

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE THE WORLD?

1John 2:14-15

Perhaps no subject causes more confusion in the minds of people, than that of worldliness.

Everyone seems to have an idea of what it is, and what it is not, yet few agree. Sometimes one church member will encourage a practice that another discourages (hair, dress, movies, etc.)

Because of the varied ideas expressed by many, our young people are often disillusioned and confused. It is therefore, imperative that Christians learn to distinguish between worldliness and Godliness.

An ignorance of what worldliness is may actually result in innocent people being accused of worldliness, while worldly people are praised for piety.

Unfortunately much of our preaching about worldliness deals only with a few practices and may leave the impression that only these constitute the sin.

I. Why Should Christians Be Concerned About Worldliness?

- a. The scriptures describe it as destructive to the soul.
 1. Consider what Jesus said: "I am not of this world..." John 17:4
 2. Consider what Jesus did: "gave himself that he might deliver us out of this present evil world." Gal. 1:4
 3. James 1:27 "Pure religion and undefiled before God."
 4. James 4:4 "Ye adulterers and adulteresses know ye not."
 5. Romans 12:1-2 "I beseech ye therefore."
 6. Titus 2:11-12 "The grace of God that bringeth salvation."
 7. Peter's description of the redeemed, are those "who have escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." 2Peter 1:4
- b. Worldliness Is Of The Devil. 1Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant."
 1. The Devil :
 - a. Is the God of this world 2 Corinthians 4:4
 - b. The deceiver of the whole world Revelation 12:9
 - c. The prince of this world John 12:31
 - d. "The whole world lieth in the evil one" 1Jno. 5:19
 2. Every Christian is the object of Satan's attack.
 - a. He wanted to "sift Peter" Luke 22:31
 - b. "Demas hath forsaken me." 2Tim. 4:10
 - c. "Resist the devil and he will flee" James 4:7

II. What Does It Mean To Love The World?

a. The Word "World" Does Not Always Mean What Is Evil.

1. The word "world" is used in the sense of the creation of the universe. John 17:5 "...before the world was."
2. "World" may be used to denote the earth or a single planet of the universe as in Mk.16:15-16.
3. "World may be used to designate the inhabitants of the earth. Jno.3:16
4. It may also be used to denote the dominion of Satan with all its unlawful works and desires. 1John 2:14-15

b. Worldliness As Defined in 1John 2:14-17 Consists Of Two Things:

1. Love of the world i.e. the ideas, programs, and activities that center around things human, and evil.
2. Love of the things of the world i.e.
 - a. Lust of The Flesh---what you do with your body
 - b. Lust of the Eyes---what you do with your mind,-your eyes are the gateway to your mind.
 - c. Pride of Life---what you do with your will, -- pride is a sin of the will.
3. From this definition we learn that worldliness centers in the BODY, MIND, and WILL of man.

III. The Love of The World---1John 2:14

- a. The Devil tempted Jesus through the flesh, the mind, and will for wealth, power and glory. Mt. 4:5-9
He first of all appealed to Christ through his hunger. Hunger is the body's great passion. Often referred to as the first and last appetite of the body. The need was legitimate. The wrong involved the use of supernatural means for the ease and comfort of his own body.

Jesus met every crucial test with these three words: "it is written."

Secondly, the Devil approached Christ in an attempt to get him to commit a presumptuous sin. "Cast thyself down" In other words, since you have faith in God and since God will not let you get hurt, just cast yourself down and show the people your power and the power of God.

Jesus again refers to the written word, declaring that "thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God."

Finally the Devil tempts Christ through the lust for power and vainglory. He shows him the kingdoms of the world, promising to give them all to Him if only he will fall down and worship.

- b. If our supreme passion is for earthly possession, power and glory we are worldly. Phil.3:19 "whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their mind on earthly things." Note the rich fool in Luke 12:15-21. There is no indication that this man was vicious, or that he obtained his wealth by dishonorable means; still he was worldly, for he lived only for time.

- c. When one is obsessed with the cares of this world, though they may be harmless in themselves, he is worldly Mk.4:19 "And the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."

The three classes of thorns: (cares) stand for distractions, which pertain to Responsibilities, and duties, (riches) the possession or pursuit of wealth, and (pleasure) following any sinful pleasure, or the inordinate pursuit of even innocent pleasure.

- d. An inordinate interest in self and the things of this world is opposed to our heavenly citizenship. Phil. 3:19-20 " whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven.

The person whose decisions in life are based upon selfish gratification is as worldly as the "prodigal son" who wasted his substance on riotous living. Col. 3:1 "If ye then be risen with ..."

IV. The Things of The World Are Associated with Lust.

- a. What is Lust? A desire for that which is forbidden.
- b. 1Peter 1:14 "As obedient children not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance."

Romans 6:12 "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

2 Peter 2:10 "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise governments. Presumptuous are they, self-willed "

- c. We must be careful not to brand a simple desire as a thing of the world.

- d. The difference between a simple desire and lust is the difference between the permissible and the forbidden, the lawful and the unlawful. Example: Jesus and the eating of the passover i.e. "I have desired with desire"
- e. God has given to every normal person certain inborn drives and emotions whether these remain simple lawful desires or become lust depends on whether or not the individual conforms to the will of God.

V. How Can Christians Overcome The World?

- a. The victory is through Christ:
 - 1. Paul could--Phil. 4:13 "I can do all things..."
 - 2. Since worldliness centers in the body, mind, and will each day we should yield these to Christ. See Romans 12:1-2 "I beseech ye therefore by the mercies of God that ye present..."
- b. We must store the Word of God In Our Heart
 - 1. Without education in the word, we cannot discriminate between right and wrong. Phil. 1:9-10 "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ..."
 - 2. We must make no provision to fulfill the lust of the flesh Romans 13:14. The idea is to "take thought for"
- c. Avoid those things that would stir unlawful desire:
 - 1. The places we go - - Why would I want to go to a bathing pool where people are almost naked, or to a movie full of sex and sin, or to a bar where people are drunk and drinking?
 - 2. The people with whom we associate
 - 3. What you read - - filthy language, and immoral ideas
 - 4. The conversations you engage in
 - 5. The things you do
 - 6. When unlawful desires are harbored in the mind, like a germ of life in a fertile egg, it will, hatch out, when proper conditions exist.

Conclusion: Remember, the world with its pleasure, treasures, glory, fame glitter, and glamour will pass away, but those who live according to the will of God will survive this world.

1Jno.4:4-5 "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God."