

THE WORLD-SYSTEM - LOVE NOT THE WORLD

CHAP. 6: LIGHTS IN THE WORLD

1. CONTENT

- a. Because Christ is the light of the world (Jn 8:12) and because Christ is in us (Col 1:27), Christians are the light of the world (Mt 5:14). Our role is to live in the midst of the kosmos, and to rescue people from it by manifesting God's light. This role has a two-fold effect:
 - It manifests the life and love and truth of God.
 - Thus, it exposes by positive contrast the hollowness and corruption of the kosmos.
- b. Being lights does not involve emphasizing extra-biblical taboos, but in manifesting the righteousness and peace and joy given to us by the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17). It does not involve denouncing unbelievers' wrong behavior, but in explaining to them how they can possess this same quality of life (Phil 2:14-16).

2. APPLICATION

- a. We should not regard non-Christians as enemies to be defeated. The kosmos is the enemy (which has already been defeated for us by Christ). Non-Christians are people trapped in the kosmos like we were (Eph 2:2,3) to whom we have been sent to rescue.
- b. We should not regard living in the kosmos as a dutiful burden. Rather, it is a fantastic privilege to be entrusted to do the very work of Christ, the most important work in the universe.
- c. We should never regard any social area of our lives as unspiritual or unimportant. Every social area - our job, neighborhood, school, family - is to be viewed as a mission field full of people who need to see and hear about God's fantastic alternative.
- d. The key to being effective lights is to maintain a vital faith relationship with Christ (I Jn 5:4). Only as we do this are we filled with the spiritual vitality and power to impact people for God.