



Definition of “The World”

In this context

- Not the physical creation
- Not the whole human race
- Not even unregenerate humanity, in and of itself

Definition of “The World”

In this context

- Unregenerate humanity in its spiritual character
 - alienated from God
 - hostile toward God as He really is
 - under Satan’s dominion
 - living for self gratification rather than God’s glory

Definition of “The World”

In this context

- Two NT Greek words
 - κόσμος (*kosmos*)
 - αἰών (*aion, eon*)
- Basically synonymous in this study’s passages

Duration of the World

- Begins at the Fall (Gen. 3)
- Continues until the Great White Throne and the “second death” (Rev. 20)
- All of human history under the curse
- Comparing “bookends” reveals stark difference between righteous(ness) and unrighteous(ness)

Believers' Relationship to the World

While the world exists, God calls His people to be different

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me **out of the world** (John 17:6).

They are **not of the world**, even as I am not of the world (John 17:16).

Believers' Relationship to the World

While the world exists, God calls His people to be different

Be not conformed to this world (Rom 12:2).

Wherefore **come out from among them**, and **be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and **touch not the unclean thing** (2Co 6:17).

Believers' Relationship to the World

While the world exists, God calls His people to be different

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might **deliver us from this present evil world** (Gal 1:4).

And **have no fellowship** with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather **reprove them** (Eph 5:11).

Believers' Relationship to the World

While the world exists, God calls His people to be different

Denying ungodliness and **worldly lusts**, we should **live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world** (Tit 2:12).

Pure religion ... is this, ... to keep himself **unspotted from the world** (Jam 1:27).

Believers' Relationship to the World

While the world exists, God calls His people to be different

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** (Jam 4:4).

Believers' Relationship to the World

While the world exists, God calls His people to be different

But as he which hath called you is holy, so **be ye holy** in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, **Be ye holy**; for I am holy (1Pe 1:15-16).

Believers' Relationship to the World

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** (1Jo 2:15-17).

Old Testament Teaching

- Israel is God's intimately special people
Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and **brought you unto myself**. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a **peculiar treasure unto me above all people**: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and **an holy nation** (Exo 19:4-6).

Old Testament Teaching

- Israel would be a testimony to the nations
If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, ... ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests (Exo 19:5-6).

Old Testament Teaching

- Israel would be a testimony to the nations
Keep therefore and do them [the commandments]; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them ... (Deu 4:6-7).

Old Testament Teaching

- Instead, Israel forsook intimacy with God and imitated the nations
Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, **transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen** ... until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy (2Ch 36:14-16).

Old Testament Teaching

- In fact, Israel outdid the Canaanites in evildoing
Manasseh seduced them to **do more evil than did the nations** whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel (2Ki 21:9).

Old Testament Teaching

- Israel's worldliness brought God's wrath
Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen ... until **the wrath of the LORD arose against his people**, till there was no remedy (2Ch 36:14-16).

Old Testament Teaching

- Israel's worldliness brought the scorn of the nations upon her and her God
And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, **to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse**, in all places whither I shall drive them (Jer. 24:9).

Old Testament Teaching

- Israel's worldliness brought the scorn of the nations upon her and her God
Spare thy people, O LORD, and **give not thine heritage to reproach**, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, **Where is their God?** (Joel 2:17)

Old Testament Teaching

- Israel's worldliness brought the scorn of the nations upon her and her God
All that pass by clap their hands at thee; **they hiss and wag their head** at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth? (Lam. 2:15)

Old Testament Teaching

- Still, God promises to restore Israel's intimacy with Himself and make her a testimony of His holiness to the nations
And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all, that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries. ... **I will bring you into the bond of the covenant ... and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen** (Eze 20:32, 37, 41).

Old Testament Teaching

- Summary of Old Testament teaching
 - Israel is God's covenant people, unconditionally
 - Israel chose adulterous worldliness over faithful intimacy, and God divorced her
 - God will yet restore Israel to faithful intimacy with Himself
 - God gets all the glory

New Testament Teaching

- The vocabulary changes
 - The nations (Gentiles) are now being grafted into God's olive tree (Rom 11)
 - *The nations* is no longer the key term for unregenerate humanity in its ignorance of God
 - The new vocabulary is *the world* (κόσμος / αἰών)
- The pattern of experience remains the same

New Testament Teaching

- The church is God's intimately special people
Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and **purify unto himself a peculiar people**, zealous of good works (Tit 2:14).

New Testament Teaching

- The church is to be a testimony to the world
But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; **that ye should shew forth the praises** of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1Pe 2:9).

New Testament Teaching

- Instead, the church has an adulterous appetite for the world
The NT teaching we surveyed earlier would be pointless if believers had no inclination to imitate the world.

New Testament Teaching

- The church sometimes outdoes the world in evildoing
It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and **such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles**, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up.... (1Co 5:1-2).

New Testament Teaching

- The church's worldliness brings chastening
Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel ... to teach and to seduce **my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols**. ... Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and **them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation**, except they repent of their deeds (Rev 2:20-22).

New Testament Teaching

- Still, God will establish intimacy with the church and make her a testimony to the world
And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; ... that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me (Joh 17:19-21).

Summary of Biblical Teaching

Under God's covenants with His people:

- Fact—redemption from the world as God's intimate people
- Obligation—living distinctively from the world
- Purpose—testimony to the world
- Penalty for disobedience—disaster and discredit
- Fulfillment—God *will* sanctify us for His glory

WARNING!

- At this point our hearts are warmly lifted up to the Lord...
- But things are about to get messy
- The application of these truths to daily living is challenging, difficult, and sometimes downright unpleasant
- But Scripture teaches us to expect this reality

One Example: Facial Hair

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/parse/2013/february/beards-of-ministry.html>

Distinctive Living Requires Discipline

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world (Tit 2:11-12).

Distinctive Living Requires Discipline

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Distinctive Living Requires Discipline

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching [παιδεύω / *paideuō*] us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world (Tit 2:11-12).

Zealous pursuit of distinctively holy living as an expression of true godliness is the fruit of the discipline of gospel grace, not the error of legalism.

Thorny Questions

- We are to live distinctively from the world
 - to what extent?
 - in what ways?
- How do we form proper lines of separation?

Thorny Questions

- To what extent should we live distinctively?
 - For starters: differently enough to be noticeable! The nations ... shall hear all these statutes, and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people" (Deu 4:6).

Thorny Questions

- To what extent should we live distinctively?
 - Further: as differently as night and day
- What communion hath light with darkness? (2Co 6:14)

Thorny Questions

- In what ways should we live distinctively?
 - What is noticeable should testify of our intimacy with God
 - "Night and day" are not just the *extent* of the difference, they are also the *nature* of the difference

Thorny Questions

- How do we form proper lines of separation?

Thorny Questions

- Rephrased, how do we distinguish between legitimate culture (to be embraced) and the world (to be rejected)?
 - The Bible provides no simple formula; reality is too complex for a formulaic approach
 - Simple, perfect lines are therefore unattainable
 - Imperfect lines are still useful (1Co 8-10)

Thorny Questions

- Rephrased, how do we distinguish between legitimate culture (to be embraced) and the world (to be rejected)?
 - Scripture provides sufficient guidance, provided we apply it sufficiently
 - The Bible *is* enough; we must not fail *to do* enough with the Bible

Thorny Questions

- Rephrased, how do we distinguish between legitimate culture (to be embraced) and the world (to be rejected)?
 - Bottom line answer: we need discernment saturated with love, knowledge, and discriminating judgment (Phil 1:9-11)

Thorny Questions

- Rephrased, how do we distinguish between legitimate culture (to be embraced) and the world (to be rejected)?
 - Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed thereto [to his way] according to thy word (Psa 119:9).

Pastoral Responsibility (Titus 2)

But **speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:**

That the aged men be sober....

The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness...

That they may teach the young women to be sober....

Young men likewise **exhort** to be sober minded...

In all things **shewing thyself a pattern of good works**....

Pastoral Responsibility (Titus 2)

In short, provide **teaching, exhortation and example** for holy living to every subgroup within the flock (1-10).

Because God's saving grace trains us for holy living and intimate communion with Him (11-12),

Which are the very goals for which Christ gave Himself for us (14).

So teach these things and press them home with all the spiritual authority that is yours as the man of God (15).

