

## **A meditation on *worldliness* and *materialism*.**

How does Christ want His children to live and behave?

What types of books should Christians read?

What music should a Christian listen to?

What movies and TV shows should Christians watch?

What is the place of TV, movies, drama, and theater in the Christian life?

What is the place of entertainment (theme parks, video games, circuses, fairs, comedy, science fiction)?

What is the place of secular art, music, dance, sculpture, statues, and museums?

Should Christians gamble or use mind-altering drugs?

Should Christians celebrate Halloween?

What is the place of sports in a Christian's life?

How does a Christian relate to consumerism, getting the newest gadgets, the latest smartphones, the latest styles and fashions, etc.?

What is the appropriate night life for a Christian?

Should Christians go to bars?

Should Christians get tattoos?

What size and type of home should a Christian purchase?

What type of relationships should Christians have?

**A meditation on several key Scriptural passages will help Christians answer these questions Biblically.**

### ***Worldliness***

#### **1 John 2:15-17**

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves 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 is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

***Christians live in the world and among the worldly, but they are not of this world:***

#### **John 17:14-18**

Jesus said, “I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them [set them apart] by Your truth. Your word is truth.

As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”

### **Psalm 1:1-6**

“Blessed *is* the man  
 Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
 Nor stands in the path of sinners,  
 Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;  
 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,  
 And in His law he meditates day and night.  
 He shall be like a tree  
 Planted by the rivers of water,  
 That brings forth its fruit in its season,  
 Whose leaf also shall not wither;  
 And whatever he does shall prosper.

The ungodly *are* not so,  
 But *are* like the chaff which the wind drives away.  
 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,  
 Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.  
 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
 But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. " And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

"You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.  
 "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

### **1 Corinthians 7:29-31**

“But this I say, brethren, the time *is* short,  
 so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,  
 those who weep as though they did not weep,  
 those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice,  
 those who buy as though they did not possess,  
 and those who use this world as not misusing *it*.  
 For the form of this world is passing away.”

### **2 Corinthians 6:14-18**

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.  
 For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness?  
 And what communion has light with darkness?  
 And what accord has Christ with Belial?  
 Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?”

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?  
 For you are the temple of the living God.  
 As God has said: "I will dwell in them  
 And walk among *them*.  
 I will be their God,  
 And they shall be My people."

Therefore "Come out from among them  
 And be separate, says the Lord.  
 Do not touch what is unclean,  
 And I will receive you."  
 "I will be a Father to you,  
 And you shall be My sons and daughters,  
 Says the LORD Almighty."

The Greek word translated *church* in the New Testament is ἐκκλησία (*ekklesia*), which translated into English means "the called-out ones." Christians are those whom Christ has set apart from this fallen world and consecrated unto God. Christians are the spiritual citizens of a heavenly kingdom (Philippians 3:20). Christians are called out of the world and into the kingdom of God. Christians are called to live lives separate from idolatry and immorality, to live lives holy to God.

### **Colossians 1:13**

"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love . . ."

### **Ephesians 5:8-21**

"For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord.  
 Walk as children of light  
 (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),  
 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.  
 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*.  
 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.  
 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

Therefore He says:  
 "Awake, you who sleep,  
 Arise from the dead,  
 And Christ will give you light."

See then that you walk circumspectly,  
 not as fools but as wise,  
 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be unwise,

but understand what the will of the Lord *is*.  
 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation;  
 but be filled with the Spirit,

speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,  
 singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

submitting to one another in the fear of God.

### **Philippians 4:8-9**

“Finally, brethren,  
 whatever things are true,  
 whatever things *are* noble,  
 whatever things *are* just,  
 whatever things *are* pure,  
 whatever things *are* lovely,  
 whatever things *are* of good report,  
 if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy  
 -- meditate on these things.

The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me,  
 these do,  
 and the God of peace will be with you.”

### **1 Timothy 4:7-16**

The apostle Paul told Timothy,  
 “But reject profane and old wives' fables,  
 and exercise yourself toward godliness.  
 For bodily exercise profits a little,  
 but godliness is profitable for all things,  
 having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.  
 For to this *end* we both labor and suffer reproach,  
 because we trust in the living God,  
 who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

These things command and teach.  
 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers  
 in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.  
 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of  
 the hands of the eldership.  
 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine.  
 Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”

## **Materialism**

### **Matthew 6:24**

"No one can serve two masters;  
for either he will hate the one and love the other,  
or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other.  
You cannot serve God and mammon [money]."

### **Mark 4:18-19**

"Now these are the ones sown among thorns;  
*they are* the ones who hear the word,  
and the cares of this world,  
the deceitfulness of riches,  
and the desires for other things entering in  
choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."

### **Luke 12:15-21**

"And He [Jesus] said to them,  
"Take heed and beware of covetousness,  
for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.  
"And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my  
crops?' "So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will  
store all my crops and my goods. 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up  
for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry." '

"But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those  
things be which you have provided?'

"So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

### **Luke 18:24-27**

"And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said,  
"How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!

"For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the  
kingdom of God."

And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?"

But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

### **1 Timothy 6:6-10**

"Now godliness with contentment is great gain.  
For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out.  
And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.  
But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare,  
and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.  
For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil,

for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

### **1 Timothy 6:17-19**

“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

*Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

### ***Choose your friends wisely***

### **1 Corinthians 15:33**

“Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.””

Christians would do well to heed the admonition of the late Dr. D. James Kennedy, pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who said,

Bad companions ruin good character. How true that is for people of all ages, perhaps especially young people. Take heed whom you select as friends. One of the wisest bits of advice that you could possibly have is: choose friends that are more godly than you are.

If you want to know how spiritual or how holy you are, take a look at your friends, because they are a very good reflection of your spiritual growth. Birds of a feather, you know, flock together. How spiritual are your friends? I can tell you this: they are probably about as spiritual as you are. Jesus went among sinners, you say. Yes, but he went to give them the Gospel, not to get fellowship and companionship from them.

In Psalm 1, David contrasts the godly with the ungodly. The godly man not only spends time meditating and reflecting on the Word of God, he shuns the corruption that comes from the company of mockers. We need to choose our friends wisely, so that we can build each other up, not bring each other down.<sup>1</sup>

**Christians are called to shun the world’s wisdom and praise, to set their lives apart as holy unto the Lord:**

### **1 Corinthians 1:20-25**

“Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made

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<sup>1</sup> From Kennedy, D. James and Jerry Newcombe, *Beside Still Waters* (Fort Lauderdale: Truth in Action Ministries, 2011).

foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

### **2 Corinthians 5:9**

“Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.”

### **Luke 9:23**

“Then He [Jesus] said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.”

### **2 Corinthians 5:17**

“Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

### **Ephesians 4:22-24**

“. . . that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”

### **Colossians 3:1-14**

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.

You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.

But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on

the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

### **1 John 2:6**

"He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."

### **Romans 12:1-2**

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.

And **do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Let us renew our minds daily as we meditate upon Holy Scripture, being reformed by Scripture and letting the Holy Spirit work in us to conform us more and more to the likeness and image of Christ.

Let us walk as Jesus did.

Let us live for Christ, who died for us and rose for our justification.

As Paul declared in Galatians 2:20,

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."