

Now look at 1 Corinthians 7:31, and you will see that “the world” means the provision God has made for the sustenance and preservation of His creatures – “And they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away.” We cannot pass by that awfully perverted portion, 2 Corinthians 5:19, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” This is the world of the Father’s love. The world to which trespasses are not imputed. The world of Jesus’ care and attention. The world of the Spirit’s gracious life and light. The world which ever lives in God’s heart, and in which He will live forever and ever. See also John 10:19, “the world is gone after him”. Now we know very well that the great mass of the people never did and never will go after Him. Mark well 1 John 2:1, 2, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and He is the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” John, a Jew, rejoiced with those who were one with him, in the Gentiles participating in the same privileges. All the Gentiles? That never has been, nor ever will be: but all elect Jews and Gentiles who find in Christ Jesus the Righteous their covering from wrath and salvation from sin. This is not true of all mankind. See 1 John 5:19, “the whole world lieth in wickedness” – in the Wicked One. Did John lie in the Wicked One? No – he lay in the bosom of the Righteous One. Did his little children who were cleansed from all sin in the precious blood of Christ lie in wickedness? No – they lay secure in their All-sufficient Covering and Hiding Place. See! The whole world in the Righteous One

– The whole world in the Wicked One. The children of God and the children of the devil (1 John 3:10).

Does God Love Everybody?

Again we see the world associated with hatred and opposition to God. Does God love everybody? Does the world mean everybody? See 1 John 2:15, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” Again I ask. Does the word “world” mean everybody? Then God commands us here not to love everybody; in other words, not to love anybody. This is a pretty state of affairs to be brought into! Read the Scriptures and test their words as you would those of any other book, and you will be constrained to a just conclusion in reference to the world of the Father’s love. “God so loved the world.” “So.” Beyond all human thought or comprehension. Nothing but that Love can work the faith to grasp and hold the gift bestowed and secured by Himself – His Son and eternal Life in Him.

“For God
So
Loved The
World”

Thomas Bradbury

Marvellous capital is made out of this remarkable expression, “the world”. There is an infatuated misapprehension of the term, and a besotted determination to give it a meaning never intended by God.

Extract from a sermon preached in Grove Chapel,
Camberwell, on Sunday morning Feb. 19th, 1899.

I remember preaching for a man a few years ago, when, after the service, he gave me a taste of that tart and temper strangely characterising the tribe of Universal Lovers. With imperious meekness he said, "We have no right to limit the atonement, for 'God so loved the world'." I quietly answered, "None but ungodly minds would attempt to limit the Holy One of Israel; but when He limits the atonement by His purpose of grace, none have a right to interfere with His purpose or limitation."

What though all the world resist Him!
God will realise His plan.

"God so loved the world". From these words the disciples of Wesley and all the Arminians and Universalists in the land tell us that God loves everybody. If such be the case then God belies Himself. God loves everybody! That sounds strange in the face of David's utterance in Psalm 7:11, "God is angry with the wicked every day." What do you think of this? "The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever" (Malachi 1:4). Come to Romans 9:13, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Is that love to everybody? Is love to all mankind found in these divine statements? Look at that wonderful declaration in Psalm 37:22, "For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off."

A Right Understanding

Now the desire of our hearts is to have a right understanding of this controverted term, "the world". Jesus was conversing with a Jew, and one of the highest order, whose prejudices

were deeply rooted and soon fiercely roused against even a thought of God's favour crossing the separating line between them and the Gentiles. This is evidenced by the fury of the Jewish mob when Paul declared to them the command he had received from his Master, "Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles" (Acts 22:21). They saw not the goings forth of God's love beyond the boundaries of Israel to seek and to save certain objects of His electing love in Old Testament times, who were not the seed of Abraham after the flesh; but were really so after the Spirit. They were the objects of His everlasting love, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb from the foundation of the world, and proved to be His children by regeneration, preservation, and gracious provision. He circumcised their hearts and thus cut them off from the world around them, and brought them into the world of His love. Jesus had come to teach Nicodemus the folly of limiting the Holy One of Israel, or restricting His operations in grace to man's weak stretch of mind. God will have His own out of every kingdom, country, clime and tongue of this sinful globe; not from the narrow bounds of Israel, but from every spot where "Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding" seeks, and saves, and claims its own.

"The World" In The Scriptures

That is the world of His love. In the face of all this we are told that God loves everybody. The thing is absurd and contrary to His Blessed Word. Let us seek for the expression, "the world", and test it by the infallible touchstone of eternal Truth, Wherever it is found it must be always governed by the spirit and subject of its context. We must never allow a word

to govern a subject; but the subject must always govern the word, and the context must rule over any expression appearing in connection with it. Many moved with unscriptural zeal and fleshly determination, desiring to have none left outside the pale of God's grace, will have "the world" to mean the whole race of mankind. Will this bear the test of Holy Scripture? Let us see. Turn to John 1:10, where we shall find "the world" has three different meanings, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not." 1st. It means He trod this earth of ours. 2nd. It means that He created all things. 3rd. It means the ungodly Jews who hated Him, In this short verse "the world" has three different significations. There is no mistake concerning that. Come with me to John 15:17, 18, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Six times in these two verses "the world" means haters of Christ. Turn to John 17:9, "I pray not for the world; but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." That cannot be the world of the Father's love or Christ certainly would not exclude it from His intercession, Then we read in Romans 1:8, "your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" – the Roman Empire. In Romans 5:12 it means all the descendants of Adam who are naturally involved in the power and guilt of sin, "As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin." Again, we find that "the world" simply means the Gentiles as we read in Romans 11:12, "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world".