

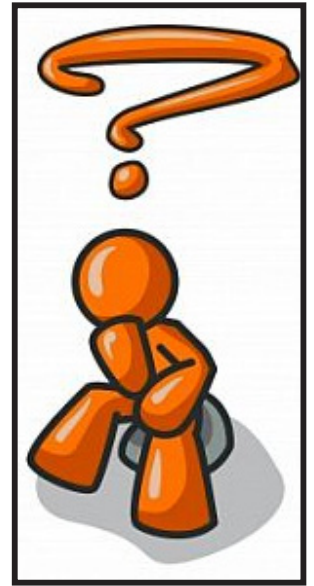
# What About... Saving the Individual vs. Saving the World?

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I have been exploring the difference between chaotic, orderly, and mature Christians. This is another point about that.

**Chaotic People** love people. They consider it good (“cool,” “with it,” “hip,” or something) to be worldly, and love everybody (well, almost everybody). They live for the present moment and go with the flow. They are trendy. They see the changes in moral behavior as they see changes in technology. It’s all good and positive. The world is getting better as people become more tolerant of each other and stop living in the past. “Love Wins.”

**Orderly People** are trying to fix the world. They believe the world is going in the wrong direction and can be improved with the right system. There are conservative systems and liberal systems. Conservatives believe things were better in the past, and we should get back to it with systems like capitalism, constitutionalism, parochial schools, and “one nation under God.” Liberals believe things would be better if we “progressively” looked to the future with systems, like socialism, evolution, humanism, and communism. Both liberals and conservatives want to fix the world by establishing their systems and defeating the opposing systems.



**Mature People** are interested in individuals, not the world. Mature believers in Christ are interested in glorifying God and reaching people for Christ, *as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself* (Acts 2:39). They are not focused on fixing or changing their world, their country, or an organization.

The leaders and prophets of Israel were nationally oriented because that’s what God was doing—revealing Himself through the nation of Israel. But the church is a global fellowship of believers, not tied to any nation. Neither Jesus nor the apostles ever did anything patriotic. They recognized God’s commitment to the future of Israel and the preservation of the Jewish people, but they never fought for the preservation or advancement of any part of the physical world. They never pursued fixing the social, political, or economic ills of Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, Asia, Greece, or Rome. They never campaigned for better schools, constitutional governments, or economic stability. They saw themselves as citizens of heaven, not the world.

The world will continue to deteriorate into moral chaos, be judged by God in a tribulation period, and rebuilt into a thousand-year kingdom by Christ at His Second Coming. That, in turn, will be totally destroyed (*the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements*

*will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up*—2 Peter 3:10). This world will be replaced by a New Heaven and a New Earth (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1). And we cannot do anything about any of that. But what we can do is reach the people God is calling to Himself.

There is an old story, which I will tell again, about a boy walking along a beach, picking up starfish and tossing them back into the ocean. They had been washed up and left to die as the tide retreated, and the boy was saving their lives. After watching this for a while, a man approached the boy and said, “There are hundreds of starfish dying on this beach, what you are doing makes no difference.” The boy picked up another one, threw it back into the ocean, and said, “It made a difference for that one.”

- **John 16:33**—*These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.*
- **John 17:15-18**—*I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*
- **2 Timothy 2:2**—*...entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*