

Worldliness

James 4:4

Worldliness Defined:

Worldliness is a tendency to consider material possessions and physical comfort as more important than spiritual values: whereas the world focuses on the life that now is while godliness focuses on that which is to come.

The Scriptures and Earthly Possessions:

- Prov. 27:23-27 – Essential in life.
- Eccl. 3:13; 5:19; 9:7-10 – “this is the gift of God”
- Eph. 4:28 – “he may have whereof to give to him that hath need”
- 1 Tim. 6:17-19 – “Charge them that are rich in this present world...but...”
- Phil. 4:10-16 – “to abound and to be in want”
- 1 Tim. 6:6-10 – “godliness with contentment is great gain...minded to be rich”

Choices Have Eternal Consequences:

- Rom. 12:1-2 – The apostle Paul makes the distinction through the terms “do not fashion” and “be ye transformed.”
- Josh. 24:14-15 – Understand that our choices have eternal consequences.
- Deut. 30:19 – “choose life”

Distractions of the World:

- 1 Jn. 2:16-17 – How worldliness infiltrates life.
- Mk. 4:18-19 – distraction in the world
 - Cares of the world
 - Deceitfulness of riches
 - Lusts of other things
- Psa. 73:3-5 – Envious of the arrogant when viewing the prosperity of the wicked.

Distractions of the World:

- Matt. 6:25-34 – Taking excessive thought about the preservation of life.
- Titus 2:12 – Worldly lusts
- 1 Jn. 5:4-5; Rev. 21:7 – Whatever the distractions, faith is essential to victory.
- Lk. 18:28-30 – God will provide
- Jam. 4:4 – Do not get friendly with the world.

Effect of Worldliness on the Gospel:

- Positive: There are brethren who would hazard their very lives for the gospel, and/or godliness:
 - Rom. 16:3 – Prisca and Aquila
 - Phil. 2:25-30 – Epaphroditus
 - Heb. 11:37-39 – Through faith, vs. 33, made choices contrary to worldliness and focused on the heavenly, vs. 16.

Effect of Worldliness on the Gospel:

- Negative:

- Matt. 10:24-28 – Those who are motivated by fear
- Rev. 21:7, 8 – “But for the fearful...”
- 2 Tim. 4:10 – “Demas forsook me, having loved this present world.”

Examples:

- Pilate and Jesus:
 - Mic. 6:8 – Jehovah requires that men do justly.
 - 2 Pet. 2:14 – As a Governor Pilate had a moral obligation: Protect the innocent and punish evil-doers.
 - Jn. 19:12-13 – “Upon this Pilate sought to release him: but...
- Matt. 14:1-12 – Herod Antipas: John the Baptist:
- Acts 12:1-3 – Herod Agrippa: James and Peter

Effects of Worldliness on the Family:

- 2 Sam. 11:2-5 – adultery
 - Job 31:9-11 – Heinous crime
 - Mk. 4:23 – Comes out of the heart of men
 - Matt. 19:7-9 – Only cause justifying divorce
 - Mal. 2:13-16 – God had witnessed
- 2 Sam. 11:14-21 – David's case resulted in murder
- 2 Sam. 12:9-14 – Death of Uriah had unforeseen consequences
- Mal. 2:13-16 - divorce

General Effects of Worldliness:

- Matt. 6:24 – cannot serve two masters
- 1 Jn. 2:15 – “Love not the world”
- Jn. 12:25 – “he that loveth life”

Overcoming Worldliness

- Col. 3:1-4 – “Set your mind on the things that are above.”
- Matt. 6:33 – “seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness”
- Psa. 119:9-11 – “Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way?”

Overcoming Worldliness

- Phil. 2:12-16 – “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”
- 1 Jn. 5:4 – “this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.”
- 1 Jn. 2:15 – “Love not the world”
 - 1 Jn. 2:4-5 “whoso keepeth his word”
 - 1 Jn. 5:13 – “that ye have eternal life”

Eternal Effects of Worldliness

- Matt. 6:24 – cannot serve two masters
- 1 Jn. 2:15 – “Love not the world”
- Jn. 12:25 – “he that loveth his life loseth it”