

## **Jesus' prayer for believers**

### **In the world, but not of it**

Christians should live in the world, but not be filled with it. A ship lives in the water; but if the water gets into the ship, she goes to the bottom. So, Christians may live in the world; but if the world gets into them, they sink.

Dwight L. Moody

John 17:14-18

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

#### **1) Not of the world**

- Jesus clearly stated that He wasn't from this world and that His kingdom is not of this world
  - John 8:23 He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world."
  - John 17:16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.
  - John 18:36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."
- We were all born into this world and its ways, but when we were born again we were transferred from this kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light
  - Colossians 1:13-14 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- This transfer takes place when we die with Christ and are born again into His kingdom
  - Galatians 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.
  - John 3:3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."
- Having died to this world and having been born again into the kingdom of God our citizenship – our belonging – isn't in this world any longer. We are citizens of heaven
  - Philippians 3:20-21 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.
- Peter also refers to us as sojourners and exiles
  - 1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.
  - We are foreigners in this world on a pilgrimage to our true home
- As citizens of heaven, we now no longer live according to the values of the world, but according to the ways and values of the kingdom of God
  - Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
  - It's easy to conform to this world as we are influenced by it daily, but we need to know what God wants of us even while we are still living in this world.
- When we live according to the values of the kingdom while in the world sets us apart and against the world and those who live according to its values

## 2) A tension in the world

- John 17:14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.
- Prior to this Jesus had warned His disciples that they would have trouble in this world
  - John 16:33 In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.
- We've already seen that Jesus had prayed for protection for the believers as they remain in the world
  - This was a prayer for protection primarily to safeguard the believers from the ways of the world.
  - There is a real tension for believers to live holy and righteous lives in the midst of the temptations of the world
- However, it's not merely a tension within us of what our old man of the flesh desires and what the new man of the Spirit ought to do
- The people of the world hate the believers
  - John 17:14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.
- As Jesus is the light, so we are also the light of the world which exposes darkness
  - John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
  - Matthew 5:14 You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.
  - John 3:19-20 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.
- Examples of worldly opposition to Biblical truth
  - The LGBTQ movement whereas the Bible opposes homosexuality and calls it sin
  - Living together instead of marriage, whereas the Bible says that the marriage bed should be honored and undefiled
  - Relativism that says everything is true according to your own personal beliefs, whereas the Bible makes exclusive claims for truth and the only way of salvation through Jesus
- When we hold on to these Biblical values, we get opposition from the world calling us bigots and judgmental, etc.

## 3) Our purpose in the world

- When we were saved Jesus didn't take us straight to heaven to receive our eternal inheritance. He left us in the world for a purpose
  - John 17:18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.
  - John 20:21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."
- We have been left in this world as ambassadors of Christ
  - 2 Corinthians 5:20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.
- Our main purpose as ambassadors of Christ in this world is to reflect the values of the kingdom and to implore the world to be reconciled to God through Christ to become citizens of His kingdom
  - We aren't all gifted to do this in the same way, but God has gifted all of us to use each of us for this ultimate purpose