

## ***The Folly of Worldliness***

God calls upon us to be spiritually minded, to abhor what is evil and to cleave to what is good (Romans 12:1, 2). Yet temptations, both brazen and subtle, seek to steal away our hearts from the beauty and simplicity of divine truth and holy living. It was love for this present world that caused Demas to forsake the right way (2 Timothy 4:10).

Many professing Christ have been similarly enticed and enthralled by worldly desires. John gives us five reasons why it is sheer folly.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

**1. He alienates himself from God.** “If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him.”

It is impossible to love God and the world at the same time for they are utterly incompatible. Though we have the capacity to love either, seeing we have the power of choice, there is no way we can love both. The love of one precludes love of the other. The language can be even stronger.

When we walk in sin we not only demonstrate a lack of love for God, but we make ourselves an enemy. Note in the following passage that God is not set forth as the enemy of the sinner, but rather the sinner in his own mind is set forth as the enemy of God.

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled” (Colossians 1:21). “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other” (Matthew 6:24).

**2. He is wrong.** “For all that is in the world is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

Everything that is “of the world” in the passage is that which appeals to the baser nature of man. It is therefore that which is low, selfish, unworthy and vain. All that it offers can be summarized in the three divinely made points: (1) lust of the flesh, (2) lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life.

By “lust of the flesh” we see the craving desire to indulge in sensuality and pleasure. It is low, disgraceful living. “Lust of the eyes” depicts essentially greed and covetousness, the eager desire to possess for the sake of possessing. The “pride of life” is the love of status and glory in the eyes of others. It is concerned with image, not character or usefulness. These three pictures show not only the vileness of our conduct, but the corruption of our hearts, when we let sin seize our souls.

**3. It is temporary.** “The world passeth away, and the lust thereof.”

This plainly declares that there is no lasting gain or advantage in sin. The pleasures of sin, as Moses wisely discerned, are “for a season” (Hebrews 11:25). But the consequences are eternal, and they must be forever suffered in hell’s agonies. An eternity lost! And for what? -- a moment’s pleasure, a bauble that glitters, or a puffed-up pride.

**4. There is a better way.** “But he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

This is the way of nobility and character. It is attended in life by a peace of mind and renders one useful to God and man in the highest sense. And seeing that it is God who made man, and who best knows man, and whose will is set forth as a guide for man, it naturally and necessarily follows that this is the only way man can attain a full measure of happiness and hope. Is it not the height of folly for a man to disdain and reject the privilege and pleasure of “walking in the light” with his God? Righteousness is infinitely better than a life of sin.

**5. Eternal life.** “He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

What a glorious triumph! This old earth, and all that pertains to it, is destroyed. The pleasures and lust of sinful society, “the world,” and now without attraction or appeal. The glitter is gone. But he that did the will of God abides, and his treasures survive the world, and he himself is

clothed with a new body, like His, "for we shall see him as he is" and "so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 John 3:2; 1 Thess. 4:15-18).

Wherefore, brethren, love not the world, but rather love God with all your heart, soul and mind. You will be glad--both here and hereafter.

- by **Jere Frost**

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## ***What Are Your Goals?***

The commentator William Barclay included these thoughts in his comments about the parable of the rich and foolish farmer in Luke 12:13-21 . . .

*There is a story of a conversation between a young and ambitious lad and an older man who knew life.*

*"I will," said the young man, "learn my trade."*

*"And then?" said the older man.*

*"I will set up my business."*

*"And then?"*

*"I will make my fortune."*

*"And then?"*

*"I suppose that I shall grow old and retire and live on my money."*

*"And then?"*

*"Well, I suppose that some day I will die."*

*"And then?"*

The point is obvious. If we live for what this life has to offer, when it is over we will have nothing. We'll leave it all behind, or, as we sometimes say, "you can't take it with you". If, on the other hand, we live for God, we have our "treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matthew 6:20). What are your goals? Think!

- by **Greg Gwin**