

In the World but not of the World

Roger Tointon—April 30, 2016

Howdy! Good Sabbath to all of you out there, and to all of you little pilgrims here in Hollister, California!

What is today? *The first day after the Days of Unleavened Bread!* We have survived another week of Unleavened Bread and it looks like we have come through it okay. We are through Unleavened Bread, *but we are still in the world!* We have learned some lessons. We have been reminded of all those things we should always be reminded of, but we are still in the world.

We have heard a lot of how this world really is. And we know that! I do not want to dwell on how this world is, because this world is a very, very negative place. We can read in the God's Word, which is *good, true and positive*. But we can read how this world is, and this world is not a positive place.

Today if you want to record in your mind what I'm going to talk about, I'm going to talk a little bit about how we can be more positive in a negative world. We need to do that, brethren! God gives us so much admonishment in His Word that should help us and guide us in being positive, even in a completely negative environment and surroundings.

John 17 should be very fresh in our mind because we always read this during Passover, which is just very recently behind us. This was Christ's prayer to the Father: His Father and to our Father. God has called us to know Him. Christ was praying to the Father.

John 17:6: "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me... [the Father selected those men] ...out of the world..." that were to become Christ's faithful apostles to pass on Christ's Word to the rest of us down through time since, and to bring out the Truth of all of Christ's teachings to the end-time generation.

We are in that end-time as we well know. Yet, we have to continually look to God and look to Christ to remind us of what we should do if we're really going to be positive in this world.

Verse 9, Christ says: "I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world..." Christ was focused upon what He was going to do through those 12 apostles, and He goes beyond that. He was looking forward to our time when we, too—long after the apostles who were in Christ's time, and for that period of time afterward—are now at the end-time, and Christ was looking forward to that, too,

when other things would be done in the same vain through the teachings that He gave.

So, He says, v 9: "I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. All Mine are Yours, and all Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them" (vs 9-10).

Verse 14: "I have given them Your words..."—the Father's. What was Christ saying?

- What was Christ teaching?
- What was Christ preaching?
- *What the Father gave Him!*

"...and the world has hated them because **they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world**" (v 14). Is that not our situation, as well? We are not of this world. If we are, we're walking dead men. We have to be Christ's, just as the apostles were Christ's there in the beginning of all of this.

Verse 15: "I do not pray that You would take them out of the world..." Why? *Very obviously, the plan of God could not be worked out in any human being's life—even though the Father called that person, opened their mind—if He were take them out of the world!* God's purposed could not be fulfilled in them unless they were in the world, in their time of judgment and go through the things that we have to go through. Those things are well laid out in God's Word: all the testing and the trials.

When you go to school—whether it's high school or college—what do you do? *You study! You prepare yourself!* Then what? *Tests come! You have to take the tests; you have to show that you are making progress!*

If you're making progress it's a good and positive thing, even though some of the tests are very negative at times. The same in God's calling of us and putting us in a much higher class than any college could give us; ***He's putting us through the test of life!*** We know that Christ spoke the words that show us what life is and what life is supposed to be. He shows us the purpose. All those things are positive, but He says:

Verse 15: "I do not pray that You [the Father] would take them out of the world..."

Christ had other things to say on this. In Luke 12 He's talking to the people leading them up to the time of the end, which we are now living in. But He's showing them how. None of them know; no man knows when Christ is going to come again and how they needed to watch, pray and be diligent.

All of those things are positive even though they are in a negative world.

Luke 12:15: “And He said to them, ‘Watch out, and keep yourselves from covetousness, for no one’s life is in the abundance of the things that he possesses.’” Why is that so important? Because if you get too focused upon those things that you covet, what are you doing? *Not only taking your eye off of God, but you’re focusing on things that will draw you away from God!* So, He warns against that!

Verse 31: “But seek the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.” In other words, focus on God! Focus upon His Word! And all the things that you’re going to need God will provide!

He said, v 32: “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father delights in giving you the kingdom”—*the very Kingdom of God to be established upon this earth.* He has called us to have an astounding part in that.

- Is that not positive?
- Is that not something that should pump us up in a good way?
- In spite of what we have to go through from time to time?
- *Very much so!*

Verse 37: “Blessed *are* those servants whom the lord, when he comes, **shall find watching....**” That’s right! He always warns us and warned the people then to be watching what the conditions are in this world.

If the Lord finds them watching, He says, “...Truly I say to you, he will gird himself, and will make them sit down, and will come *and* serve them” (v 37). Does God not serve us? *Puny little people, but God serves us every day we are to faithful to Him!* That is what God is; God is giving and all good things flow out from God. He sits down and serves us!

Verse 42: “And the Lord said, ‘Who then is the wise and faithful steward... [to God; both extremely positive things] ...whom the lord shall put in charge of his household, to give *to each one* the portion of food in season? Blessed *is* that servant whom the lord, when he comes, shall find so doing” (vs 42-43).

So, if we are being positive in the things that God has opened our mind to, then it is a very blessed thing, and our lives will be enriched and we can be counted faithful by God; just as Abraham was counted faithful *because He believed God!* He did not comprehend all that God was showing him. Absolutely not, especially in the beginning.

But what did Abraham do? *He believed!* God then counted it righteousness for him. That has to be in our eyes, too. We have to believe and be convicted. You can say positive things in different ways. Paul made one statement in Rom. 8 that we’ll see the positive effect of this even though it involves something that can be very negative.

Romans 8:18: “For I reckon that the sufferings...” Do we like sufferings? *No!* Can sufferings have a very negative effect on us? *Yes, they can!*

But Paul says, v 18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” See how Paul takes that negative situation and turns it into something very, very positive.

That is our assignment every day. Every day we go out the door into the world to be bombarded by all the things that can be; a lot of them very negative. If we are focused on God and prepared to go through the door and face the world, by going to God first thing and having His blessing in us going forth into this world we can expect to have a positive day, a productive day and a safe day. All of those things are positive. We need to focus on God and what He tells us.

What is Paul focusing on in the first part of Eph. 5? *He’s focusing upon something that we have thrown in our faces big time!* At this present time, the end-time—we’re having these things he’s talking about that can be very hard to stomach, a very hard thing to handle.

Ephesians 5:14: “Therefore, He says, ‘You who are sleeping—**wake up...**’” If we are putting our head in the sand as to the true condition of the world, what can happen? *You keep the head in the sand and you don’t know what’s coming!* You’re not watching if your head is in the sand!

So, yes, we have to look at what is going on in the world so that we are aware, so that we can look to God and say, ‘God, help me to focus on the right things! Help me to follow You!’ Then it becomes a positive thing.

Verse 15: “So then, take heed that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as those who are wise.” How do you become wise? *Through God’s Word and the work of the Holy Spirit opening up the meaning of God’s Word to us in our mind at a deeper level! Deeper layers!* So, that we will react.

We come into a situation after we go out the door into the world, and we hit that situation where we can react this way or that way. One can be good, and the other can lead to not very good results. We’ve all come against those.

But if you are prepared and have God

working *for you* when you go into the world, then it can be a good result. That's what we need! We need to keep in mind because every day another challenge, but every day can be more progress as well if we approach it right.

Verse 16: "Redeeming the time..." That's right; God has given us X amount of time, each individual. And we do not know for our self and we do not know for our brethren, but God knows.

He's given us time and we need to redeem it "...because the days are evil. For this reason, do not be foolish, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (vs 16-17). That's what I've been saying; we have to understand what God's will is in our life. Then we can respond in a positive way to every situation.

Then Paul warns against going the way of the world (v 18); then in v 19: "Speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and offering praise to the Lord... [always offering praise to God] ...with your hearts... [with our whole being] ...**giving thanks at all times...**" (vs 19-20).

I don't care how negative tomorrow may be, if we're truly doing what we should and what God shows us, we will be thankful to God for one more day to be doing what we should be doing. *Being thankful is a positive thing!*

Colossians 3:14: "And above all these things **put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...**" (vs 14-15). If truly have the peace of God in your heart, are you going to be a negative person? *I don't think so! Not if you're letting it rule you, and rule your life as God should!*

We need that peace of God, "...to which you were called into one body, and be thankful... [Be thankful that God is working in you] ...Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (vs 15-16). We're to be of that right attitude!

Hebrews 10:22: "Let us approach **God with a true heart...** [a right heart, a right attitude, a humble spirit] ...**with full conviction...**" Every single day of the rest of our life we must be absolutely convicted that:

- that God is
- that God is working in us
- that God is making His abode with us
- that we are in covenant with Him

—so that we can go out there each day and be positive in a negative world. We need to always keep that in mind.

Verse 23: "Let us hold fast without

wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess..." We do profess hope in the promises of God, because we believe that if we're faithful and do our part we will not inherit the Kingdom of God because *of our own righteousness*. But we do believe that God will accept us, and Christ's sacrifice for us will be applied to us when we're doing our part. ***Christ said that He is always there for us. He will never leave us and we need to take hope in that!***

Verse 24: "And let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another unto love and good works.*" That's why it is so important for us to come together as brethren when we can. I feel for some of you out there that I know personally that are all alone and by themselves. That can be a very negative thing, when you're too long alone without being able to be around brethren. That's why you need to turn to God and let Him stir you up, lift you up by His Spirit.

And we who do get to see each other more often, to be thinking of those brethren and pray for them when you know them. ***God hears the true prayer from a right heart!*** He hears it and He will help those people. We should always be there for each other.

2-Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not delaying the promise *of His coming*, as some in their own minds... [their own reasoning] ...reckon delay; rather, **He is longsuffering toward us...**" It may seem like He's delaying His coming, but why is He doing that? *He is:*

"...He is longsuffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish... [He is giving us *time*] ...but that all should come to repentance." Time to repent and make wiser choices. That, brethren, is very, very positive. If we do that enough and God gives us enough time, then we can be absolutely assured of a place in God's kingdom. He will smile upon us when we do that.

I just wanted to pass those things onto you. Here we are through Unleavened Bread, but we're still in the world and more than likely most of us are going to be able to come to another Passover and another Days of Unleavened Bread, but the challenge will always be the same:

Being positive to the people around us in this negative world, and leaving that kind of a witness!

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 17:6, 9-10, 14-15
- 2) Luke 12:15, 31-32, 37, 42-43
- 3) Romans 8:18
- 4) Ephesians 5:14-17, 19-20
- 5) Colossians 3:14-16
- 6) Hebrews 10:22-24

7) 2 Peter 3:9

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Ephesians 5:8

RT:bo Transcribed: 5/11/16

Copyright 2016—All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.