

Why You May Not Want to Be at Peace With the World After All

By now, you may have heard about Christian celebrities who have either renounced their faith or are in the process of losing their faith.

The most recent celebrity to do so is Marty Sampson, a lyricist long associated with Hillsong and whose songs many of us have sung in our churches. Sampson wrote:

“I’m genuinely losing my faith, and it doesn’t bother me. Like, what bothers me now is nothing. I am so happy now, so at peace with the world. It’s crazy.”

He has since deleted the comment and qualified it by saying he was “struggling with many parts of the belief system that seem so incoherent with common human morality” and his faith is on “incredibly shaky ground.”

Struggling with doubts and questions is not unusual. Of course, few Christians have the kind of public platforms that people such as Marty Sampson and Josh Harris have.

But as Sampson tries to figure out how to get his spiritual life back on solid ground, it’s worth asking about his goal. Is his goal peace with the world, as he mentioned? Because if it is, then Christianity will never give him what he’s seeking, as these Bible verses attest:

- “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2).
- “Do you not know that the friendship with the world is

enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

- “Do not marvel, my brothers, if the world hates you” (1 John 3:13).

With growing animosity, our culture has set itself against the God of the Bible. Yes, to the point of hatred, including hatred of those who identify as Christ-followers. Even so, Christians are not to respond with hate in return. We are to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44).

But loving our enemies is not the same as being at peace with the world. For the foundation of a Christian’s faith will always put us at odds with a world system that has declared itself too wise to need God and too independent to be accountable to Him. A world which, at best, mocks our faith and, at worst, kills Christians who profess to belief in the God who sent His Son to die for those who hate Him.

Is Sampson, along with others, willing to obtain peace with the world at the cost of compromising or renouncing his Christian beliefs? Does he understand it’s those beliefs that engendered the hostility to begin with?

What about you and me?

- Is peace with the world worth losing peace with God (Rom. 5:1)?
- Is acceptance by our culture worth giving up the acceptance we have in Christ (Eph. 1:6)?
- And is the temporary approval of the world worth losing our eternal identity in Christ (Gal. 1:10)?

Peace—real peace—is found in a relationship with the Prince of Peace. A relationship with the world apart from Jesus Christ can only provide a poor imitation.

The Christian life is the sum of more than just singing emotional songs and quoting Bible verses. It includes a

willingness to endure suffering and the loss of the approval of others. Jesus Christ showed us what that looks like:

" Let us look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

Easier said than done? Yes. But not impossible, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Still, the choice is ours to make.

What will you choose? {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at .

For the news stories about Josh Harris and Marty Sampson experiencing faith struggles, listen to the podcasts included here.