

This World is Not Our Home

Jay Graham

Last summer, I was assigned the topic of “The Wilderness” to present at the Eminence camp meeting. I was to discuss some of the many times when the Lord’s people entered a time of particular difficulty and temptation due to various circumstances. I noted how the apostles entered such a time at the beginning of the Lord’s church in Acts. They were threatened, beaten, and maligned by those who tried to force them to cease their preaching of Christ and His gospel. Fortunately, they persevered and continued their preaching, and, as a result, thousands were added to the newly formed body of Christ.

I am wondering if we Christians, in this twenty-first century, are entering such a time. No doubt you have noticed this continuing descent into spiritual darkness; our society has continued in a downward spiral. At first, these changes came slowly, but it seems they have gained speed and momentum over the past few decades at a rate that is unbelievable. We are seeing wickedness in a form that would have been unimaginable in regard to such basic things as how many genders we have or that marriage is between one man and one woman. Our children and grandchildren, as well as we adults, are being inundated with vile messages, pictures, and portrayals of things that are extremely ungodly and wicked. I am reminded of the prophecy in **Revelation 20:7-9** about a time when Satan will surround “the camp of the saints.”

With this said, I know many of you have sung the song “This World is Not My Home” probably many times over the years. This song has always been a favorite of many of us. But does it seem like it may have even more application in these vile times? I know it does to me. I seem to have come to a deeper appreciation of this truth much more than 40 years ago. This wicked world we live in has made me realize the more “comfortable” the Lord’s people are, the less prone they are to concentrate on the Lord and His ways. Certainly, this wickedness has made me much more “uncomfortable” in this world. However, the truth is, and has always been, that this world has never been our home! It was never intended to be. We should long for the “better land” the Lord promises His people after this life, and this wickedness has certainly made this longing much more acute.

When Jesus uttered the phrase “Oh, faithless and perverse generation,” I have no doubt He was referring to that generation He lived in. But I wonder if this could be said of all generations. Ours certainly is such a generation. These moral and spiritual issues and problems have made it so. Christians are being even more ostracized for their faith and for their willingness to stand on — and even preach and speak of — the Lord’s truths in contrast to what is being lifted as “right” by our society.

If we bravely speak of the Lord’s truths, we will have many things in common with those first-century saints. We are being called “names” as they were. It is my understanding the term “Christian” was probably a type of “slur” the Romans called the Lord’s people — “You must be one of those ‘Christians!’” It is interesting to note the Romans did not care who Christians worshipped as long as they worshipped the Roman gods in addition. The world treats us this way today. The world does not care who we worship as long as we worship their gods in addition to the Lord, for they have their gods in the form of evolution, the earth, as well as other wicked philosophies. Yes, idolatry is certainly alive and well in this twenty-first century.

Consider all the vile stuff the world is attempting to “stuff down our throats” in the form of television commercials. The only TV I watch anymore are some sporting events because I do not wish to see the commercials! Some of you may know I have always been a *Star Trek* fan, for I have always enjoyed the various *Star Treks*. However, there is a new series that I refuse to watch due to the wicked marriage relationships they are trying to show as good and even mainstream.

Another tactic that is beginning to be used is Christians are encouraged to keep our beliefs and messages in our “church buildings.” It is noteworthy that the Jewish leaders of the first century did not care what Christians believed. They did not seem to care about what they preached as long as they kept their messages in their meeting places. They just did not want it preached to Jewish people! In **Acts** chapters **4** and **5**, the apostles were told they must not preach the gospel, or they would face severe persecution. Preaching for the need to repent is considered “hate speech” by many today.

Christians are beginning to be considered a “detriment” to our society. There are voices that are growing louder that would like to pressure Christian parents to not be allowed to teach their children about the Lord creating the universe in six literal days. Christians are being criticized that our “hope” is in “Christ and Him crucified” rather than placing our hope in the earth and other things.

I can go on and on, but I need to draw this article to a close. I am not writing of these things to make you afraid. We can still see the “hope” the Lord provides through His Word and His gospel. The darker it gets, the more easily those in the world who are looking for something better can find it. We, as the

Lord’s people, have something much better!

Let us not be ashamed nor afraid to speak the Lord’s truths to our children, our grandchildren, our families, and our neighbors. Let us be like those Christians in **Acts 4**, who, in response to threats, prayed for boldness in order to better preach the gospel.