

THE CHRISTIAN IN TODAY'S WORLD

Gal 6:14

Zatec, 8th September 2018

Ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ κόσμῳ.	Gal 6:14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.
Ἰωάννης 17:14-18 ἐγὼ δέδωκα αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον σου καὶ ὁ κόσμος ἐμίσησεν αὐτούς, ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. ¹⁵ οὐκ ἐρωτῶ ἵνα ἄρῃς αὐτούς ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, ἀλλ' ἵνα τηρήσῃς αὐτούς ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ. ¹⁶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου οὐκ εἰσὶν καθὼς ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. ¹⁷ ἁγιάσον αὐτούς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστιν. ¹⁸ καθὼς ἐμὲ ἀπέστειλας εἰς τὸν κόσμον, καὶ γὰρ ἀπέστειλα αὐτούς εἰς τὸν κόσμον.	John 17:14-18 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because <u>they are not of the world</u> , just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are <u>not of the world</u> , just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so <u>I have sent them into the world</u> .
Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω ὑμᾶς ὡς πρόβατα ἐν μέσῳ λύκων· γίνεσθε οὖν φρόνιμοι ὡς οἱ ὄφεις καὶ ἀκέραιοι ὡς αἱ περιστεραί.	Mt 10:16 Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

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- “I suppose that this is the biggest and most difficult question in many ways that those of us who are Christians today can possibly meet. What is our position in this world?” (LLOYD-JONES *Fellowship with God*)
- “We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.” (Lewis C. S. *The Weight Of Glory*)

0.2. CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD

- Engaged OR separated? → John 3:16 ↔ 1John 2:15

- involvement ⇒ (1) happiness [psycho-theology], (2) culture [theo-philosophy]; (3) peace [politics]; (4) prosperity [economics]...
- separated ⇒ (1) purity [ghetto]; (2)

1. THE WORLD – WHAT IS IT?

- two dangers: (1) underestimate (2) overestimate (nothing new under the sun)
- two extremes: (1) separation without service; (2) service with conformism
- today: (1) democracy (2) selfism; (3) prosperity; (4) peace; (5) pluralism...

1.1. ALWAYS THE SAME

- Eden [look; pleasure; wisdom] → Temptations of Jesus → Christians (1John)
- **1John 2:15-16** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world- the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions- is not from the Father but is from the world.
- **Eph 2:1-3** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following (1) the course of this world, following (2) the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience- ³ among whom we all once lived in (3) the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

1.2. THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY

1.2.1. LOSSES

- (1) the loss of **privacy** → on-line living; (**Mt 6:6** ...when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret)
 - Networks are a principal theme of our age, and as the networks we are a part of continue to grow, we struggle to understand what that connectedness means. Not all connections are good. ...Connection means vulnerability. (CONOVER *The Routes of Man*)
- (2) the loss of **certainty**/direction → info-explosion; (**Heb 10:22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith [ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πίστεως])
- (3) the loss of **depth** → absolute entertainment (**2Tim 3:6-7** ...weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions [ἀγόμενα ἐπιθυμίαις ποικίλαις], ⁷ always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth [πάντοτε μαθηθάνοντα καὶ μηδέποτε εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν δυνάμενα].)

1.2.2. PREVALENCE

- (1) visual; (2) funny; (3) self-fulfilling

1.2.3. "ZEITGEIST"

- (1) anthropocentrism → human rights, (2) individualism → self, (3) scientism → control, (4) worldliness → this-worldly eschatology

2. THE CHRISTIAN – WHO IS IT?

- “The Christian is neither Adam nor Jesus Christ, the Christian is a new man in Christ Jesus.” (CHAMBERS *The Psychology of Redemption*) → **2Cor 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

2.1. CONTEMPORARY ATTITUDES TO CHRISTIANS

- faith? → believe what you like; religion? → practice what you like; **exclusivism**? → hatred
- **John 7:7** The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.
- **2Cor 2:15-16** For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death (ὁσμὴ ἐκ θανάτου εἰς θάνατον), to the other a fragrance from life to life (ὁσμὴ ἐκ ζωῆς εἰς ζωὴν). Who is sufficient for these things?

2.2. KEEP FOCUSED

- Jesus – the Savior – the first and foremost fact
- Jesus – the source of all **wisdom** (**Col 2:2-3** ...Christ, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge) → in the midst of popular science deception...
- Jesus – the hope for the world (no political gospel) → looking beyond the horizon of this age

- "...the secret of the Christian is that he knows the absolute Deity of Jesus Christ." (CHAMBERS *The Psychology of Redemption*)

3. ONE CROSS – THREE CRUCIFIXIONS

- **Gal 6:14** But far be it from me to boast except in (1) the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which (2) the world has been crucified to me, and (3) I to the world.

3.1. THE CROSS OF CHRIST

- **Gal 2:20** And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
- **Heb 11:13** not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth (ιδόντες καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι καὶ ὁμολογήσαντες ὅτι ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί εἰσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.)
- **Heb 11:35** Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life (οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν·).

3.1. CRUCIFIXION OF THE WORLD

- ...the world has been crucified to me...
- the world is *dead* → **1John 2:17** And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever;
- **1Cor 7:31** those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away
- the world is *despised* → **Mt 6:24** No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other (ἐνα μισήσει καὶ τὸν ἕτερον ἀγαπήσει), or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other (ἐνὸς ἀνθέξεται καὶ τοῦ ἑτέρου καταφρονήσει).

3.2. MY CRUCIFIXION

- ... and I [have been crucified] to the world
- *dead* → **Rom 6:11** So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- *despised* → **1Cor 4:13** We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things
- **Mt 10:25** It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

4. REMEMBER

- The world is changing fast but underneath the changes remains the same.
- The Christian is defined by his relationship with the resurrected Jesus.
- Christian attitude to the world is cautious (sheep among wolves) contempt (crucifixion) mixed with pity (pray for your enemies).