



THE CHALLENGER

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PROCLAIMING THE WORD TO THE WORLD

December 2008

This World

BY THE EDITOR

HERE is a word not easily defined. It is expressed many times in the Bible. We know that Satan is the "Prince of this world." (John 12:13) There is a "course of this world" (Ephesians 2:2); "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4); "the spirit of this world" (I Corinthians 2:12), which is in contrast to the Spirit of God; "the fashion of this world (I Corinthians 7:22), which is passing away; and "the wisdom of the world" (I Corinthians 2:8), which crucified the Lord of glory.

Evidence Is Clear

The toll of the world within our heart and mind is plainly visible to all. Who fashions our conduct, holds our attention, and is a motivating force in our heart and mind? Let's ask ourselves the following questions?

1. Does this evil world surrounding us get more of our attention than God's provision and direction?
2. Does the difference from the world cause us difficulty?
3. Are our affections down here rather than set on things above?
4. Is our motivation for possessions governed by environmental things of this world?
5. Is our greatest motivating factor the accumulation of this world's money? Never forget, the love of it is the source of ALL evil.
6. Does this world govern our entertainment and the way we dress (or undress)?
7. Must the beat of the world be a part of the music we listen to?
8. Do we allow our attitude toward the opposite sex to be influenced by Hollywood?
9. Are we reading, hearing, and seeing what the world provides for us?
10. Is our time spent with some trifling matter of the world at the neglect of God's Word, prayer, and attendance at His place of worship?

We know the world's attitude toward the Christ we love and serve. They nailed Him to a cross. "He that hates me hates My Father also" (John 16:23). "If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are not of the world, but

I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19) Here is one reason for many not serving the Lord. They can't stand the thought of everybody not loving them. Genuine love is found among the saints.

A Plain Command

"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" (I John 2:15). The issue in this verse is heaven or hell. John, under the pen of inspiration, wrote this book to give evidence of our possessing eternal life. (John 5:13) If loving the present evil world, we forfeit His love. Where is the fact of God loving everybody found in this verse? Note the contrast in Philippians 3:19,20: "Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, WHO MIND EARTHLY THINGS. For our conversation (manner of life) is in heaven; from where also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." In this one verse (2:15), we know who has forfeited the love of God and awaits His judgment: those who love the world and the things of this world. This fact is so important to God that He gives us a plain definition and description of it in the next verse: "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" (I John 2:16).

The enemy always solicits us through these three avenues. We see them in action in the Garden of Eden, and also in David's adultery, and the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. The first action of Eve, after being instructed concerning the forbidden fruit, was to

PRAY FOR MIKE ECCLESTON

Our assistant director has undergone one knee replacement and faces another. As we all know, his rehabilitation is very important. He has been very active down through the years as an outdoorsman as well as pastoral duties. My appraisal is, they live on a lovely ranch in Titusville, with a lake, all of which calls for much labor. Please pray for complete riddance of his knee problems.

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This World (continued from page 1)

look upon it. (Genesis 3:6) What catches your eye that the world has provided? I wonder, how many sermons have you heard on I John 2:15,16? Have you heard it as part of a message? This entire book is put aside because of its clarity as to who is on their way to heaven or hell. (There are only two final destinations.)

THIS IS THE TIME OF THE YEAR to desire all of last year's bills to be paid in full. We hope for a sufficient income to provide us with a good send-off for the new one just ahead.

END OF THE YEAR

Everything we do for the Lord is determined by your gifts. We have no other source of income. Thanks

for your faithfulness last year. We pray for many more to join our ministry this coming year. Should the Lord so direct you, we will praise Him for your participation.

The World and Today's Church

The Bible calls for separation. "Wherefore come out from among them, and BE YOU SEPARATE, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (II Corinthians 6:17,18). No separation from the world means no blessings as a son or daughter.

Ever wonder why we are so quiet these days about this important subject matter? The explanation is that our pastors and church leaders have allowed the world to enter their churches. Many have the beat of the world in their music. Meet their people in the parking lot, and by their appearance they are headed for a hayride rather than to enter into the presence of a holy God. Their main attraction is no longer the Word of God. Their tendency is dependent upon their program rather than the Person of Christ Who said, "Come unto Me." There is a group of people near you who have not forgotten God's command to be a separate people. Find that church and labor with them.

It Is a Command

"And be not conformed to this world; but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove (demonstrate) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). Your separation, or the lack of it, demonstrates to all around you whether or not God's purpose is realized in your life. Please note that the lack of a renewed mind reverses the exchange of the glory of God for the glory of man. It does not embrace God as the Supreme treasure and authority of our lives.

God Has Spoken!

"If you were of the world, the world would love his own, but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you OUT OF THE WORLD, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19). "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." We, who possess grace, given to us by God, say NO to worldly lusts." [Grace] teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world (here and now)" (Titus 2:12). "You adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

People in God's family are not overcome by the world. To be born of God means victory over this wicked world. Its power and influence are broken, in fact is dead to us." (Galatians 6:14) "For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcomes the

world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God" (I John 5:4,5).

Our relationship with this present evil world clearly indicates our being in God's family and rejoicing in His provision of joy and peace. Friend of mine, turn to the Lord with your whole heart. Place yourself under His absolute authority in every facet of your life. Should you do this now, you will thank God for this Truth. When we meet in heaven you will thank me for sharing it with you.



For you and yours I wish a joyful season as you remember the Savior Who left the Ivory Palaces to come to this sin-cursed earth to die on a cross to take away our sins. Sent by the Father, willing to accomplish His purpose, He steals into this world by the way of a manger. He is "CHRISTTHELORD." (Luke 2:11) In all your activity may He have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:18)

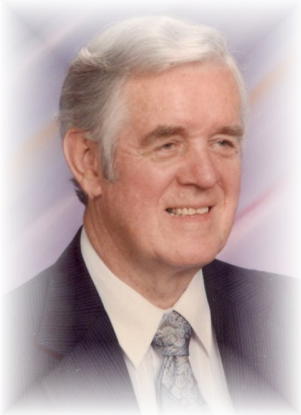
This is my second Christmas without Maid Marian, as I often called her. What a change since she left this earth and stepped into the Lord's Presence! No lights are in our windows again this year. No colorful greetings are mailed from our house to yours. No Christmas decorations will be seen in my home. The sound of her usual Christmas music is heard no more.

Now Marian sings in the Heavenly Chorus. Christmas was a joyful time for dear Marian. But soon we will be together face to face with the One Whose message we had the joy of declaring together for over 60 years.

*In Christ,
Dwight Porter*



Personal Word



We had just arrived at our new pastorate in Wheeling, West Virginia, with our congregation of ten people, when a new lady in our church asked me to visit her sister in the hospital. While in her room, in walked her husband. As she introduced me, he said we had already met; he had picked me up hitchhiking to Greggsville. He was introduced to Jesus Christ as his wife was in that hospital room. They visited our church and eventually came forward to be saved, the first in the history of that church. Well do I remember that night. After going through the scriptures, I asked him if he was saved.

His answer was that if the Bible is true, he was. I assured him that it was the very Word of God. Our few people rejoiced with them. Then Charles stepped back and asked how we operated the church financially and how much money was he to give each Sunday. I mentioned tithing, and his response was that he did not know if he could afford that much; but he took \$20 out of his pocket and said, "Here is my start." That couple got saved, including their billfold. In all three of my churches, this couple was one of the finest and most effective workers.

I learned of this man's death when I received a letter postmarked "Wheeling." The letter told of Charles' death. The writer wanted to send a gift in his honor — a check for \$2,000. He told me how Charles witnessed to him in the shop where they both worked. Of course, I sent him our monthly publication. He was in an old-line denomination and marveled at what he was learning from the Bible. This man sent us thousands of dollars at the end of each year for about 25 years. This wonderful provision began when a man picked up a hitchhiker!

The Government Bailout

Socialism says let the government divide the profit and the money we each receive. For many years some political parties made their appeal for votes upon what the government will do for the people. Presidential candidates make promises that they never can fulfill, because Congress holds the purse strings of our nation. At the beginning of our present national economic crises, the bailout was announced and accepted by Congress. A few at the beginning stated the danger of depending upon the government. Why should we be surprised at our economic calamity when the people of our nation are living on credit cards?

This is also true of businesses, including huge corporations operating on credit. Have you noticed the size of our national debt? I knew that some day it all would catch up with us. How foolish to think we can survive by living on other people's money. What a price we pay in interest. When that credit is not easily available, we are in for real trouble. After government assistance was finally passed, we learned that our leaders did not know if it would work. This is still true to this day. The famous answer to those making an enquiry is, "I DON'T KNOW." Have you ever stopped to ask yourself, just what do I know?

I Know for Sure!

1. After my repentance and faith in Christ (both are gifts of God), God had declared that I possess eternal life. (John 3:16)
2. I now possess within my body the Holy Spirit, Who is my present Comforter. (John 14:16, Romans 8:9)
3. One of the main conditions for the reality of God's blessing is obedience, and I can and will obey Him. (John 14:21, Philippians 4:13)

4. God has graciously told me what to do and not to do. (Philippians 4:1-8)
5. I know for sure what my course of action must be to possess His peace. (Philippians 4:9,7)
6. I am unable to do anything to be satisfactory before a holy and righteous God. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
7. Jesus Christ died to take away my sin (not for me to continue in it). (Romans 5:6-10)
8. I am under either His love or wrath. (Romans 5:9, John 3:36)
9. Jesus Christ is coming back for me. (John 14:1-3)
10. I am now in His family. (John 1:12,13)

I Don't Know!

This is the answer of our country's national leaders to most of today's economic questions. How did we get into this major crises? Will the billions of dollars provided by government expenditures be enough? Why did this crises suddenly be upon us about five weeks before our national election? Will we go through a major or minor recession? Who is responsible for the collapse of banks, lending institutions, and the supposed financial backing of these? Why are so many businesses today depending on loans for their day-to-day operation? Where is California going to get their billions to pay present and past bills? Why are so many of our largest industries in financial trouble? Will I be able to get my next car financed? What about my home?

Where has the sane management of our leaders gone? Our national financial system has for years promoted credit. It is so easy to come by. Credit cards, interest rates, and special deals have been advertised in every way possible. (The interest money desired is called greed.) Whatever happened to the old American style of "pay as you go"? Most of us were forced into purchasing a home with the help of a bank loan. Why finance anything else we possess? How much debt do you now have? When the financial crunch comes, you will be in deep

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Personal Word (continued from page 3)

trouble if your monthly payments are of any size. This is the way our national leaders have operated the finances of our country. And we wonder how we got here. It would be shocking to learn how much money our nation has borrowed from foreign countries. And also how many foreign interests own American assets.

We Know!

Interested in living with positives and absolutes? Want riddance of speculation, uncertainties, and disappointments? Open your Bible and behold the message of absolutes and finalities. Let's start with the most important question ever asked by mortal man? Will I ever reach heaven? There is no speculation about it. We know whether our destiny will be heaven or hell. In I John 5:13, God plainly declares the action of the redeemed, saved, and adopted into His family. Hear it loud and clear. "These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God."

Friend, if you live another day wondering about getting to heaven, you are deceived. God must perform a miracle on the inside of you if heaven is going to be your home. In this same book of the Bible, God lays it out very clear as to your action and behavior if on the way to heaven. Underline the word KNOW every time it appears in this book. It is a shocking revelation. You not only know, but all your relatives and friends know.

Here is what I want you to do: Listen to my cassette or CD "YOU KNOW." I will joyfully send it your way without cost or obligation. By audio you can also hear this particular message on our web-site. Don't spend another day with that common sad and false statement of "I don't know." The importance of this question? If you don't reach heaven, you can be assured of reaching hell according to your Bible. Let me know of your allowing God to change your life. Write Dwight Porter, Box 400, Roseland, FL 32957.

Is Worry a Sin?

Well, I do not worry, I am just "concerned." I am "anxious" sometimes, but worry, never! These two terms are a vital part of worry. Fear is another component of this dreadful exercise. In both Testaments, this command comes direct from heaven "FEAR NOT!" Under the pen of inspiration, the Apostle Paul spoke a great deal about fear. If God commands no fear, then such exercise is a sin, for we are in disobedience. *But, after all, most people I know worry, so it cannot be too bad.* Friend, it is devastating! In such action, we forfeit His love and presence. "He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me; and he that loves me, shall be loved of my father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to Him" (John 14:21). "He that says, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:4).

God in grace tells us what not to do and gives direction for obedience. A perfect demonstration of this action is in Philippians 4:6, "Be careful (anxious) for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." Most people spend far more time going over their anxieties with mere humans than in consultation with God.

If reading the Bible, we know God's promises. These are the objects of our faith, which are given to us by God. (Ephesians 2:8-10) Faith rests upon the action of God as per His promises. Such exercise is not complicated. If willing to be operated on by the Almighty, we stop worrying and start resting upon what He has promised. Either He will or He won't! If He won't, after He promised, what a dread accusation we have against Him. To doubt Him and trust in the arm of the flesh, no wonder one is filled with anxiety, care and worry. Such action on the part of God's children is sin. (James 4:17)

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*"Be you steadfast, unmovable, always
abounding in the work of the Lord . . .
You know your labor is not in vain
in the Lord" I Corinthians 15:58*

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