

“NO PART OF THE WORLD”—IN IMITATION OF CHRIST

Note to the speaker:

Help the audience examine Christ's example and thus get a clearer understanding of what it means for them to be “no part of the world.” In practical ways help them to see that it is possible to imitate Christ in this regard today

GOD LOVES THE WORLD, BUT WE ARE TO BE “NO PART OF THE WORLD”—WHY? (10 min.)

Christians are familiar with the thoughts that God loves the world (Joh 3:16) and that we are to be no part of the world (Joh 15:19; 17:14, 16); is that not a contradiction?

We know that we should copy God's example of love and should also apply Jesus' counsel

How can we understand and resolve this seeming conflict?

God loved the world of mankind, humans in general, so much that he gave his Son so that those persons who would exercise faith might be saved (Joh 3:16; *tp* 118-20)

One of the meanings of *ko'smos* (world) is “all mankind” (*it-2* 1205 ¶5, 1206 ¶4-7; *rs* 435)

Out of love for all humans in imperfect state, for mankind in general, God sent his Son to earth

Thus made salvation and eternal life available to any who would accept ransom

God has never loved the world's *ungodly qualities* and *ungodly deeds* (Read 1 John 2:15-17)

Jesus showed that we are to be no part of the world alienated from God (Read John 15:18, 19)

Bible also uses *ko'smos* with regard to mankind apart from God's servants (*it-2* 1209 ¶2-5)

Jesus could not there have meant all mankind, for he and the apostles were then part of mankind

But *how* are Christians to be no part of mankind alienated from God?

Are to imitate Christ, being no part of the world ‘just as he was no part of the world’ (Joh 17:14)

It is reasonable and proper to believe that we can be no part of world, just as Christ was not

God and Christ would not subject us to frustration by asking us to do something impossible; early Christians were able to imitate Christ, and so can we

During this discussion, we will carefully examine Christ's example and then see what this means for us, how we are involved, and what changes or improvement we may need to make

SUCCEED IN BEING NO PART OF THE WORLD, AS JESUS DID (25 min.)

Jesus knew that he had to struggle to be no part of the world alienated from God

He pointed out that what he had accomplished was a victory (Read John 16:33)

His words prove that we will have to struggle, but we can be victorious too

A major reason why Jesus had to exert himself, and we do too, is that Satan is ruler of world (Read John 14:30)

It is plain that Jesus meant mankind alienated from God, for Satan did not rule Christ

In heaven Satan had displayed how compelling and insidious his influence can be; was able to lead many angels selfishly to turn against God's sovereignty (*Re* 12:4; *re* 179)

Satan also succeeded in influencing the majority of humans to pursue selfish ends (*Mt* 7:13)

This world ruler wanted to break Jesus' integrity and wants to break ours also

Devil tried in various ways to conquer Jesus, but he failed

Involved more than Jesus' need to avoid certain acts; had to avoid “spirit” of the world, the impelling force that influences human society (*Eph* 2:2; *rs* 389)

Jesus resisted worldly desire for *self-importance*, and so must we

Satan tried to tempt Jesus with possibility of being important in the world (Read Matthew 4:8, 9)

Was Satan inviting Jesus to love the world as at John 3:16 or as at 1 John 2:16?

This was an appeal to a selfish desire for glory and prominence among men

Loyally, Jesus rejected the side of Satan and his world (*Mt* 4:10)

Jesus did not have the spirit of the world that is manifest in thirst for self-importance

We too need to imitate Christ by resisting worldly desire for personal prominence

Spirit of world regularly induces in many a desire for prominence (*w83* 6/15 19)

In school, honor is heaped on those who excel in sports; Christian may be tempted by this

On secular job, an interest in becoming a supervisor, chief salesman, or manager might involve desire for personal prominence; necessary to examine our motive

Some wives show desire for prominence by loud manner in which they make known their views; others seek prominence by the type of clothing that they wear or their grooming (*w91* 6/1 30-1)

Analyze own life; do you see areas where you have given in to desire for prominence?

Jesus also set example we should imitate in being *neutral* as to world's affairs

Rejecting the Devil's offer also meant Jesus declined any share in political and military affairs of the Jews

When Jewish political zealots tried to involve him in efforts to gain independence from Rome, Jesus would not join with them (Read John 6:14, 15)

He would not be swayed from Kingdom of God; was determined to support it (Joh 18:36)

Early Christians copied this neutral position (*rs* 272-4)

Do you imitate Christ by striving to maintain such neutrality today?

Most of us would readily admit to being neutral as to direct participation in political and military activities

We view matters in the same way as did our brothers in Malawi and other lands

Will you consistently be neutral, not sharing in any form of political activity?

Being no part of world includes not developing sympathies for any political faction of the world (*re* 197-8)

Mental sympathies easily lead to activism, either words or deeds of support

Takes real self-discipline to side only with Kingdom, being no part of the world

We should follow Jesus' example of not being interested in immoral sex

Jesus recognized that sex had a proper place in marriage (Mt 19:5, 6)

Christ, being no part of the world, did not delight in immoral sex

He made his position on morality plain in his Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:27, 28, 32; *rs* 367)

Many "sinners" coming to him were harlots, but he helped those willing to repent (Lu 5:30-32)

Early Christians avoided immoral sex, in imitation of Christ (*w82* 2/1 6)

Christians who want to be no part of the world copy Jesus' example in this (*w87* 9/15 13-14; *w87* 10/15 6)

We know we must not commit fornication, adultery, homosexuality

Might we tend to delight in stories or pictures involving immoral sex?

Will not dwelling on such pictures and stories weaken our zeal for righteousness? (Eph 5:3, 4)

If in future you are tempted with things related to immoral sex, ask yourself: 'What should I do so as to be no part of the world, in imitation of Christ?'

As did Jesus, we should resist world's preoccupation with *material things*

While Jesus ate, slept, and wore clothing, he was not preoccupied with such things and was not infected with world's spirit (Read Luke 12:23-31)

Early Christians, though many were materially poor, were not constantly coveting material things (*w69* 564)

We must resist the increasing pressure to be constantly concerned about material things

While we need food, clothing, and shelter, as did Jesus, avoid letting these be the primary topic of your thought and speech (Mt 8:20; 24:38, 39)

BE DETERMINED TO RESIST THE SPIRIT OF WORLD IN ALL WAYS (4 min.)

We have only considered some of the ways that we, in imitation of Christ, must be no part of world

You may personally recognize other ways that you are pressured to be part of the world

It may be to display prejudice toward a minority group of another color or language (*w87* 9/15 19)

Perhaps it will be to copy world's ways of dress or pleasure seeking (*w87* 9/15 14-15; *yp* 91)

Or it may be to share world's spirit by exalting sports heroes (*g79* 11/8 18-20)

Whatever way you are pressured to be part of the world alienated from God, resist (Jas 4:4)

By your efforts not to display the world's spirit, you will never endanger your relationship with God

Will prove you cherish your friendship with God more than anything world can offer

TAKE COURAGE FROM JESUS' CONQUEST—WE TOO CAN CONQUER (6 min.)

Jesus truly conquered world by avoiding spirit of the world (Read John 16:33) (*it-1* 516)

He was not involved in politics; he refused to adopt the world's standards, attitudes, and ambitions

He assured us that we can do it too; we can successfully be no part of world

This conquest may mean unpopularity or persecution, as it did for Jesus (Joh 15:18, 19)

One reason for this is that our course condemns the world (Heb 11:7; *w89* 10/1 11, 13)

Do not let unpopularity frighten you into submission to the world

Do not give up in your determination to conquer the world (Mt 24:13)

While being no part of the world, continue to show love for people by helping them to gain salvation

Love it in the sense that God did, by loving and helping humans (Joh 3:16; *tp* 128)

Share in the preaching work to help others survive passing away of world alienated from God

Help them to look forward to time when the world of mankind will all be worshipping Jehovah

Then we, as conquerors of this world of ungodly persons, will be fully a part of that world

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read)