whoever attains to this state, in him verily Christ lives, and he reciprocally in Christ by Faith. Then Christ conquers and reigns in man, whose faith is become "the victory that overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4).

3. But since the world, which thou art to strive against, is not without thee, but within thee, it follows, that it is also to be conquered not without, but within thee. For what is the world, but "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life?" (1 John 2:16). As these are in thee, so in thee they are to be subdued, that thus thou mayest worthily bear the name and character of a true child of God. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4); and if thou overcomes", and Vainest the victory over thy great enemy the world, thou art then a child of light (Eph. 5:8), a member of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:30), and the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 6:19). Thou art now a good tree (Matt. 12:33), that freely and without constraint, yea, with joy, love, and pleasure bringeth forth fruit to the glory of God (Matt. 5:16).

4. But if thou livest in Adam, and Adam reigns in thee, then thou art not a child of God, nor born again of him. For since thou art overcome by the world, and since the prince therefore rules in thee by pride, ambition and selflove, thou art on this very account to be numbered amongst the children of the devil (John 8:44). "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). And, on the contrary, as many as are led by Satan, they likewise are his children; yea, they are the very members of Satan, sons of darkness, a habitation of unclean spirits, an accursed Babylon, full of impure and of abominable beasts; as it is represented by the ancient prophets (Isa. 13:21; Rev. 18:2); but particularly by the prophet Ezekiel. He being brought in spirit into the temple at Jerusalem, beheld two remarkable things: one whereof was, "every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about;" and secondly (which was still more detestable), "seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, worshipping these beasts and images, and offering them incense" (Ezek. 8:10,11).

5. Behold, O man, a lively representation here given of thy depraved, brutish, and bestly heart! If thou wilt but enter into this temple of thy heart, thou shalt surely find therein vast numbers of foul, detestable creatures, images, and idols, fashioned and represented by all manner of corrupt and impure thoughts in the carnal mind, imagination, and memory. Moreover (and this is the greatest evil of all), though these idols and horrid abominations should be utterly banished from the heart, and this detestable evil, by which man is made the habitation of unclean and pestilential reptiles, should, by all means, be destroyed by repentance, by mortification of the flesh, and by penitential tears and humiliation; yet, instead of doing that, thou lovest these serpents, adorest these vile monsters, and servest and carressest them. Alas! thou but little regardest that Christ is cast out of thy soul by these abominations, and is utterly banished from thy heart; and that by this means thou deprives" thyself of the supreme and eternal Good, losing the Holy Spirit with all his excellent gifts and graces. O miserable man! thou exceedingly grieveest when any outward trouble befalls thee, or when thou lovest any thing in the world that is dear to thee; why then is it, that thou art not at all concerned at the loss even of CHRIST himself, and at the deplorable state of thy soul and body, which are both become a habitation of malignant spirits!

6. If these things be seriously pondered and laid to heart, we shall soon understand what Adam and Christ are; and how they live and act in men. To this head we may also refer the following observations. First, In Adam we are ALL naturally equal, nor is one better than another; since we are all, both as to body and soul, equally polluted and corrupted, so that it is affirmed by St. Paul, not only of Jews and Gentiles, but even of all men in general, that "there is no difference" (Rom. 3:22). Hence it is also true, that in the sight of God, no an is better than the most profligate criminal. For though that perverse temper which is natural to all, does not equally in all break out into works, yet God judges all men by the inward state of the heart, that poisoned fountain of all sin. Nor is there any sin so heinous, which man by nature would not freely commit, were he not strongly restrained by divine grace. For by the bent of our nature we are but too much inclined to pollute ourselves with all manner of wickedness (Jer. 13:23); and if the inclination be not always attended with the external effect itself, it is wholly to be attributed to the grace of God, and not to any strength or prudence of our own (Gen. 20:6). This

consideration should excite us to the practice of true humility, and to an unfeigned fear of God; and at the same time restrain us from rashly despising our fellow-creatures, lest, by reflecting on others, we ourselves split upon the dangerous rock of carnal presumption. Secondly, It is proper to observe, that as in Adam we are all equally bad with regard to the corruption of nature; so by Christ we are all made equally just and holy; no man receiving for himself any prerogative of a peculiar righteousness in the sight of God. For since Christ is our perfection, our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30; 6:11), we, who in Adam are alike, are also alike in Christ. For as in Adam by nature we are all one man and one body, infected with the foul contagion of disobedience and sin, so all true Christians are as one man in Christ, and make up one body, completely purified and sanctified by faith, and the blood of Christ.

7. This truth is a remedy against spiritual pride, namely, that none should account himself better before God than others, though perhaps adorned with greater gifts, and endowments. For even these are no less bestowed on him of pure grace, than are righteousness and salvation themselves. Upon this principle of pure grace, be careful to keep thy mind constantly fixed. If thou cost so, then this grace shall protect thee against the dangerous snares of pride and arrogance; and as, on the one hand, it will convince thee of thy own misery and poverty in spirit, so, on the other, it will give thee a most lively insight into Christ, and into the exceeding riches of grace, offered through him to all mankind.

