

The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away.
Isaiah 24:4

Store In My Heart Ephesians 3:6

This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Paul's message in the verse above is unity in Christ. Though he spent several years working with the brethren in and around Ephesus, there were still many who would not fully accept this unity. A major difficulty in the early church was understanding that all were saved in the same manner, no matter what their heritage. None were saved by their own actions. All were saved by grace through faithful submission to Christ.

Spending the first half of the letter building up to this point, he follows with practical examples of their submission to one another in Christ. His encouragement to faithful submission to Christ and one another concludes in a final instruction to stand firm together in the Word of God.



Not Of The World

Billy Norris

Jesus prayed for His disciples, *"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world"* (**John 17:15-16**). Paul applied Old Testament scripture to the relationship of God's people to the world, *"Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. And you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty"* (**2Cor. 6:17-18**).

There is, however, a sense in which Christians are of the world. They are of the human race, made of *"the dust of the ground"* (**Genesis 2:7**). The actual physical appearance of a Christian may not be significantly different from those who are people of the world, and yet there can be a noticeable difference in that the Christian, living by the principles of behavior set forth in the gospel of Christ, will not dress slovenly or immodestly, as do multitudes of the world. The Christian will be *"clothed and in his right mind"* (**Mark 5:15**).

Christians are of the world in that they have association with people of the world. The great commission to take the gospel into all the world and preach it to every creature shows that God did not intend for His people to be separate from the world by closing themselves away in monasteries, or by living separate from the world as hermits (**Mark 16:15**). Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren *"not to keep company with sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner -- not even to eat with such a person"* (**1Corinthians 5:9-11**). In daily affairs Christians may have association with people of the world, while not engaging in activities of the world.

Christians are of the world in that they are confronted with the temptations of the prince of the world. Satan has placed his temptations before every accountable member of the human race from Adam to every one of this present generation. We can be sure that he will not cease his efforts until that day when he is consigned to *"the lake of fire and brimstone,"* where he *"will be tormented day and night forever and ever"* (**Rev. 20:10**). If he was bold enough to confront Christ, the Son of God with his temptations (**Matthew 4:1-10**), we would be foolish to think that we are immune to his evil designs.

Christians are of the world in that they experience the joys and sorrows of the world. A faithful Christian lays for months even years, helpless in agonizing pain. He said to me, "Through the years I have tried to serve my Father. I do not know why He does not call me home and relieve me of pain it seems beyond my ability to endure." And yet the suffering continued on and on until finally death brought sweet release.

However, there is a definite sense in which Christians are not of this world:

They are citizens of a kingdom that is not of this world. This kingdom, though made up of human beings, is a spiritual kingdom. Christ said to Pilate, *"My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from here"* (**John 18:36**). Knowing the true nature of this spiritual kingdom, Paul said, *"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform our lowly body that it may conform to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself"* (**Philippians 3:20-21**). Citizens in this kingdom *"seek those things which are above, where Christ is."* They set their minds on *"things above, not on things of the earth"* (**Colossians 3:1-2**). Though Christians may enjoy citizenship in an earthly government, their superior and eternal citizenship is in an everlasting kingdom *"which shall never be destroyed...and it shall stand forever"* (**Daniel 2:44**).

Christians are not of the world in that as citizens of the kingdom, the church, they are called out of the world. This call is by the gospel (**2Thess. 2:14**). Therefore they live by the principles set forth in the gospel and exemplified in the life of Christ and not by the lustful inclinations of the world. They remember the exhortation: *"Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord"* (**2Cor. 6:17**).

Christians are not of the world in that they refrain from the speech that is characteristic of the world. Not only will they refrain from evil and corrupt speech, they will speak to edify, to give grace. *"Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers"* (**Ephesians 4:29**). *"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness nor foolish talking; nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks"* (**Ephesians 5:3-4**). *"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one"* (**Colossians 4:6**). The speech of the world too often is vulgar, profane, degrading, and reveals the corruption that is in the heart. *"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks"* (**Matthew 12:34**).

Strong proof that the Christian is not of the world will be seen in the final windup of affairs, for when the world goes down, the Christian lives on -- forever and ever. *"And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the Will of God abides forever"* (**1John 2:17**).

Contact Us

We like opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

Church of Christ

1512 Tanner Street
Malvern, AR 72104
(501) 332-8806

preacher@tannerst.com

tannerst.com

The
CHURCH OF CHRIST
MEETS HERE



10:20 AM • Sunday Worship Service
5:00 PM • Sunday Night Bible Study
7:00 PM • Wednesday Bible Study

For Our Information

Ruben Keisler had a stent placed last week and is doing well.

Paula Laubach continues physical therapy on her knee.

JoBeth Henderson should start radiation treatments in about two weeks. She will have treatments Monday through Friday for three weeks. Her immunotherapy will pause for radiation.

Tommy Robinson is in Pines nursing home in Hot Springs.

Sunday @ 5 - **Jeremiah 4** Wednesday @ 7 - **Luke 2**

Gospel Meeting - Michael Green - September 27-October 1

Announcement flyers are in the foyer