

Memory Verse

1 John 5:19

We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

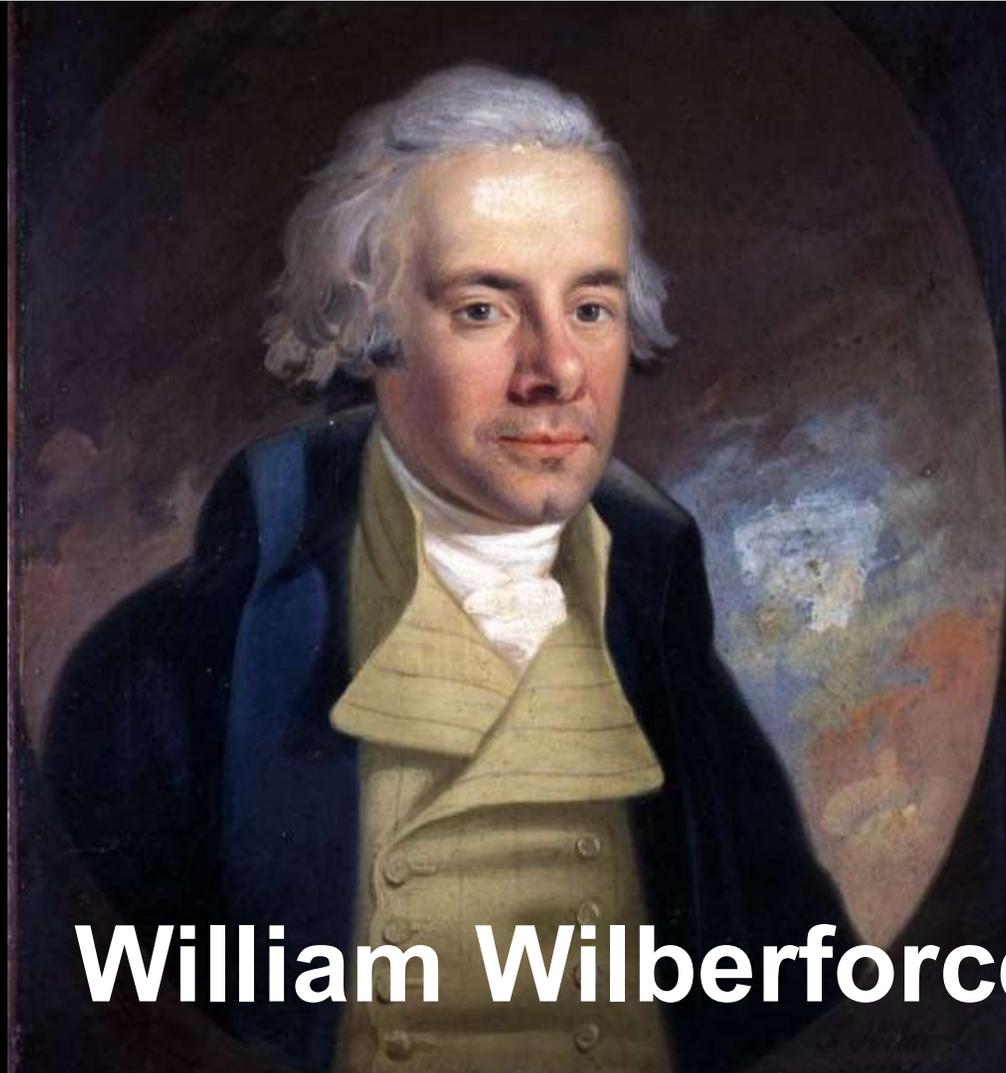
GRACELIFE



CHURCH

**THE CHURCH HAS LEFT
THE BUILDING...**

**PART 9 – THE CHURCH AND
THE CULTURE**



William Wilberforce

The church consists of **individuals** who have turned away from their sins and **trusted in Jesus** alone. We are **family**, led by **pastors** and **deacons**, modeled around the **synagogue**. The church has **responsibilities** to each other and to those who are not Christians. For **each other**, we *preach, teach* and *worship the Lord*, and *provide for needs*. For those **outside of Christ**, we *preach, teach, evangelize*, and *provide for needs*. This is what the church has been for 2000 years and it has made a great **impact** on the world.

A. 1 John 5:19, and Daniel 10:8-14 - The World

When we think of the *world*, we think of the physical earth, or globe. While the *Bible* does refer to the circle of the earth in *Isaiah*, when John and other writers talk about the world, they are **not** referring to the physical world. In Scripture, *most of the time*, "world" or "age" refers to the **current corrupt spiritual system**, where satan is the leader.

A. 1 John 5:19, and Daniel 10:8-14 - The World

1 John 5:19 - We know that we are from God, and the whole **world** lies in the power of the evil one.

In *1 John 5:19*, the word for "**world**" is ***kosmos***, and refers to *an ordered system*. There is the *physical world*, and a *spiritually ordered system or world* and both are against God and led by satan.

Daniel 10:8-14

So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. 9Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground. 10And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on

my hands and knees. 11And **he** said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. 12Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and **I** have come because of your

words. 13The **prince** of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but **Michael**, one of the **chief princes**, came to help me, for I was left there with the **kings of Persia**, 14and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

A. 1 John 5:19, and Daniel 10:8-14 - The World

Daniel had a vision. An *angel talked with him* and said he was ***fighting with other angelic beings***, or what we could call ***demons***. This is the *unseen world* and while people are responsible for their decisions, and while there is a global agenda, behind these things are *principalities and powers determined to destroy Israel, Christians and thwart God's plan.*

B. Responses by the Church

1. Reflect

Sadly, often the church **reflects the culture**. This is *not a new thing*. Even in Corinth in the first century, Paul rebuked the church for "*looking like the culture*" with their infighting, arrogance, pagan and mystical practices incorporated into their worship and more.

B. Responses by the Church

If we look like the world, we don't look like the church. God has called His church to **stand out** from the world and be **different!** If we do the same things as the world, act and think the same and more, *why would people come?* Yes, some may come to Christ, but *they don't grow in Christ!*

B. Responses by the Church

2. Revolutionize

Then there's the opposite! These churches, *which have been around for a long time*, are often rooted in the idea that the church **can** and **must change** the world for Jesus to return. Now, *some use that as an excuse*, but others sincerely believe it is up to us to bring in God's Kingdom rule on earth! **No...**

B. Responses by the Church

These *churches and leaders* say we must put Christianity into every area of the world. We must elect Christian politicians, have Christian teachers... and change culture. Part of was the *political push by some churches and Christian leaders* to reclaim America through political means. ***God does not call the Church to change culture!***

B. Responses by the Church

3. Reject

Some have *rejected the culture to varying degrees*. Historically, monks *locked themselves away in monasteries*, reading, studying, and copying Scripture in an attempt to get away from sin and its influence. ***Scripture never encourages this extremism with the culture.***

B. Responses by the Church

There is an **element of truth** to these 3. We should *live in our culture*. We wear the appropriate clothing, use the same technology, speak the same language *where we live*. We should try to *change culture through legal means...* We should reject the cultural aspects that tell us to disobey God and embrace what is sinful and contrary to the Bible.

B. Responses by the Church

4. React

Some churches and leaders have *reacted to the culture without thinking or considering the consequences* of their actions and attitudes. This is an emotional reaction, like the *ones I've already mentioned*. This has taken various forms.

B. Responses by the Church

The *protest the theme park...* Another reaction is to *get angry and look at everything and everyone through that lens* and show no love and justify your anger. This *individual or group* may isolate themselves, *connected to rejecting the culture, or take up arms and attack others.* This is where groups rage, destroy property, stores and overturn cars, set fire to buildings, and more.

B. Responses by the Church

5. Respond

Acts 5 - The religious leaders told the apostles to stop preaching Jesus! Peter, and the others said in *verse 29*, that, "**We must obey God rather than men.**" There is a *time to stand up against authorities* and say,

"NO."

***Rather than an emotional
reaction, God calls us to
have a theological
response to the culture
and situations we face in
life.***

B. Responses by the Church

John 17:15:18-19, 17:14-19

Romans 12:1-2, 14, 19-21, 13:1-7

Colossians 3:1-17, 4:5-6

1 Corinthians 5:9-12

1 Timothy 4:1-5

2 Timothy 3

1 John 2:15

James 1:27

John 17:14-19

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are **not of the world**, just as I am **not of the world**. 15I do not ask that you **take them out of the world**, but that you **keep them from the evil one**.

16They are **not of the world**, just as I am **not of the world**. 17**Sanctify** them in the **truth**; **your word is truth**. 18As you sent me into the

world, so I have sent them into the **world**.

19And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in **truth**.

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2Do not be **conformed** to this **world**, but be **transformed** by the **renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Colossians 4:5-6

Walk in **wisdom toward outsiders**, making the best use of the time. 6Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

B. Responses by the Church

We live in the world. We **cannot escape** it. Jesus prayed for us *not to be taken out of the world*, but protected. Satan can only tempt us. He can only do what God allows him to do. He can never force us to do something against our will. We are sanctified, or set apart, in and by the truth, found in *God's word and God Himself*, and sent into the world.

B. Responses by the Church

1. *Don't be surprised that the culture is growing increasingly hostile against God.*

Though I didn't read from *1 and 2 Timothy*, those verses make that very clear! This is a *spiritual battle* and it **WILL get *more intense* as time goes on.**

B. Responses by the Church

2. *Stand firm in your convictions. We must never compromise God's truth.* We are sanctified or changed by it through His Spirit and it protects us from thinking and acting like the *world*. Whether it is abortion, homosexuality, the occult, the disintegration of marriage, abuse of children or the elderly... *we must stand firm in God's word by faith!*

B. Responses by the Church

3. ***Speak the truth in love.*** Paul refers to this in *Ephesians 4* in a different context, but hints to it in *Colossians 4*. While there are times to shout, we should let the truth shout for us! We are *involved in the world and with the people* around us.

Truth and love are not enemies but married to one another!