

# Worldliness

by David Barnes

There is no doubt that Christians are called on to dismiss the influences of this world and firmly plant their hopes on the world to come. Passages like Romans 12:1-2 clearly tell us to be transformed in our old thoughts and attitudes and move to a spiritual plane by renewing our minds. This makes perfect sense because it is the old way of thinking that slayed us in our sin. To either remain or go back to the old ways is deadly. God calls us to better things.

That is why passages like Hebrews 11 are to be understood by the verbs of action contained in the chapter. Those worth people of faith left their former lives behind as they looked for a better place prepared for them by God. They could have returned to the old life and the old ways but they firmly refused. The world was dead to them. Their minds and hearts were in a different place.

Yet, while that was true, the world (Satan) constantly tried to lure them back to a godless life. Compromises with the truth were dangled in front of them on a regular basis. Certainly there were numerous “justifications” for *mild* changes that would make life more comfortably while they waited out their time here. Perhaps Demas fell to this kind of trap. At times they were blindsided by Satan with decisions made in regular life circumstances. I think Lot saw the water and the grass but not the danger to himself and his family. It is encouraging to see that while both these men made poor decisions, they ultimately succeeded in once again leaving the world behind.

Our circumstances are no different. The world still calls on a regular basis. It calls in T.V. and movies. It calls in music and video games. It even calls in the news broadcasts from godless news agencies with liberal agendas. It certainly calls in the classroom where our children are taught. It never stops. The danger is real.

Let me suggest a few signposts which indicate worldliness in a Christian’s life.

**First**, if you aren’t motivated to pray then I think danger is present. In Ephesians 6:18 Paul speaks about the need for prayer. Take note that this is immediately on the heels of the description of the armor of God. If someone is not interested in speaking to God, they likely are in grave danger from the world.

**Second**, if worship is boring to you then II Peter 1:9 probably applies to your life. This passage says the person is blind, cannot see very far and has forgotten he was cleansed from his sin. How can worship possibly be boring? I suppose it could if we are measuring the way the world measures. I heard of an advertisement from a denomination which proclaimed both “traditional services,

contemporary services as well as a postmodern service.”! What in the world is that all about?

**Third**, when Christians sleep in, purposely make plans to miss worship and are just plain unengaged during worship there is a serious problem. Their mind and heart are in the world, not with the Lord and His people. Attendance is important, God says so! It is a necessary spiritual meal. Think about it. Do you become super excited every time you eat? No, of course not! We eat because it is necessary. If we did not eat we would become sick and perhaps die. The same is true spiritually, we need to eat regular meals to live. I would venture to guess if someone is missing worship with the Brethren they are not praying and studying at home either. The world is more important to them than spiritual responsibilities.

All this can change. People who are weak can become strong. People in the world can come back to Jesus in full spiritual force. I believe one *major* key is appreciation for the sacrifice Jesus made for our sins. If we do not appreciate that to its fullest extent, then Satan is ready to enter our heart with other concerns and they are all worldly in nature. The Son of God came to earth and died for me. How can I ignore that? The world was my problem, Jesus is the answer, why would I want to go back to the world? I must never forget the price necessary for my salvation.