

# **Certain Of What We Do Not See**

**God's Way To Spiritual Freedom**

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**The Influence Of The World**

*"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*



**DVD Video Series**

**Freedom In Jesus Series  
(Part 1)**

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## Certain Of What We Do Not See, #9 The Influence Of The World

As followers of Jesus, we're commanded to live IN the world but not be part OF its values and goals. That's not an easy thing to do.

The most common word for "world" in the Newer Testament is "*kosmos*". Its root meaning of "order" or "arrangement" of things here on earth sets it apart from the spiritual realm of heaven.

The world is the arena in which human life and experience take place. In biblical thought, "worldly" means a system that's corrupted by sin, controlled by darkness, and operating on ungodly principles.

Remember from the previous segment. We can best understand the world in terms of mental enticement.

Words, images, and feelings intrude into our minds every day trying to seduce us away from obedient trust in our Lord Jesus.

As a follower of Jesus, it's vital that you understand that the goals of the world are completely opposite those of God. And, the world system operates directly against your Father's desire and plan for you.

Let me repeat that important point: The world system operates directly against your Father's desire and plan for you.

The Apostle Paul expressed keen insight into the self-gratifying nature of the world system that's so in conflict with God's Kingdom of death to self.

"For many — I have told you about them often before, and even now I say it with tears — live as enemies of the Messiah's execution-stake. They are headed for destruction! Their god is the belly; they are proud of what they ought to be ashamed of, since they are concerned about the things of the world" (Philippians 3:18,19).

Paul also realized that because we ARE human, we'll be tempted to mesh the world's values with God's. He warns us to not even try that approach!

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

The indwelling Holy Spirit and God's grace enable us to reject the world's goals and ways so that we can choose to live in ways that please Him.

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (Titus 2:11,12).

James goes even further to strongly rebuke anyone who seeks worldly pursuits!

"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Just listen to the intensity of those words: adulterous, hatred toward God, enemy of God. Maybe you're beginning

to see how seriously God views half-hearted religion that feeds our sin nature, and disregards His demand that His children LEAVE BEHIND worldly desires!

At this point you may be thinking, “If the world system is so vile, why does our Lord have us living here on earth? Especially since its values are so contrary to the relationship of love and holiness He wants with us.”

Remember that we shared earlier that Satan is now on earth and has authority over the world’s systems. The goal of these are to entice us away from whole-hearted devotion to God.

It’s true that when God first created the world, He called it “good.” Our righteous Lord walked in the Garden of Eden and talked with Adam and Eve. They had face-to-face fellowship with Him.

Have you ever stopped to consider how God felt when His beloved first couple chose to rebel against Him and sin? Their decision to disobey their loving God changed the nature of His relationship not only with them, but with all mankind.

Both sin and the knowledge of evil came into the world when Adam and Eve sinned. And, sin and knowledge of evil interfere with all of us relating to God in the way He desires.

This inherited sin nature we all receive at birth is what makes us susceptible to the world’s enticement. It’s like the attraction of two magnets.

### **The Allure of the World**

It’s clear why our Father doesn’t want

His children enmeshed in the world’s goals and values.

We mentioned in a previous segment that Satan and his rebellious companions were thrown down to the earth.

The governments of this world’s systems are under Satan’s authority, and he’s determined to wage spiritual war against the followers of Jesus.

There’s a profound interconnectedness between the allure of the world, the propensity of our sin nature, and the schemes of the devil. When you give way to any of these three, you’re choosing to silence the voice and the power of the Holy Spirit within you.

God calls us as His children to separate our thoughts, decisions, values and actions from those of the world because the world is enslaved to Satan.

“We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one” (1 John 5:19).

Satan uses worldly enticement to lure Christians away from their devotion to God.

As far back as the time he enticed Eve, the devil recognizes our human frailty.

What worldly enticement does Satan use to ensnare followers of Jesus? The three snares the elderly apostle John warns about bear repeating.

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of

sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world” (1 John 2:15-16).

It might be worthwhile for you to pause a moment and examine your own life:

- What do you crave the most in life?
- What do your eyes lust after?
- What do you boast about the most?

You need to be warned that those who consistently align their hearts with the values and ways of the world will forfeit eternal life.

“The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:17).

Again, we encourage you to take a close look at yourself. Do YOUR motives align with those of the world? Scrutinize yourself carefully.

Both the cravings of sinful man, and the lust of his eyes hunger for the things of this world, be they material trappings, or personal power and acclaim. The third motive, boasting about what you have or do, also focuses on self-gratification, either by ownership or by ability. Either way, taking pride in yourself is your real intent. If any of these are your focus, then you’re ensnared by the world.

In fact, the deceit behind these three worldly motives is the false view that we’re here on earth so that God can make us happy.

Jesus warns that even those who know the truth can get entangled in the world’s affairs and mindset.

You recognize these people by their worry. They’re either consumed with accumulating worldly goods, or terrified of losing what they have.

Whatever growth in Christ-likeness they could have made is strangled completely away.

“The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature” (Luke 8:14).

Let’s review what we’ve shared so far. The world system belongs to Satan. Our holy and loving God will not stand by watching His children follow the devil’s ways.

That’s why our Lord warns us time and again through His apostles against desiring or conforming to the things of this world.

Remember, even Jesus was tempted by Satan to rule his dark, earthly kingdoms. But just as Jesus resisted, so can we as His followers.

He’s equipped us as His soldiers to resist through the determination and power of the Holy Spirit within us.

### **Called Out Of The World**

Basic biology teaches that we’re connected to the world around us through our five senses.

As we said earlier, 89% of what we learn is through our sense of sight. The remaining 11% is through our other senses of taste, touch, hearing and smell.

BUT, we’re commanded by our Lord to

“walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

As we discussed in our video segments on the *Gospel of the Covenant*, the indwelling Holy Spirit enables us to overcome the world’s system of values and ways. He then equips us to live out God’s plan and purposes in a manner that pleases God.

You may recall that the Greek word *ekklesia*, which is commonly translated “church”, literally means the “called-out ones. What is it that we’re called-out FROM? Jesus gives us His answer:

“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you OUT OF THE WORLD. That is why the world hates you” (John 15: 19).

Think about it. Jesus calls us out of the world’s way of thinking and acting. In essence, He calls us away from depending on our five senses, so that we’ll rely on His Spirit. And because of this, the world will hate us.

Your conversion is really the BEGINNING of your pilgrimage OUT OF the world’s values and goals, and INTO the Kingdom’s values and purposes.

In the process of living in union with Jesus, those who love the allure of the world will hate you. Let me ask you:

- If you aren’t hated by those who love this world more than they love God, what do you think that might mean about you?

Listen to these two passages of Scripture as if they’re being spoken directly to you:

“I have given them your word, and the world hated them, because they DO NOT BELONG TO THE WORLD just as I myself do not belong to the world. I don’t ask you to take them out of the world, but to protect them from the Evil One. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. SET THEM APART FOR HOLINESS by means of the truth — your word is truth. Just as you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.” (John 17:14-18)

“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are FROM THE WORLD and therefore speak from the VIEWPOINT OF THE WORLD, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood” (1 John 4:4-6).

Just as God called Abraham out the Ur of the Chaldees to the Promised Land, He’s calling us out of the world’s values and goals which are of Satan’s domain.

He calls us as followers of Jesus to embrace the values of His Kingdom. This is the crux of Jesus’s command, “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33).

What’s crucial for you to remember from this segment is that when you align any of your goals with those of Satan’s world system, you become an enemy of God.

We really encourage you to scrutinize your life.