

Worldliness

Text: I John 2:15-17

Introduction

1. A ever-present problem for Christians in any age is that of worldliness.
 - a. It is difficult to live in the world but not be of the world. (John 17:11-16)
 - b. The Christian is to put away the world since he is a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) and all things are to become new.
 - c. The Christian is to be unspotted from the world. (Jas. 1:27)
 - d. The Christian is to be separate from the worldly. (2 Cor. 6:17-18)
2. The church at Corinth was plagued with many problems because of its worldliness.
 - a. They had not transformed their thinking—it was still carnal. (1 Cor. 3:1-3)
 - b. It led them to allow an adulterer in their fellowship and, if left unchecked, would lead to their ultimate demise. (1 Cor. 5:6-7)
3. Any church that has problems has worldliness.
 - a. Worldliness is not just seen in what we normally think of as worldly actions.
 - b. Worldly attitudes are even more prevalent. (Note the “works of the flesh” in Gal. 5:19-21)

I. Worldliness

- A. As it is set forth in the NT, it is any conduct or thought which is hostile to and/or antagonistic toward God. (Text)
- B. When one of God’s children engages in or longs for anything in this world which is hostile toward God, he/she is guilty of worldliness.
 1. Every individual has to make a choice such as Moses did. (Heb. 11:24-26)
 2. One who longingly looks to the world is unfit for the kingdom of God. (Luke 9:62)
- C. The Christian is to be able to discern good and evil—to know the difference between right and wrong, worldly and godly. (Heb. 5:12-14)
 1. He is to hate evil. (Rom. 12:9)
 2. Even though he is surrounded by the world, he must be careful not to be influenced by it so that evil becomes good and good becomes evil.

II. Some Guidelines to Determine Worldliness

- A. Revelation: Is this obviously wrong?
 1. Human wisdom is not a reliable guide.

2. Consider passages that detail those things that are obviously wrong: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-9.
- B. Identity: If I do this will it make me look worldly? (Rom. 12:1-2)
1. If I do this will I appear before others as a devoted Christian or a person of the world?
 2. If it will make me look worldly, then I cannot afford to do it.
- C. Doubt: If I do this, will it leave me with a clear conscience? (Rom. 14:23)
1. Do I have some doubts about it?
 2. If I cannot do it with a clear conscience, I better leave it alone.
- D. Influence: If I do this will it likely have a weakening influence upon others?
1. See 1 Corinthians 10:23-33; 8:7-13; Matthew 18:6-7.
 2. If my conduct is likely to weaken others or cause them to stray, I better not engage in it.
- E. Control: If I do this will it produce in me an inordinate fleshly appetite? (Col. 3:5-6)
1. Such an appetite is one that is unrestrained or out of control.
 2. If I partake of this, am I likely to lose proper control of my thoughts and actions? Will I act in a way that is unbecoming to a Christian?
- F. Association: If I do this will it bring me under the weakening influence of evil companions? (2 Cor. 6:14-18)
1. Evil companions corrupt. (1 Cor. 15:33)
 2. You not only are known by the company you keep, you become like the company you keep.

Conclusion

1. For the church to be what it ought to be, you and I must be what we ought to be.
2. Worldliness will be the demise of those who stay in the world but I am afraid it will also cause many of those who were once in Christ to be lost eternally.
3. See 2 Corinthians 6:17-18.