“IN THE WORLD YE HAVE TRIBULATION”

Truer words were never spoken, “in the world ye have tribulation.” (John 16:33) the words of Jesus to John, after he proclaimed him “the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.” Jesus knew it because he was God. John knew it because of his experience with the world.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus described the seed sown upon the rock, and says, “yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway he stumbleth.” (Matt. 13:21)

What many do not understand is that the world IS “tribulation.” Nothing of the world is desirable in the spiritual life. And although it happens more than we would want to see, standards of the world (if any there are) are not the standards of the church, although some have tried to make it so.

Since the world produces nothing good for the spiritual, it is not the world we desire, and we know the world brings tribulation. Consequently, overcoming the world is a sought after condition. Since the world cannot save us, and we desire such salvation, we know we must overcome the world to be saved.

Therefore Jesus not only tells us “I am the way,” but also tells us “I have overcome the world,” so therefore we can be cheerful about that aspect and do as he did.

What do you think life would be like and the church would be like if our goal, first and last, was to overcome the world? As long as we are in the world, (and Jesus prayed his disciples not be taken out of the world )“I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one.” John 17:15) We will have tribulation and only in him can we overcome.

momentoftruth@oldpathspulpit.org October 31, 2017