

PRBC Bishop's Bible Study

A Christ-centered ministry endeavoring, through the Holy Spirit, to be like a city that is set upon a hill, a beacon of hope for all.
(Habakkuk 2:2)

Wednesday Evening 6:30PM

November 7 & 14 2012



Touching the World (Part 1 – The Horizontal Effects)

November 7, 2012

Honor to our Sovereign Lord God, Jesus Christ, Bishop, Alexis A. Thomas and First Lady Michelle and to the whole Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church (PRBC) family

This quarter's theme (at Bishop's direction) is: *Touching the World*

There are quite a number of ways to approach this topic. It is broad and it is deep.

Over the next 2 sessions we will meddle with both the horizontal and vertical considerations of what is "touching the World." Tonight we'll visit just a small part of the horizontal consideration of "touching the world."

And we'll talk about them in the following categories:

- Defining the terms "touch" and "world"
- Seeing Jesus' perspective on the matter (**John 18: 33-37 and (1 John 2:51-17)**)
- What is our Lord's mandate concerning the world (**Acts 1:8**)

One thing that's great about the topic "Touching the World" is that it only consists of three words. And 2 of them are very significant.

Let explore the concept of "touching." Then let's look at the thing that is the "world." And so we'll begin there. Let's briefly define the term "world" and what it consists of.

The term "world" represents a place and a thing, right.

The **place** that is the world is the physical planet that we live on and its contents.

The **thing** that is the world is the "non-organic systems" that control the events and transactions of this world. Non-organic is a phrase that I am re-scripting and points to those things that did not issue from God. They have either come from; or have been depreciated by the hands or mind of man. Example, the things that we produce, build, design, make, etc are things that are non-

organic parts of the systems of this world. Organic things were brought into play during the first 6 days of the earth's restoration, (**Genesis 1:2 – 2:25**). "Organic" speaks to both the material effects of the world, and the immaterial effects of the world. So that speaks to the term "world."

Now there's the concept of what it means to "touch," right. This will be a lot simpler, I think. To touch a thing implies that one has an effect on a thing. When we go to museums and art galleries, the exhibits usually have a sign that say "Please do not touch" ... said otherwise, "Please do not have an effect on these items."

So those are basic definitions of the terms "to touch" and "the world."

Now our topic is Touching the World and we're looking at the horizontal perspective of this mandate.

There are many, but here are 2 things that Jesus says about the world. One is found in John 18: 33-37. The other is found in 1 John 2:16-17. He says "1) my kingdom is not of this world.... And 2) Love not the world...for all that is in the world amounts to displays of lust and pride.

Sidebar: Verse 15 is a bit scary, because it indicts us. God says that "if any man loves the world, or the things that are in the world, the love of the Father is not in Him."

Now that we've identified the World, let's see what affect we are obligated to have on it. There is the idea of *us* touching the world. And there is the idea of the *world* touching us. And in either case the one has some effect on the other.

SCRIPTURES

1 John 2:15-17a

*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, **the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away....*

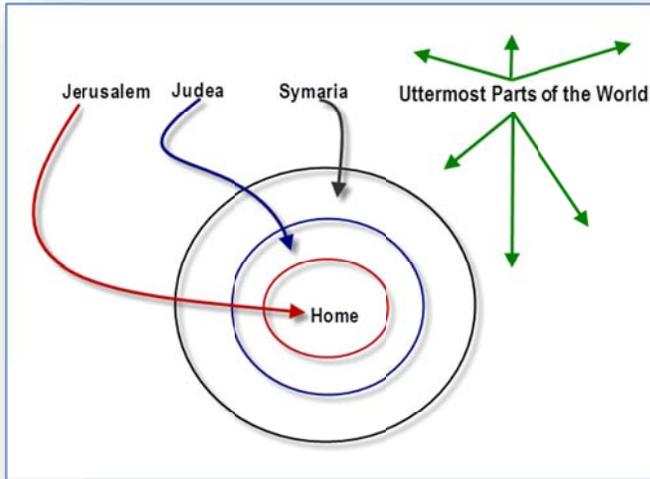
John 18:33-37

*Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Say thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world**: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou say that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth hears my voice.*

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

See, with me, three concentric circles.



As you can see the inner-most circle is labeled Jerusalem, next out is Judea, next out is Symaria and all else outside of these, constitutes the uttermost parts of the world.

Think of Jerusalem as (home), it is the closest to us. We live out our lives in the areas closest to us. And for many of the Jewish people (during certain periods), that was Jerusalem. At "arm's distance" is Judea. When you leave your "neighborhood" you enter Judea. In Judea, people are a bit less familiar with you, but they know of you. They are familiar with Jerusalem, and that it is near. Your cousins, and friends from high school, your business partners, live in Judea. They're not "in your house" but they're not far from it either. Now Samaria is a "mixed bunch." In Samaria, are our in-laws, who live on the other side of the creek. They are our "Facebook friends," they are the people who read our "tweets and blogs." They think they know us, but they don't. And the uttermost parts of the world: they don't know Samaria; they don't know Judea; they don't know Jerusalem; they don't know you and they don't care to know you. So running out to the uttermost parts of the world to "touch" them is like pouring a cup of water into the ocean. It wouldn't make a splash.

Charity begins in Jerusalem (at home). (1 Peter 4:8) [End]



Touching the World (Part 2 - The Vertical Effects)

November 14, 2012

This week, the Lord has agreed to share with us the vertical implications of "Touching the World."

Horizontal Perspective

Last week, the Lord shared with us two imperatives concerning the "World."

- 1) ... that His Kingdom is **not** of this World. (**John 18:33-37**)
- 2) ... all that is in the World is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. (**1 John 2:15-17**)

The Lord also shared with us that if we are to "touch the world," we must take our light home. And that the authenticity of our faith, Christianity, beliefs, etc. is vetted in Jerusalem (home). (**Acts 1:8**)

According to the scriptures, "we shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come ... and we shall be witnesses on the behalf of (*original language*: martyrs, ones willing to die for) our Lord first in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the world.

The scriptures (and experience) teach us that no man lights a candle and puts it under a bushel. Instead it is to be placed on a candle stick so that it may give light to all that are *in the house* ... *our* house ... charity beings at home. It doesn't begin in Samaria; nor does it begin in the uttermost parts of the world.

Then there's the other side of the coin: You've heard them, statements like; my relationship with God is "private." What's between me and God is between *us*. Well I'm not so sure where that mindset came from. Yea, I am sure where that came from. And as sure as I am of its origin, I am sure of its error. Nowhere in the scriptures will we find support for that perspective. Not only will we NOT find support for that perspective, but I dare say that the opposite is true.

How an apple tree brings forth apples, may remain a mystery to many of us. But once the apples are revealed, they don't belong to the tree anymore. Not only that, but once the apples come forth, the tree can't do anything with the apples. And at length it must cast them to the ground. Because apple trees, don't eat apples.

The same for "salt," we are the salt of the earth.... If we do not *salt the earth*, then we need to be "recalled." The same is true for "light." If we do not *light the world*, then we either need to have

our batteries replaced or the whole flashlight needs to be discarded. A flashlight that does not "flash light" is useless. And it needs to be put where all useless things go.

In Luke's telling of the gospel, this parable reads:

"No man, when he hath lighted a candle, puts it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light." (Luke 11:33; Matthew 5:15) I think that we know by experience that it is harder to keep a light from being seen, than it is to make it seen.

Vertical Perspective

Now to the scriptures; let's look closely at the 2 imperatives:

When Jesus says to us that "His Kingdom is not of this world," and that "all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life...." There is something that we may safely understand from what our Lord has said. And you'll see the scaffolding of this reality, *expressed* throughout the New Testament and *implied* throughout the Old Testament.

If the Lord's Kingdom **IS NOT** of this world, we may safely assume that there is a kingdom that **IS** of this world. If there is a kingdom that is "of this world" then there is a government undergirding that kingdom. With that we see the framework of the hierarchy of the principalities, and powers that array themselves in the cosmos, over this world.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:12)

If there are principalities, then there is a "government." If there is a government, then there is a "**head of state**." He is called the "prince of the power of the air."

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind ... (Ephesians 2:2-3)

He goes on to say, through John (**1 John 2:16**) all that is in the "kingdom of this) world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. So we've identified that our Lord's kingdom is not of this world. We've also identified that there is a kingdom of this world; the contents of which are "lust and pride."

Again, our mandate this quarter is to observe our responsibility to "Touch the World, our responsibility to *affect* the world." Let's continue to look at the implications of such a grave and weighty responsibility.

When Jesus was in the wilderness, the enemy tried to take Him on a shopping spree. He showed our Lord "all the kingdoms of this world. And said, all of these kingdoms are mine and I may give them to whomsoever I will. The enemy said to Jesus, "these can all be Yours for a small fee: if You will just fall down and worship me." (**Matthew 4:7-9; Luke 4:5-7**) The enemy is such a liar. The kingdom of this world is *on loan* to him. And he got the kingdom from Adam. The enemy could only have a "lease" on the kingdoms of this world, because "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." (**Psalm 24:1**) The Lord didn't even humor the enemy with this, for He knew that The Most High rules in the kingdoms of men, and gives it to whomsoever *He* will. (**Daniel 4:25**) The enemy has been trying to wear God's jersey since the beginning ... he's a "pretender."

As a Body of Believers, we have a responsibility to "touch the world." If we are going to touch the world (in a way that is meaningful); if we are going to make a "Meaningful Connection" with the world, we must affect it at its "deeps."

The prince of this world's kingdoms (the thief) seeks to destroy our testimony of Christ, in the earth. (**John 10:10**) He wants to so denigrate our testimony that it loses its savor. He wants to put it under a bushel. This walk, this way of life is more than about just coming to church on Sunday. We need to know that there is a contract on our heads; we are a marked people. Now don't judge the enemy entirely random on this point. He has a valid reason (within himself) for wanting to silence the cry of the righteousness of God's people in the earth (*more on this later*).

Here is why it is imperative that we understand the verticality of "touching the world;" because someone is seeking to sabotage our efforts. And just like it is our duty to walk out our witness *first* in Jerusalem (at home). He is following that same strategy. He seeks to destroy our witness *first* in Jerusalem. The enemy intends that we should not do, there, any great works, because of their unbelief. (**Matthew 13:55-58**) For if "Jerusalem" becomes disenfranchised (*or alienated*) by our unsavory witness; they can become inoculated against the work of the Lord in their own lives; potentially a *coup de grâce* for the enemy of our souls and of our Savior.

Our adversary seeks to thwart our testimony by means of the instruments of his warfare: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. For it is by these that he goes about to kill us; to steal from us and to destroy us. (**John 10:10**) I am using the term "kingdom" but essentially the "world is that kingdom." Is he not also called the prince of this world?

Jesus says as He pointed to Calvary, "*Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*" (**John 12:31**)

"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (**John 14:30**)

Why, you ask, is he working so hard to humble us and to destroy us? A great question deserves a great answer. The enemy seeks to destroy our witness, and thus our ability to effectively "touch the world" because if we "get this right" ... if we deny ourselves ... if we take up our cross ... and if we follow our Lord; in that day when we shall all (enemy included) stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, we will be *Witnesses for the Prosecution*. At the judgment seat of

Christ, when the enemy's docket is read. We will side with the Prosecuting Attorney *against* him. Our lives must be lived in such a way as to indict the enemy concerning his treason. Our lives are intended to be so perpendicular to this world's system that the enemy will be left without rebuttal or defense, when he stands before the Judge of all the earth.

The Lord says, to us through Paul. "Know ye not that you shall judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:3) The enemy seeks to impeach all witnesses against him. That is his whole campaign. That is why he seeks to destroy the testimony of the Christian. One very simple and primary way that he intends to do that is to ensure that we do not know the constitution of our Lord's Kingdom (the Bible). For then we will not know what judgments have already been passed against him. Like: "*no weapon formed against us shall prosper.*" (Isaiah 54:17) This is not just a benefit to us; it is a judgment against the enemy. The Lord has judged that neither the lust of the flesh, nor the lust of the eye, nor the pride of this life shall lord over us. But if we don't know that (which frankly, by way of transparency, I didn't know that until just now) then we do not fall prey to its antics. We walk right past them in all of their impotency and ineffectiveness. And thereby, are a light to others who "all their lives" have desired to be free from this world's grip; but did not know that such a liberty was available or even possible.

Jesus wasn't just talking, when he said "*if you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and the truth shall free you from the deception of the enemy ... free from the clutches of the systems of this world ... free from the authority of the spirit of mammon.*" (John 8:31-32)

You may recall last week that the Lord shared a private conversation with us. The enemy's indictment against God is that God is responsible for his fall from grace. The enemy purports that it is because God made him beautiful, wise and powerful that he got "caught up" with himself. (Isaiah 14:12-16 et al; Ezekiel 28:1-19) The enemy purported that such favor was "a certain recipe for failure." What he ignored was the fact that such favor was "a gift, to be gifted." The enemy was supposed to sanctify those gifts to the Sovereign Lord God, as a sacrifice of himself. But he did not. Instead the enemy, by the freedom of his own will, decided to "fly upon the spoil." (1 Samuel 14:32 et al)

The enemy believes that anyone to whom beauty, wisdom and power are given will likewise resort to treason, against the Living God. And the Lord's response to that was; "Not only are you wrong, but I will prove it. And I'll do it with, of all things, *a man; an earthen vessel.* That Man is Jesus Christ, the second Adam. And if you name the name of Jesus Christ then that man is *you*. That man is *me*. This is not a conversation for the feminist, right here. This is why we cannot say "the Lord understands that I'm just human;" as a means to excuse sin. The Lord fully intends to use our lives as an indictment against the enemy, at his judgment. And the only way that's going to happen is that we prove the enemy ... unilaterally ... unequivocally ... wrong.

And we will do this by living a life that is a walking, talking up-close-and-personal indictment against the Prince of this World. Our Lord said as He approached Calvary, "*and now is the prince of this world judged; ... and now is My life a living, breathing indictment against him.*" (John 12:31, 16:7-11) For verily, this is the testimony of the servants of the Lord; and those whose name is written in the *Lamb's Book of Life.* (Revelation 13:8, 3:5; Philippians 4:3)

As we do that, men will see our good works and glorify our Father, which is in heaven. They will also know that it is possible to live a life other than the one they have. The scripture says that the enemy makes captives of (or pimps) the children of disobedience, at his will. (2 Corinthians 4:4; 2 Timothy 2:25-26) They sense that, even though they do not know what to call it. They feel trapped. They do not see an EXIT sign anywhere. Some of them want "out." But they don't know how to get "out;" just like we didn't know how to "get out." Then God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in our hearts; to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6)

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth ... that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

This is the only effect, or means by which, we will "Touch the World;" in a way that pleases, that indemnifies and that justifies our Risen Lord and God. [End]