Being a Christian in a Non-Christian World

Facilitator Instructions: The words in italic are possible answers you are looking for as you lead the discussion. Give a number of people time to answer the questions before you try to answer the question. Also, always have group members look up the Scriptures in their Bibles while one group member reads.

As you lead the discussion, be open to the Holy Spirit and what He is doing during the meeting. You may never get beyond one or two questions if they are provoking a great discussion. It may also be that someone in the group needs important ministry because of what the discussion opened in their heart. Take the time to allow the Holy Spirit to minister the person through your group members.

Ice Breaker: What was your favorite thing to play with as a child? Why?

Bible Study: Being a Christian in a Non-Christian world

1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

- What does it mean when it says; “the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one?

Facilitator: Once your group has answered the above question share the thought below.

When it says the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one, it means the world is under the controlling influence of the devil. It means the devil or the wicked one is using all of his ability to exercise influence and authority over my life. This means I need to fully submit to God’s authority in my life so that He can rule my life from a kingdom perspective.

- How is your Christianity personally affected by the fact that the world lies under the sway of the devil?

- What are some of the attitudes and characteristics that are in the world that have the potential of rubbing off on you?

Facilitator: Once your group has answered the above questions, have someone read the following Scripture reference and then have them answer the question below.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

- Do you see any of these attitudes is your life, the people you know, children or other family members?

These are many of the attitudes that Christians have to deal with and contend with every day of
their lives. They are also attitudes that are promoted heavily through the media.

If the world were full of godly characteristics wouldn’t it be easier for us to put on the wonderful characteristics of Christ’s nature. But it is not and that makes it much harder to put on the clothing that belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. The world hates those attitudes.

The Challenge for the Christian in Today’s World:

- How do you think God wants us to respond to the world’s attitudes and characteristics?

Facilitator: Once members from your group have attempted to answer the above question share the following with them.

_We are encouraged to be blameless and holy._

*Philippians 2:14-16*  Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

This means that we cannot afford to allow our attitudes and characteristics to be molded by the world. _We are called to resist the mold of the world._

*Romans 12:2*  And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

In order to be the kind of controlling influence in the world that God has called us to will mean that each one of us takes on the responsibility of putting on the Lord Jesus Christ and all of His garments. It is as we do this that we truly become salt and light and act as preserving agents and begin to flavor the world around us.

- What are some Christ-like attitudes that help us to resist the conformity of the world?

Facilitator: You will probably receive many varied answers which will be all good, but it would be good to share the thoughts below as well.

_We should conduct ourselves with simplicity and godly sincerity._

*2 Corinthians 1:12*  For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.

_We must exercise a righteousness that is not phony._

- How do we do that?

Facilitator: Share the thoughts below after your group has attempted to answer the above question. Give them time to do so.
We must strive to be holy without being self-righteous or appearing as we are snubbing the world. Our goal should to become more and more like Christ, whose presence welcomed sinners and made them comfortable.

A description of Christ’s character concerning righteousness gives us a glimpse of why He was able to resist the conformity of the world without being self-righteous is found in Hebrews.

**Hebrews 1:9** You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”

Jesus did not merely act righteously; He loved righteousness. He didn’t merely abstain from sinful deeds; He hated wickedness. His holiness was more than skin deep.

His righteousness wasn’t outward conformity to a moral or religious code. It went beyond His thoughts, words and deeds. Jesus’ emotions were holy. His motives were holy. Everything He did was with the intent of pleasing His Father.

**We must exercise the proper response when we are reviled.**

**2 Timothy 3:12** Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

We know from the Word of God that when we endeavor to live a godly life before unbelievers and the world, we will experience a certain amount of persecution, mockery, etc.

- How does Christ want us to respond when we experience these things?

**Facilitator:** Share the thoughts below after your group has attempted to answer the above question. Give them time to do so.

Jesus actually answered this question for us when He was being persecuted for righteousness sake?

**John 18:36** Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”

**1 Peter 2:21-23** For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

We must purpose in our hearts to always respond with Christ-like attitudes during these times otherwise we put out the light and our persecution and suffering is all in vain.

**Christ’s Ministering Purpose.**

- How has this lesson impacted you?

- In what areas could the group pray for you?