

THE KEEPING OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

"Deliverance from this Present Evil World"

"I AM the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Ex. 20:2, 3.

What is it to have other gods before the Lord? Since to truly have Him alone, is to love Him with all the heart, and all the soul, and all the mind, and all the strength, then, plainly enough, it follows that anything by which any part of the heart, any part of the soul, any part of the mind, or any portion of the strength, is turned from God, is devoted to anything other than to God, is, in itself, to have another god than the Lord. And all this is what is forbidden in the First Commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

It is important, therefore, to notice the gods which the Lord points out as the principal ones that it is natural for men to have before the Lord.

One of these, if not the chief one, is "the world." For it is written: "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." 1 John 2:15. And, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James 4:14.

The reason of this is that "the world" itself has a god. And "the god of this world" is "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," and is, in fact, Satan himself. Friendship of the world, therefore, is of the spirit of the world; it is fellowship with the spirit of Satan. And this is why it "is enmity with God." Note, the Word does not say that the friendship of the world is at enmity with God, but that it is itself "*enmity* with God." And this is because it is of the very spirit of him who is the god of this world.

This is made plain in another text: "The whole world lieth in the evil one." 1 John 5:19, R.V. It is true, as our King James version renders it, that "the whole world lieth in wickedness," lieth in evil; but this is so because the whole world lieth in the wicked *one*, in the evil *one*. And the thought expressed here in the word "lieth" is "to lie at ease continually."

Plainly, then, a person who has friendship, and is in fellowship, with that which lies at perfect ease, and is content continually so to lie, in the evil one, is of the same spirit; and that can be only the spirit of the evil one, and, therefore, is of itself "*enmity* with God." And one thus so in friendship with the evil one, who is the fixed and continual enemy of God, makes himself thereby "the enemy of God."

This spirit of enmity is described in another place: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. It cannot be subject to the law of God, because it is of the very mind and spirit of Satan, who is the decided enemy of God.

But thanks be to God, there is deliverance from this enmity; there is deliverance from this present evil world. For Christ Jesus "is our peace, who hath made both [God and man] one [who had been separated by this enmity], and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having *abolished* in His *flesh* the *enmity*, . . . for to make in himself of twain [God and man] one new man, so making peace." Eph. 2:14, 15.

Therefore, though that enmity cannot be subject to the law of God, in Christ every soul can find it completely abolished. Though such a spirit is enmity with God, in Christ every soul can find it completely abolished. Though such a spirit is enmity with God, in Christ every soul can find that spirit completely driven out, and himself made one with God, having not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that he may know *not* the things of the world, but "the things that are freely given to us of God." Therefore, for a man to love the world, or to have friendship for the world, is for him to have the world as his god. And that is, in reality, to have the god of this world as his god; it is to do service to the evil one as his god.

And so, when the god of this world, the evil one, had shown to Christ "all the kingdoms of the world, and *the glory of them*," and had offered them to Him, Christ could have them only on the condition that He would "fall down and worship" the evil one. And these are the only terms upon which anybody in the world can ever have the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, or the things of this world and the glory of them. "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."

Christ's answer to that whole thought, for himself and all who are His forever, is: "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Matt. 4:10.

And when Jesus had taken this stand against all the world, against all that is of the world, against all worldliness, and all the spirit that is of the world, and for God only, "then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." Verse 11. And so shall it be forever with every one who, in the faith of Christ, takes his stand as did Christ.

Thus utter separation from the world and from all that is of the world—nothing less than this—is the keeping of the First Commandment. "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Deliverance from the world—this is the way to the keeping of the Commandments of God. And Christ "gave himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God."

Deliverance from sin is deliverance from the world. Deliverance from the world is deliverance from sin. This is the way to the keeping of the Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

"I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." "Out of Egypt have I called my son." And "behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Who would have other gods?

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