

Living in an Unfamiliar World

There are a number of scriptures that indicate a separation between the world lived in, and the world beyond.

Concerning the “world lived in” the apostle Paul, as directed by the Holy Spirit, said, “be not fashioned according to this world” (Rom. 12:2), i.e., “to fashion or shape one thing like another” (Vine’s), and “that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk” (Eph. 4:17). The difference in the two world’s is illustrated by a “walk,” i.e., “signifying the whole round of the activities of the individual life” (ibid): one is described as a walk that is “not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:4), the other, “the mind of the flesh is death” (Rom. 8:6). These two worlds cannot co-exist in unity, i.e., “that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God” (Jam. 4:4).

The apostle Paul reflected upon these walks, saying, “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members” (Rom. 7:22-23).

Life brings out success or failure of conduct: before the Lord was betrayed, Peter said to Jesus, “If all shall be offended in thee, I will never be offended” (Matt. 26:33). After the Lord was betrayed and facing charges Peter, “If all shall be offended in thee, I will never be offended” (Matt. 26:72). A similar occurrence there was an occasion where Cephas “ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision” (Gal. 2:12). To which Paul said, “when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Cephas before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews” (Gal. 2:14): the affects of peer pressure is strong. As the apostle Paul assesses the situation, and having concluded “*how is it that* you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?” (NASV) In essence, when living in one world, (surrounded by those faithful

to the Lord), righteous, but when (surrounded by those who yield to the flesh) the behavior changes, as with a new unfamiliar brush of a painting causes the viewer to ask, “What?”, and to become aware that, although they had assumed one conduct to be prevalent (as was Paul with Peter), only to realize they are “Living in an Unfamiliar World.” ret