

# Four Characteristics of the World We Live In

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please take out your Bibles and turn with me to Ephesians 4, verses 17 to 24.

A couple things before we get into today's text. You'll notice, and this is the announcement that Carl had shared in regard to, it said, if you want to know about the youth ministry, let's be honest, you're all excited about the youth ministry, right?

This is a chance we get to build into the younger generation to equip them to be followers of Jesus Christ. So I'm inviting you tomorrow to come out.

Here's the plan, kind of what we got going. You can come whether you want to be a prayer partner, whether you'd like to be a small group leader. Perhaps you have a gift of teaching. I can work with you and we can have you teaching some of the youth.

But one of the things that we want to do is we want to make an impact on the lives that God has given us responsibility for. We're here as to partner with you for that primary role goes to you as parents.

[ 1 : 07 ] But we want to come beside you, equip you, train you, partner with you, so that your children might grow up and understand the love of God, but also to equip them to deal with this world.

The second thing is there's, if you haven't been baptized, you haven't taken that step that Judy has, we actually have two other families that have made notice to us that they are interested in being baptized and being obedient to Christ.

If this is something that you have not done, I'd encourage you to talk to Dave or myself. There is certainly room in the tub for more, right?

No shortage of water, but it's a great blessing. We would love to see you following Christ in this way. So, again, turn with me to Ephesians 4.

We are in this study of Ephesians, which we've been in. We haven't been here since last July, but we're going to be digging in here again. As if you were new, you do not understand, we follow a form of expository preaching, meaning we want to explore the book that God has given to us in its entirety.

[ 2 : 20 ] We want to turn it over, we want to learn it, and we want to be changed by it. But I'm here to tell you, and experts all agree, you and I have a problem.

You and I have a problem with stuff. In fact, many business articles today encourage you, if you have any type of property or room, one of the best businesses that you can get into is to store other people's stuff.

It is a booming business. If you've got space, people will rent it from you. I am convinced there are two types of people.

Those who can throw things out without a second thought, and others can't. They keep, they save, they collect.

They have a place for everything in life. Perhaps you're married to one. Maybe you were raised by one.

[ 3 : 33 ] Maybe you are in the process of raising someone like that in your home. Guess what?

There seems to be more savers than there is thrower-outers. If you're curious in my marriage, who's the saver and who's the keeper?

However, just so you know, I still have my college athletic shirt that I'm hoping to fit in at one time in my life. Again, which I fear will happen after I've been decomposing for 15 years in the grave.

In fact, in the U.S., it is estimated that the average American individual has nine square feet of storage goods.

Nine square feet, every single American has. In Canada, it's actually two square feet, but it's growing. And like I said, it is a booming business.

[ 4 : 40 ] Jerry Seinfeld reminds us that everything that we own is turning into garbage. In fact, he's convinced our homes are one great, one big, great garbage processor.

You know, we buy something, we put it on the shelf, we want people to see, look at it, you know, we use it. And then we buy something else. So we have to do something with that other one. So we stick it in a cupboard, hide it away, because there's no other reason to have cupboards than to store things, right?

And then after we've bought something else, we've got to do something with the stuff in the cupboard. So where does it go? It goes into the garage, from which we get the word garbage, right?

And you know when something goes into the garage, it's never coming back to the home. It's never going to make its way in there. The reality is, once an item has been living with where you store the garbage, you're never letting it into your house again.

And then eventually, you will actually pay someone to store your garbage, and you will visit it once a month. You know, when we first become Christians, there's a lot of stuff we need to throw out, right?

[ 6 : 04 ] When you become new in Christ, you realize that you have a lot of junk. That junk could be physical items that you recognize no longer coincide with your life.

It could be your attitudes that you need to throw out. Language, habits, attitudes. In fact, you might have to throw out the map to find those places that you once visited.

You might actually need to stop allowing certain people to influence you. Whether they be friends or family.

Because you've come to the realization that the only thing that they bring into your life is junk. Why? Because those things aren't who we are anymore.

We realize we have no use for them. No affinity. We have no draw. We have no desire for us. For them. And sadly, some of us, as Christians, some for many years, still have a lot of junk that we need to throw out.

[ 7 : 32 ] I want to read you this text. This is the point of the passage that Paul has for us today, starting in Ephesians 4, starting in verse 17.

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds.

They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

They have become callous and have given themselves over to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

But that is not the way you learned Christ. Assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life, and is corrupt through the deceitful desires.

[ 8 : 43 ] And to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God, and true righteousness and holiness.

This is what Paul is telling us to do in this passage. Now that you are a Christian, now that you are a new believer, now that you are indwelt with the Holy Spirit, take a look at verse 1 of chapter 4.

Paul began this section by saying, I urge you to walk in a manner worthy of your calling. We understand that word walk, a very distinctive term, that it is the way in which you carry your life.

In how you are known, it's to walk. What are you? You would say, what is their walk like? How is the consistency of who they are, and how it was seen, and how they carry on their life?

So he began in verse 1 to urge you. And now it's contrasted with verse 17. You must no longer walk as the Gentiles do.

[ 10 : 01 ] In case you forgot, the book of Ephesians is essentially split in two. The first part, first three chapters, is how God sees us.

These next three chapters are how we've kind of decided that it's how the world should see Jesus in us. To put it another way, the first half is doctrinal.

Theological. The second part is the practical. It is the ethical. It's the way we put into practice what we've learned, or what are the implications of the first half of Ephesians, which are now understood to be acted out.

The supposition that Paul begins here is that if you've been truly saved, that means you've been elected by the Father, redeemed by the Spirit, and marked by the Holy Spirit, you are now a new creation, a new person.

You are no longer a Jew. You are no longer a Gentile. You are, as Judy quoted from 1 John, you are now a child of God.

[ 11 : 24 ] You are no longer of the world. You are of God. It's not a renewed type of individual.

It's not a hybrid individual. You are a new individual. So this section is all about the ethical implications of being a child of God.

This is how you should act if you are a child of God. Scripture tells us that we are to live holy lives, not because morality is good in itself, not because it promotes happiness or success, but we do it because of what God did for us.

It is our love offering to our Father. He saved us. We are now His. We honor Him. We love Him.

We follow Him. We desire to live our lives because of God. So this morning, I want to draw your attention to this whole word called Gentile.

[ 12 : 45 ] Gentile. If you remember from Ephesians 2.11, we understand that a Gentile is one who stands outside of God.

So when we talk in the Jewish terms, the Jew was the redeemed, the chosen people. They were the ones who God had chosen through Abraham.

And He said they were going to be His people, not because there was anything great about them. In fact, it was because they were considered a lesser people. But God desiring to show His majesty, His honor through them and how great He is, He chooses these Jews.

And outside of them stood the non-Jewish person, which is the Gentile. So today, I'm going to kind of add a word to Gentile. I'm going to call it the world.

All right? It's going to be those outside of the church. A Gentile was one who was uncircumcised, separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers of the covenant of promise, and ultimately had no hope without God in the world.

[ 14 : 06 ] So why, if you notice in your bulletin, there's a title. I've actually changed that title. I've actually changed the sermon in the last 24 hours because I thought it was really important for us to drill down on this word Gentile and understand it as the world.

I believe as we go forth, we need to follow the wisdom of Thomas Brooks. If you do not know who Thomas Brooks is, he was a Puritan who wrote some incredible books.

But he had this belief that every Christian should know four things in their life. The first thing they should know is Jesus Christ.

That we should be experts in Jesus Christ. The second thing we should be experts in is God's word. We should be experts in scripture.

The third thing we should be experts in is our own nature. We should know our personality. We should know our weaknesses. We should know our strengths.

[ 15 : 14 ] Be aware of ourselves. And the fourth thing that he want us to be aware of is we need to be aware of Satan's devices.

Satan's devices. And one of which, devices that he has, is the world. So today I want to look at four characteristics of the world in which we are to no longer walk.

Four characteristics of the world of which we are no longer to walk. So the first characteristic of the Gentile world, of a world outside of Christ, is described for us in verse 17.

Take a look in your Bibles. It says that you must, no longer, not saying, hey, maybe not on a Wednesday or a Friday, but any other day you can walk. No, he's talking about this definitive term.

You must no longer walk as the Gentiles do and he describes them at in the futility of their minds. The futility on their minds.

[ 16 : 24 ] The first characteristic of the Gentile world is their intellect is futile. Or futile. Now, question, where does sin start?

Starts in your mind. Sin starts in your mind. Sin begins in your head. Notice verse 13.

It says, darken in their understanding, ignorance that is in them. Understanding. There's this word that he's using about our mind. In verse 20, if you look, he says, not the way you learned Christ.

So there's another mental action. And we're taught in him. Verse 3. In verse 23. And be renewed in the spirit of your minds.

The first battle we face as Christians is the battle for our minds. It is our minds in which Satan assaults. And one of his primary means of assaulting us is with the world.

[ 17 : 34 ] Reality is, we often think that the most important aspect of being a Christian is our actions. How many of you as parents want your kids to be good?

You remind them to behave. Show good manners. Say thank you. Say you're welcome. Say sorry.

So we're teaching them this externals. And we've begun to form in our head that that's what Christianity is about. It's these externals. But what Paul's calling our attention to, it's not the externals that Christ is going after.

It's the mind. Right? We understand as Christians that we are to think differently.

That our outside actions need to be motivated by a properly renewed mind. Now if you're in the audience, Paul is preaching this, and you're Greek, this is coming as a complete slam to your understanding of life.

[ 18 : 47 ] If you know anything about Greek, those are the guys who produced Plato, Socrates, right? Some of the greatest philosophers that we still study today were Greeks.

And they elevated man's intellect to be above all else. In fact, if you were a rich Roman and you had the ability to acquire a slave, a Greek slave was a highly prized slave because you could use them to train your children in the finer arts, literature, science.

So now Paul's giving them the bad news. Whoa, whoa, whoa. Your mind doesn't free you of the flesh. Your flesh is corrupted because of your mind.

So Paul is telling us simply here, we need to pay attention to our mind, what we think.

We all know this because we've been called to understand the gospel. We've been called to, we understand that as a Christian, that God is creator, that God is holy, that God is just.

[ 20 : 05 ] We understand that we were created in the image of God. But we sinned and destroyed the image, the perfect image.

And the relationship that we had with God is now broken. We understand that this sin separates us from God. We understand that in God's great love, he prepared a way to fix that relationship.

We understand that he sent his son, Jesus, to this earth who lived a perfect, sinless life for 33 years.

And we understand that he died on the cross for the penalty of our sins. We understand that God poured out his righteous wrath for our sins on his one son.

We understand that by repenting and believing in our hearts and confessing with our lips that Jesus is Lord, we are saved. Amen? See, these aren't things we feel.

[ 21 : 16 ] These are things we know. We had to know this knowledge in order to incorporate into our lives. Thinking is the first step to becoming a Christian.

It is a change of understanding of our spiritual reality and our condition and about God. And here Paul is telling how Gentiles are characterized.

That Gentiles are characterized by futility in their thinking. that their problem is their thinking. That when it comes to moral and spiritual issues, the Gentile, the world, the unbeliever cannot think straight.

Their rational processes are warped and inadequate. Paul reminded us in Romans 1.18, he says, for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

He writes again in 1 Corinthians 2.14, the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. For they are folly to him and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

[ 22 : 44 ] again in Titus 1.15, he says, to the pure all things are pure, but to the fabled and unbelieving nothing is pure, but both their minds and their conscience are defiled.

They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. What's interesting is that man has made all sorts of advancements in life, whether it be technology, sciences, literature, arts.

But what do you think? Do you think man has made many forward progress in spiritual issues? What does the world tell you?

Is there some wisdom the world offers in regards to God? One of the things that you may think is we're certainly more tolerant, we're certainly more accepting of other people's spiritual positions, but what's ironic about that is they seem to be more tolerant of other spiritual values, but they're certainly not more tolerant of Jesus Christ, not of Christian values.

You see, futility, that word, means unable to produce the desired results. That means man on his own, if he were to search for God, can't do it.

[ 24 : 16 ] He cannot do it. He does not have the ability to come to the proper conclusion about God. He can be brilliant, he can be educated, but on his own, his intellect will not be able to accomplish this.

Their thoughts on this issue are empty, vain, void of substance. And you guys know what I'm talking about. You've had religious conversations with people, right?

And they'll put out their opinion, and they can be accomplished in just about anything in life, but when it comes to talking about religious matters, it's like asking a two-year-old about a calculus equation.

Everything goes right out the door, and they think they're making glorious sense. Let's talk about karma. Do you know how crazy karma is? Right?

Most people who profess to know karma actually don't know what it's really about. This reality is the world holds up its own thinking as its own authority.

[ 25 : 28 ] As one author says, it's absurd as it's like the world thinks Yankee Doodle Dandy is a wonderful great song and better than any of the symphonies composed by Beethoven.

They have no ability to discern what is good and excellent. To think that the Gentile world will eventually think right about God and that our existence is futile thinking and utterly hopeless thinking.

That is the first characteristic of the world which Paul describes here. The second characteristic of the world is that it is willfully ignorant to God's truth.

That the world is willfully ignorant to God's truth. Take a look at verse 18. They are darkened in their understanding alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to their hardness of heart.

Let me ask you a question. What would you rather be known as? Ignorant or a sinner? Think about it, right?

[ 26 : 52 ] Nine out of ten people will choose sinner. I'll accept I'm a sinner. I steal, I rape, I lie, I cheat.

Ignorant? No way. Right? Because that assaults the pride. We don't want our pride assaulted. The reality is Paul describes the world perfectly in 1 Timothy 3:7 when he says it's always learning.

But never able to come to the knowledge of truth. That's why people say how can you call me ignorant with all my learning, all my education?

I've been in discussions with people, that's just your opinion. No, it's not. It's actually God said this and it actually conforms to every reality that we know of life.

question. Do you think people aren't saved because they don't know enough?

[ 28 : 02 ] Reality is the Bible teaches that mankind has a built-in ability to know and comprehend the things of God. Romans 1:21 says for although they knew God, they could see, they understand rain comes, it helps things grow.

There's great, majestic, mighty things in this world that we don't touch. The interactions of the human body are incredible, whether it be the process of photosynthesis and plants, all speak that there is something greater and beyond us.

But he says for although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him. But they became, here was this word again, futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.

That word darkened means a continuing condition of spiritual darkness. It's not getting lighter, it's getting darker.

It implies both ignorance and immorality. And why are they in the dark? The end of verse 18, due to the hardness of their heart.

[ 29 : 25 ] This hardness means a willful determination to remain in sin. It's the declaration that it's sin, it's my sin, and I'm going to keep on sinning.

this is what happened when man rejects God as the sole authority and places his self in God's place and determines what is right and what is wrong.

Do you remember Moses before Pharaoh? He's a complete, perfect illustration of hardness of heart. Here's Moses, a simple Jew, comes with his brother Aaron and he's pleading to let his people go.

And he does miracle after miracle after miracle. And what does God do? God does power over power over power. And Pharaoh still won't give in.

Pharaoh believed the lie that he was God, the ultimate authority. And scripture says, God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

[ 30 : 39 ] See, what happens when we continue to resist truth, resist righteousness, and insist on living our own way? Our hearts get hard.

It's the same thing with the Pharisees who walked among Jesus, who saw the incredible miracles that he did. They heard the marvel that is teaching, yet would not accept him as the son of God.

Paul continues in Romans 1, he says, claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Therefore, God gave them up in their lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever.

Amen. You see, hardness is defined as being unresponsive to truth. They cannot understand God no matter how loudly and clearly the gospel is declared.

[ 31 : 58 ] declared. The term is actually a medical term used to describe a joint that is hardening. It continues to get hard. In the context, it means willful, obtuseness, and stubbornness.

What causes this? Sin. Sin has a petrifying effect. In the heart of a person who continually chooses to sin, becomes more hard, more hard, and more hard.

Oddly, they become totally insensitive to the things of God. Sometimes we think if we have a sin and it's secret, and nobody else is affected by it, it's okay.

The effects won't be as devastating. The effects won't really hurt me. But you see, that is a lie from Satan.

There's an incredible danger to pornography that experts have been yelling at us for years. In fact, I believe it was Lindsay Wilson this past week posted an article on Facebook about Hollywood actors who've come out, who've been a part of that, claiming the dangers, how it's affected their marriages, how it's affected their relationships.

[ 33 : 34 ] When people start to take part in porn, they're believing it's secret, it's only for themselves, and it won't hurt anybody. But the most important relationships it hurts is with God, right?

Could be gossip, could be laziness. It could be unwilling for a man to lead in his home. It could be for a wife unwilling to respect her husband.

And it could simply be a child who refuses to honor his parents. You see, Satan's greatest temptation is to get us to stop sinning because of the problems that might happen in our life.

And what I mean by that is I quit porn because I don't want to be found out by my wife and be shamed. You see, that's actually a lie from Satan. God wants you to quit porn because God hates sin, amen?

We need to get to a point of hating our sin before God and desiring to resist it at all costs. That is what it means to no longer walk as the Gentiles do.

[ 34 : 50 ] The third characteristic of the Gentile world is found in verse 19. It says, they became callous. Callous. When was the last time you used that word?

Probably have to think pretty long time, right? Or if you've ever used that word. We don't use it much anymore. Callousness happens when people continue to live in their sin despite the warnings.

It's when people turn themselves from God. They become apathetic, insensitive to moral and spiritual things. They reject all standards of righteousness.

They do not care about the actions or the consequences of their unrighteous thought and actions. Here's a question for you. Is our culture callous?

Does our culture celebrate sin? Do they parade sin? The fact of the matter is this world doesn't even bother hiding or excusing it, does it?

[ 35 : 56 ] Just the other day, my wife and I were going through probably the most tense moment of our day, which is trying to decide what to watch on TV, right?

Or a movie. It's hard. You see, my wife is given to spectacularly unrealistic movies. Her favorite happens to be Jurassic Park series, right?

Like dinosaurs and T-Rexes and raptors. Now, I put up with that because I'm a good guy. All right?

I've watched When Calls the Heart, too, okay? I've got the whole series knocked down, but I put up with that because I'm a realist.

I understand that the better movies that are more realist are like Godzilla, right? That God has giant beasts living in the center of the earth willing to come to correct our climate change damage.

[ 36 : 59 ] But anyway, but it was interesting. While we're watching this show, a commercial comes on and she just simply says to me, are they? She goes, I just get the impression that they're telling us to sin.

We're like, yeah, we were watching a channel that we never get. It was like a free channel for the week or whatever and we were watching Jurassic World and it's true. This commercial was so flagrant in their desire to encourage his spouses not to be faithful to one another and that there's protection for that.

See, that word callous means to have no shame, no feeling of remorse. One author on the subject writes, when self-desire rules, indecency runs wild and proceeds to cauterize the conscience, the God-given warning light and pain center of the soul.

How perverse is this world? There is now a well-known porn site that is always quoted in the news as an expert in our activities.

and the news, they just say it like everyone in the world is supposed to know this. The final quality that defines the world is depravity of mind.

[ 38 : 40 ] Depravity of mind. Take a look at verse 19. First, we had futility, which was self-centered thinking. Then we had ignorance of truth, hard-heartedness and spiritual moral callousness.



What does it lead to? Verse 19, they have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

Sensuality essentially means the absence of moral restraint, especially in the areas of sexual sins. Peter writes to us in 2 Peter 2, 9, 10, says, Then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despising authority.

Notice how those things all go together. All these sins that we're talking about all have a they despise authority.

Reality is most people by virtue of being created in the image of God by living in this culture which is largely influenced by a Judeo-Christian ethic know that certain things are wrong.

[ 40 : 13 ] They experience a sense of shame when they act against God's standard. I remember when I was in university and I went away for a week and I came back and these guys on the floor decide to start the gold star club and if they had slept with a girl they would put it on their door.

And I went to each guy who had the gold star on the door and I was like what in the world? Some immediately in their shame would tear it down. That's all the question I had to ask.

They knew that bragging about those things, even doing those things was wrong. But there are some who would tell me to get the heck out of their lives and that they were going to flaunt every person that they were able to defile sexually.

They just don't care. As they continue down the road it becomes easier and easier and what they do is they train their conscience and will eventually leave a society that holds to certain values.

I've got a sad story about my friend's father-in-law. I got to know him when he got married. He was seen as a very well-respected Christian man in the community, very wealthy living in the Calgary area, deacon serving in his church.

[ 41 : 40 ] he just announces one day I'm leaving your mom to my friend's wife, going back to my original high school love but I'm still going to come to church.

I'm still going to be a Christian. I'm still going to be involved in your lives. Sadly, he's now dying of cancer and no one knows him because he's completely distanced himself for the last 15-20 years.

He didn't keep any of those things of course because the gospel at that point when you choose to live in sin is not a message of glory but it feels like a tombstone weighing you down.

You see by pursuing those aspects of life that God has plainly spoke against, Paul refers to in 118, he eventually gives them over to a depraved mind.

It's as if they lose all ability to think clearly and reason rationally. We see this so clearly today in how this world values its sexual ethics.

[ 42 : 57 ] I'm going to tell you what depravity is. In BC, you need to be 19 years old to buy alcohol legally. In BC, you need to be 19 years old to buy a cigarette legally.

In BC, you need to be 18 years old to vote legally. And in BC, you need to be 16 years old to drive a car legally.

But just this summer, Supreme Court of BC said that a 14-year-old can make a decision to transition to another sex. Despite the mountains of evidence which demonstrate the, first of all, the student has actually been diagnosed with a mental health disorder.

teenager, and all, the reason why this teenager wants to transition is because their seventh grade school counselor encouraged that it might help them fit in better.

despite, like I said, mountains of evidence that tell us that teachers, teenagers, their frontal lobes don't even fully develop by 25, their bodies are still growing, that it's okay to go on hormone blockers and start to change how your body changes.

[ 44 : 28 ] Even those statistics are so overwhelming that show that this leads to such a horrible life of depression, and I think it's something like 41 percent increase in suicide, the doctors are still encouraging it.

This, my friends, is depravity of mind. It's undiscerning. It's void of judgment.

Should we, as a society, not be protecting children rather than using them as science experiments? You see, depraved mind is a mind that cannot recognize God's truth, let alone common sense.

It is a mind that loses contact with all reality. You see, when indecency becomes a way of life, every aspect of life is distorted, corrupted, and eventually destroyed.

You see, the fact of life is we were made by God. God made us for a certain function, and that is to glorify him.

[ 45 : 48 ] You see, when we jettison God and his standards, we will be smashed upon the rocks of this world, which seeks to destroy us. my car is meant to be driven on the road, not meant to sail the ocean.

The corruption we see around us is not the result of psychological or sociological circumstances, but the result of personal choices that run contrary to God and his design for us.

You see, when we participate in a culture like this, we will accept falsehood for reality. The saddest thing that I've ever seen is when Christians try to impose these values upon the church of God.

So what does Paul say about this Gentile world? No longer must you walk in this way. Theologians call this total depravity.

What this means is, before Jesus, man's condition is it doesn't, let me tell you first what it doesn't mean. It doesn't mean that all men are as bad as they can be.

[ 47 : 02 ] We know that. We have friends, we have neighbors that we know don't agree with what I'm talking about or these definitions of the world, even though they're in the world. It doesn't mean that the unbelievers cannot do good things, but it simply means that they cannot please God.

God. No matter what they do, what they say, there is nothing that they can do to please God. Man on his own cannot please God.

If man could of his own free will turn to God, we'd have no reason to have Jesus. Man would have the ability to do the greatest thing, which is to please God.

And we know that every word of Scripture contradicts this. this world we know is not our friend, but note Paul's words.

You must know longer. We used to be a part of that system. We used to be without hope.

[ 48 : 12 ] We used to have a heart that was darkened. We used to have a heart that was hardened. We used to be calloused and we used to be depraved.

Something happened to change that. Something really good happened. God in his great love loved us.

Amen? He chose us. He pulled us out of that reality. Instead of being enemies of God, we are now his children.

Not because we are better, not because we are more moral, not because we were more enlightened, but solely by the grace of God, he gave us eyes to see and ability to repent.

This incredible grace we have experienced is the same grace we are to live by. if you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, you don't want that world.

[ 49 : 20 ] You don't want to be corrupted by that world. You don't want to go back to that world. You cannot live with one foot in that world and one foot out of that world.

For those who are you're single, who are contemplating dating someone from that world, there's more than a few people at this church will tell you it doesn't work.

They will sit down with you, they will pray, they will share with you the hardship that they've experienced being married to an unbeliever in their life. I always hear the same, well, they're good and moral.

I kind of want to gag when I hear that because you know why? I wasn't good or moral to be saved. Despite the fact that I was bad and immoral, God saved me.

We can't become business partners with those in the world and think it's not going to bring us hardship. So, as much as this world is dark and depressing, blessing, we are called to call people from that world.

[ 50 : 41 ] Amen? We are to speak truth. We are to speak to the mind. We are to give them God's truth. We are to be kind.

We're not to hate them. We're to love them, bless them with friendship and kindness, love them. And call them from that lifestyle.

We are told to put off the old man. We're going to learn more about what this means next week. But the analogy is like clothes and we need to take it off because it's stinky and it's rotten.

And if you are trying to reach those in the world and you still have your stinky rotten clothes off, they don't know the difference about what you're calling them to.

You know that? If you're compromising, they're not going to buy it. And often we think that people are going to not accept us because of the truth that is in us.

[ 51 : 50 ] It's true. It's not because of us, because it's the one who sent us, the one who saved us. But I call you not to judge them, but to warn them.

And for those who are parents here, you need to protect your kids. The world comes into our homes in so many ways.

And many of our kids still do not know the saving grace of Jesus Christ. That is a big motivator of why I'm excited about the youth ministry here. I want to give our kids a fighting chance when they go to university because that university world ain't there to help them.

Go talk to many of our quest kids, right? They'll tell you. Hey, come be blessed. Talk about your faith all the time. We want to hear it. We want to respect you. As soon as you say Jesus Christ, how intolerant of you.

But the most important thing that we can do is to pray. Pray that those that God has put in your life will recognize the calling that you have and will want that for themselves.

[ 53 : 09 ] If you are here today and you are still a part of the world and you're not comfortable with it, perhaps it's habitual sin, perhaps it's a legacy of corrupt decisions, but you no longer want it, now is the time to rip it off, to stand apart from that, to take those dirty clothes off of you and be renewed.

If you are that person, I'm going to ask you to pray with me because I'm going to pray that God would call you, you would hear his calling loud and clear and that you would repent and make Jesus Christ our Lord.

Would you guys all pray with me for this? Alright, let's pray.