

Proposition # 2 – Are we **in** the world, but not **of** the World?

The **first proposition** explained that we are born into a world that is going to hell. We are naturally **in** the world (physically) and **of** the world (spiritually). When we are born again (John 3:3) we not only escape the world's destiny (hell), but we are delivered from the world's dominion over us through Satan. Christ's deliverance has made us citizens of heaven – members of God's family (Philippians 3:18-20). Being delivered from the world, our heart is able to see something better than the world and embrace it.

In this **second proposition**, we who have been delivered remain physically **in** the world. We still live among those who are under the influence and control of Satan. Though **in** this world, we must not be **of** it! We live here, but we don't belong here. Our purpose is to be instruments (weapons – Romans 6:13) in God's hands, to war against Satan's kingdom and rescue (deliver) others who are still **in** and **of** the world (II Timothy 2:24-26).

Let's focus on the phrase, "**In** the world, but not **of** it."

After we repent, believe and become followers of Jesus, the world tries to cling to us – to seduce us back into its ways. See II Corinthians 11:2-3, 13-15; I John 2:15-26; 4:1-6.

- Before going to the cross, Jesus prayed that we would be kept from the evil of this world – sanctified (set apart for holy purposes) by the word of God. See John 17:14-17.
- Paul warned us that the world will try to conform us to itself (push us into its mold). We must be transformed by the renewing of our mind. See Romans 12:1-2 cp. II Corinthians 3:18.
- Paul also warned us about murmurings and disputings that can interfere with our purpose of being lights that shine in this dark world. See Philippians 2:14-16 cp. vs. 1-16; Matthew 5:13-16.
- The world tries to entangle us with a great variety of pleasures and concerns. We must get the grace to stay focused and have the discipline of a good soldier. See II Timothy 2:1-4 cp. Matthew 13:22; I Peter 2:1-11.

It has been noted that when God delivered Israel out of Egypt, it only took a few weeks. But getting the "Egypt" out of Israel took forty years! Sanctification can also be described by what happens after you empty a glass of milk. The milk is basically gone, but there is a film – a residue that still remains, clinging to the inside of the glass. Removing worldliness from the thoughts and patterns of habit in a Christian is like washing the inside of that glass. Sometimes it seems to be dried and stuck in there very firmly. You

will have to spend your whole life working on that cup. Don't just work on the outside of the cup. Work on the inside of it too. Many people attempt to be sanctified by changing outward appearances. They follow rules that have been set by a church, but their hearts are still clogged up with desires and attitudes that make things difficult and hypocritical. Men see only outward appearances, but God is looking at the heart (I Samuel 16:7). If we work on the inner man (pride, lust, greed, fear, anger, etc.) the outward things will clean up more easily. If we only work on the outward things, we will be always having a big fight inside. See Matthew 23:25-26; Mark 7:14-23; Galatians 5:16-25; James 4:1-10.

Thoughts from Psalm 37

Psalm 37:4 tells us that God wants to give us the desires of our heart. However, our hearts must first be in alignment with His heart. We must first delight ourselves in the Lord and in the things that please the Lord. See Psalm 51:6-10; Jeremiah 9:23-24.

Psalm 37:7 tells us to rest in the Lord (be silent before the Lord). We are not to catch the restless, anxious and fretful (fuming & inflamed) spirit of this world. We are to patiently wait on the Lord's instructions and the Lord's provision. See Psalm 32:6-11; 46:10 (see vs. 1-11); Philippians 4:4-8.

Psalm 37:31 describes those who love and trust the Lord as people who have a heart-felt love for God's Word. This love will keep them sure-footed, on the right path. Psalm 119:9-16; 97-105; John 17:17; Romans 7:22; Colossians 3:16-17.

Are you **in** the world, but not **of** it?

Colossians 3:1-3 tells us that we are risen with Christ, above the sinful and mundane things of this world's agenda. Therefore, we should seek the things which are above – heavenly and holy things. We should set our mind and affections on the realities of God's kingdom, not the kingdoms of this earth. Though in this world, our lives are hidden (protected and nurtured) with Christ in God (Psalm 31:19-24; Proverbs 18:10). This truth should lead us to mortify (disable) the works of the flesh and walk as children of light in this dark world. See Colossians 3:1-17; Romans 6:4-14; 8:10-13; Ephesians 5:1-21.