



# **Christians And The 'World System'**

**By**

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## The World System

Christians and their churches, denominations, conferences, schools, colleges and universities are in grave danger today. How so? From *The World System*. Let me explain.

One of the best ways of understanding the phrase, *The World System*, is to look at what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians and Ephesians, what John wrote in his first letter, and what Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke.

*“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”*

### **2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-4**

*“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among*

*whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”*

### **EPHESIANS 2:1-3**

*“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”*

### **EPHESIANS 6:11-13**

*“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”*

### **1 JOHN 3:8**

*“Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, ‘All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.’ And Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”*

#### **LUKE 4:5-8**

Christians now find themselves in the middle of a [cosmic battle](#). We see it clearly from the beginning of God’s Word. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, was manifested (revealed, made known, made visible) for the purpose of *destroying the works* of the devil, who Paul called “the prince of the power of the air”. The Greek word John used for the word ‘destroy’ was λύω, which means to *release, unleash, loose, unbind, dissolve*.

Notice that when Satan tested Jesus in the wilderness and told the Lord that he (Satan) had the authority to give the kingdoms of the world “to whomever I wish,” Jesus didn’t disagree. Satan said the authority to do that “has been delivered to me.” Jesus didn’t disagree. Why not? We’ll see in a minute.

First, let’s see how Satan tested Jesus with the idea of giving Him authority over “all the kingdoms of the world” –

*“Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”*

#### **LUKE 4:7**

Our Lord’s response was strong and direct. He resisted Satan using God’s Word –

*“Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’” Luke 4:8*

Jesus did not challenge Satan’s truth claim that authority over the kingdoms of the world had been *delivered* to him. Why? Because Satan was right. God had given him authority over the kingdoms of the world. That’s why Paul called Satan the “god of this age.”

What Jesus had done was come to earth to *destroy* Satan's authority and work. How did Jesus do that? By dying on the Cross, rising from the dead and ascending to Heaven where He sits at the right hand of His Father.

That's why the Apostle Paul prayed these words in his letter to the Church in Ephesus –

*"... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."*

**EPHESIANS 1:17-21**

It's also a good prayer for us today. We need to remember that Satan attempted to get Jesus to choose the easy path of joining the *world system* under the devil's control rather than making the tough choice our Lord faced to accomplish the eternal will of His Father by offering Himself as the Perfect Sacrifice on the Cross. Satan does the same thing with Christians. Will we choose the easy path of partnering with Satan's *world system* or make the tough choices necessary to accomplish God's will in our lives?

Jesus already did the heavy lifting by sacrificing Himself on the Cross. What He asks Christians to do is make disciples and teach those disciples to obey Him (Matthew 28:18-20). Jesus asks Christians to preach the Gospel to the nations, to make His Name known in the world. How are we doing with that? If we are honest with ourselves and with our Lord, not very well. We'll see what Jesus thinks about our efforts in a few minutes.

## The Danger to Christians

The danger to Christians is clear from everything we read in the New Testament. Jesus told His followers –

*“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”*

### **MATTHEW 10:16**

Jesus never told His disciples that following Him would be easy. Our Lord was always honest about the dangers they would face. You read it in the Gospels. You read it in the Book of Acts. You read it in the apostolic letters. Christians are called to do battle with Satan and the *world system* he directs, not participate in it.

Here's how Jesus prayed the night before dying on the Cross –

*“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 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. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.”*

### **JOHN 17:14-19**

Do you see it? The *world system* hates us because it hates Jesus. We are not *of the world* because Jesus is not *of the world*. Our connection is to Jesus, not the *world system*.

However, Jesus did not pray that His Father would take us *out of the world* but would “keep” (guard, protect, preserve) us from “the evil one.” Who is the evil one? You guessed it – Satan.

The apostles Peter and James told Christians how to deal with Satan – through focus, vigilance, resistance and steadfastness –

*“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”*

### **1 PETER 5:8-9**

Please notice that all Christians have this common experience with the devil – “knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.” Peter wrote that every Christian must be sober, vigilant and ready to resist Satan, being “steadfast in the faith.”

James also wrote about resisting the devil, but he gave us a very important clue to what happens when we do that –

*Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” JAMES 4:7*

So, that's it? All we have to do is join the resistance against Satan and he runs from us? No, there's much more to it, beginning with total submission to God –

*“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”*

### **JAMES 4:8-10**

The context of the verses in James's letter that lead up to this are that Christians were caught up in the *world system*. Look at what James wrote just a few sentences earlier –

*“Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously’? But He*

*gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.'*

### **JAMES 4:4-6**

Read these words again and let them sink in as we consider what Christians are doing in the world right now –

*“Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”*

Also, remember the words of the Apostle Paul we mentioned earlier. Satan and his spiritual forces (e.g. principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*) are our real enemy and we must fight the fight not as friends of the *world system*, but as soldiers of God –

*“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,*

*against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”*

**EPHESIANS 6:11-13**

## Time To Choose

Unfortunately, many people around the world who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ are good friends with the *world system*. They are more involved in the things of the world than they are in the things of Christ. They are more impressed with the way the world thinks and acts than how Christ thinks and acts. They are more in line with the *way of the world* than **The Way, the Truth and the Life**. So many Christians and their leaders have actually 'laid down' with the *world system* and are 'in bed' with them. That's why James called them adulterers and adulteresses. That's why James wrote "that friendship with the world is enmity with God" and "Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

That's very strong language for an apostolic elder of the 1st century to use with people who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ, but the Lord was even tougher on His followers.

I know these words will be familiar to many of you, but please read them as if Jesus was saying them directly to you and your church leaders.

*(To the Church of Ephesus) “Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.”*

### **REVELATION 2:4-5**

*(To the Church of Pergamos) “But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”*

### **REVELATION 2:14-15**

*(To the Church of Thyatira) “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things*

*sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.”*

### **REVELATION 2:20-23**

*(To the Church of Sardis) “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.” REVELATION 3:1-3*

*(To the Church of Laodicea) “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich,*

*have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.”*

### **REVELATION 3:15-19**

Does that get your attention? It should. What would a letter from Jesus Christ to your church or denomination say today? Would it contain words of praise or admonition? Would Jesus tell us to be zealous and repent? What would He say?

Christians in many parts of the world have made a lot of bad choices in the last several decades. They are more concerned about what’s happening in the *world system* than in the **Kingdom of God**. They are more interested in the philosophy and politics of this world than in the righteousness and justice of the world to come.

Remember what we read from Paul about what's going on in the world today?

*“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”*

## **2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-4**

Satan, the god of this age, has blinded not only unbelievers, but even believers! It makes me so sad to even have to write those words.

Many churches and denominations have fallen head first into the *world system* and don't even know it. Satan has successfully blinded many Christian leaders into putting on the mind of the *world system* rather than the Mind of Christ. If the shepherds are blind, where will they lead the sheep?

## The Coming Judgment

My prayer is that we will all ask ourselves serious questions based on what God has clearly laid out for us in His Word. Please don't follow blind church leaders into the world's ditch. Let's remember who will judge all of us in the future on the choices we make today –

*“For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.”*

### **JOHN 5:22-23**

The Day is coming when Jesus Christ will judge every human being who has or will ever live — “each one according to his works” (Revelation 20:13).

Then what? God will show in the ages to come “the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:7). We as God’s children will forever experience His love and grace.

Christians need to understand clearly that the current *world system* will be around for only a short time. This world’s days are numbered, even as are Satan’s.

### **Jesus Christ is forever!**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we need to seriously consider our loyalties and priorities.

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