

## Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

“I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it” (John 17:14-16).

I've always been drawn to the idea that we are “in the world, but not of the world.” I've taken that to mean we don't follow the world's ways, but God's. We don't define ourselves according to the world's fickle values, but by God's timeless love and grace.

Yes...but. This morning I read the *Desiring God* blog, and the author, Pastor David Mathis, suggested a new way of understanding Jesus' words. He suggests we think of them, not as “in, but not of,” but as “not of, but *sent into*.” It might sound like the same thing, and they are quite similar, but I think the second one is less focused on the next life, and more on this one. We're not spending our time thinking about heaven and trying to escape the world's sin, because the “sin” is where Jesus needs us. We're meant to walk right up to that missed-mark—both the world's and our own—and remember how God calls us to return to him, so he can make us whole.

That's going to require us to immerse ourselves fully into the muck and messy mire of the “here and now.” Not always fun...but definitely where we're meant to be. Just as it was with the disciples who kept staring into the heavens after Jesus ascended, and had to be reminded by the angels to get to work, so it is with us. Thank YOU for fully immersing yourselves into our corner of the world so you can care for each other. May God bless you as you share his blessings with the world. It's a joy to be on this journey with you.

Peace be with you in the coming days,

Pastor Kara

