

WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES ABOUT SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD: “In the world, but not of it” (Jn 17:11, 14)

SEPARATION = Walking in light and holiness, having no fellowship with the darkness and sin of a rebellious world system under Satan (Psa 4:3, Eph 5:7, 2 Cor 6:17, 1 Jn 5:19).

THE WORLD (Gk: *kosmos*) = Satan’s global kingdom/system, which is empty, passing and opposed to God. The Bible speaks of “the wisdom of”, “the god of”, “the course of”, “the children of”, and “the kingdom of” *this world*, a world which grew up out of man’s disobedience at the fall. Its crowning act of rebellion was the crucifixion. Since the cross, it has existed in a state of condemnation, awaiting the tribulation and the 2nd coming of Christ in judgment (Jn 12:31, 2 Cor 4:4, Gal 1:4, 6:14, Eph 2:2, 2 Tim 4:10, Titus 2:12).

WORLDLINESS = Moral and spiritual conformity to the thinking, attitudes and behaviour of “this world” (Rom 12:2, 1 John 2:15-16, Jas 1:27, 4:4).

QUOTATIONS about “the world” from Christian authors: **William MacDonald**: “[The world is] the system which man has built up in an effort to make himself happy without Christ. It may include the world of culture, opera, art, education – in short, any sphere in which the Lord Jesus is not loved and welcomed.” **A.J. Higgins**: “Nothing in this world brings pleasure to God apart from Christ.” **J.N. Darby**: “The world is an immense system built up by Satan around fallen man to keep him insensible to his ruin.”

Type of separation	ECCLESIASTICAL (religious)	SOCIAL	POLITICAL	MARITAL	FINANCIAL (business)
Separation from...	The errors and evils of the religious world, and from those who compromise with it.	Social friendship with a world whose “hands are stained with the blood of Christ”.	The politics of a condemned world in which Christians are but pilgrims and strangers.	Joining in marriage with an unbeliever and contracting an “unequal yoke”.	Joining with the ungodly in business partnerships and joint financial ventures.
Separation unto...	Unto Him “outside <i>the camp</i> ”, holding fast the faithful Word.	Unto the Lord and to His own people, “outside <i>the city</i> ”.	Unto Him “outside <i>the gate</i> ” of this world’s government.	Unto “the Lord and His will” in one’s life for a spouse.	Unto the Lord in whom our trust and confidence rests.
Bible Refs	Rom 16:17, 1 Cor 10:19-21, Heb 13:13, 2 Ti 2:19, 1 Jn 4:1, 2 Jn 10	Rom 12:1, Eph 5:7-13, Jas 4:4, 1 John 2:15-17, 1 John 4:1	Jn 17:14, 18:36, Ro 13:1-10, 2 Co 10:4, Ph 3:20, 1 P 2:13-17	2 Cor 6:14-18, Deut 7:3-4, Judg 16:4, 1 Kin 11:1-10	Gen 14:21-24, Lu 12:13-34, 2 Cor 6:11-7:1, 1 Tim 6:6-12
Explanation	Communion with a ‘table’ is communion with its contents. Fellowship with a church/man is fellowship with that church or man’s doctrine. To attend is to acquiesce: to encourage is to endorse. i.e. in joining hands with a clergyman, I condone clerisy.	If a wife loves another’s husband, it is adulterous love. So, when a Christian loves the world that crucified Christ it is spiritual adultery. While the blood of Christ fits me for heaven, it is the cross of Christ that finishes me for the world.	The church’s hope and citizenship is heavenly. It has no flag, army or earthly HQ. Christians pray, obey and pay taxes, but aren’t called to disinfect the dunghill of this present evil world. The gospel must be the focus, not politics.	The unequal yoke of “an ox and a donkey” in Deut 22:10 serves as an illustration of the spiritual incompatibility, confusion and danger arising from the marital union of a believer with an unbeliever.	Joining up with the ungodly for financial gain and advancement is a form of spiritual adultery. It is depending on the world instead of God and is a detrimental compromise for a Christian.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ecumenical Movement • The Charismatic Movement • Denominationalism • City-wide Crusades 	Following/imitating the world’s materialism, fashion, glamour, sport, movies, music and its partying and drinking culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting • Running for office • Campaigning in elections • Trade Union activism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dating an unbeliever • Marrying an unbeliever 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A business partnership with an unbeliever • Membership of the Masonic Lodge etc.