

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 John 2:15-17  
Lesson #9  
Worldliness  
02/27/2022

## Jeremiah 2:13

“For My people have committed two evils. They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”



*Worldliness is faith, hope, & love in this world's cisterns.*

*As broken people in a broken world human's long for and seek life.*

1. **Peace with God** - Covenantal
2. **Peace with self** - Psychological
3. **Peace with others** - Social
4. **Peace with the world** - Cosmic



## Worldliness and Holiness

*are competing systems in the search for life and peace on the stages of:*



1. **What is at the heart of worldliness?**



2. **How are we to manage life as broken people in a broken world?**

Scripture reminds us that security, significance & serenity **are not synced to external circumstances.**

- Prodigal son.
- Martha and Mary.
- Paul's thorn in the flesh.
- Joseph's captivity in Egypt.
- Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.



At the end of Jesus' ministry he prayed for...

## John 17

“15 I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to **keep them from the evil one.** 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. 18 **As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.** 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. 20 I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; 21 that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me.”

**Observations from this passage:**

1. Jesus does not ask that his followers **change (reform) the world.**
2. Jesus does not call them to **exorcise Satan out of the world.**
3. Jesus expects them to struggle, **as aliens in this life, as he did.**
4. Jesus' goal is for them to promote **the Word and Way of the Cross through the unified Body of Christ.**



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**1. What is at the heart of worldliness?**

*1 John 2*

“15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life**, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 And the world is **passing away**, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God **abides forever.**”

**Worldliness is an internal spiritual virus, not an external material circumstance.**

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**One of the worst mistakes we make is to treat worldliness as something outside our heart.**

*Matthew 15:18*

“But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and **those defile the man.**”

*Matthew 23:27*

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, **but inside** they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.”



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**A worldly spirit is:**

1. **Sensually oriented** “*Lust of the flesh*” (driven by “bread alone” rather than by the Word and Way of the Cross)

*1 Corinthians 15:19*

“If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.”

**Christ did not come to help us find our kingdom in this world.**



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**A worldly spirit is:**

1. **Sensually oriented** “*Lust of the flesh*” (driven by “bread alone” rather than by the Word and Way of the Cross)
2. **Short sighted** “*Lust of the eye*” (“walking by sight” rather than faith)

*2 Corinthians 5:7*

“for we walk by faith, not by sight”

**Walking in the light starts with facing in the right direction.**



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3. **Superficially satisfied** “*Pride of life*” (settling for not being fully human - after the image of Adam, not Christ)

*John 1:9*

“There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.”



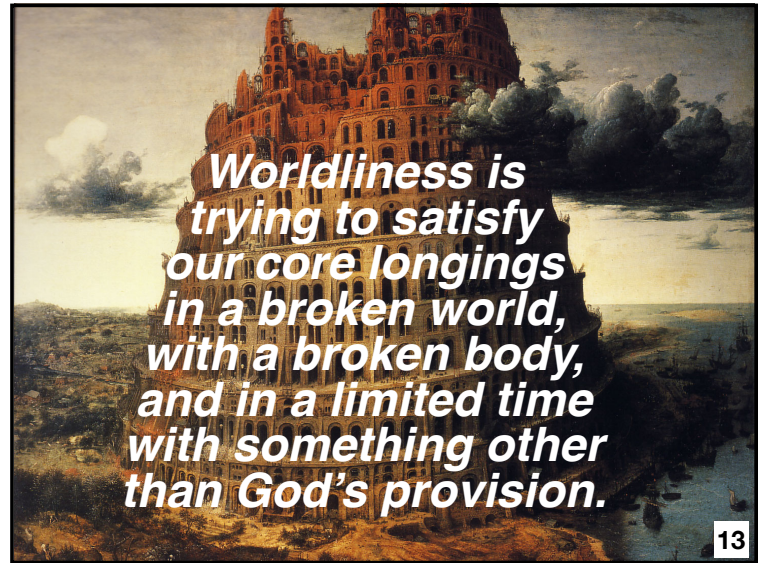
11

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**This is the heart of “worldly wisdom”.**



**Worldliness is to displace God and His kingdom with our own goals and plans.**

*James 4*

“13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15 Instead, *you ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.” 16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.”

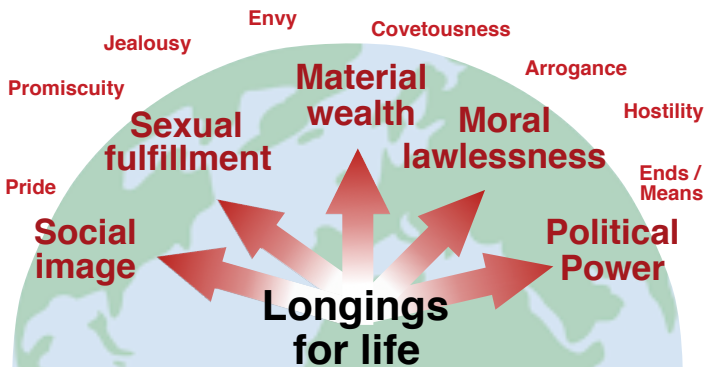
**Christ came to save our souls not our plans.**

**Don't treat worldliness superficially.**



**What is worldliness?**

**The core of worldliness**



“the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life,”

**Satan does not want to take away our faith, hope, & love.**



**He just wants to misplace the object and subject of our faith, hope & love.**

## Levels of human hope and peace

### Casual longings

### Critical longings

### Core longings



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## A false messiah's focus is superficial.

### Casual

### Critical

### Core longings



Limiting our hope to anything & everything but Christ.

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## Satan's sneaky pack of lies

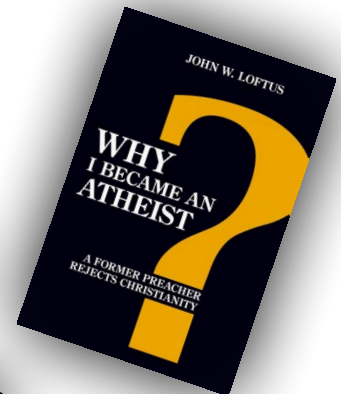
- ✓ **Who do we blame** - self (shame), others (bitterness), the culture (fear)?
- ✓ **Unrealistic expectations** for God, others, ourselves, the government.
- ✓ **A toxic church culture** with a misplaced faith, hope, and love.

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"I had too much to live with and not enough to live for."

"My expectations of faith, prayer, the church, & God were crushed."

Rev. John W. Loftus



21

"To create despair you need hope."



false



*Bane*  
Batman's foe in  
"The Dark Knight"

22

## How should we relate to worldly culture

### Transcribers

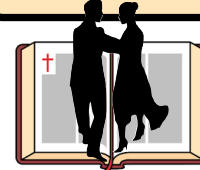
Sanctifies a previous culture

We apply the Biblical text in a literal way to our present situation.



### Translators

The Biblical message is applied in **principle** to modern society giving careful attention to the unique cultural settings of both the Biblical text and the present.



### Transformers

Sanctifies modern culture

We let modern culture dictate the Gospel message and its application.



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We are called to dance with the culture

without losing our balance while keeping our distance, and never giving up the lead.



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## Christian aliens dance with culture in different ways.

### *Liberal*

The state sets the agenda for the church

Become completely political

### Anabaptist

The church is to avoid the state

Be salt & light from the outside

*Roman Catholic*  
The church sets the agenda for the state

legislate Christian morality

Puritan Reformed

The church is to reform the state

Reform the culture through conversion

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At the heart of worldliness is not only a displaced faith, hope, & love but also a **worldly wisdom** that makes perfect sense of this displacement.



*Jesus is a dance teacher in Matthew 4*

1. Spiritual power for material gain -
2. Presuming God's protection -
3. The ends justify the means -

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## Worldliness is a mindset.

*Ephesians 4:17*

“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer **live** as the Gentiles do, **in the futility of their thinking.**”

We must resist our fallen nature.

*1 Peter 1:14*

“<sup>14</sup> As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former **lusts which were yours in your ignorance,**”

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## God's post-its to His worldly children

“This world is fresh out of generic Messiahs.”

“Watch my Son if you want to learn how to dance.”

“What is it about “alien” that you don't understand?”

“What did you think your baptism meant?”

“This world is not heaven.”

“My Son came to save your soul not your plans.”

“Are you majoring on a minor?”

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## Look at worldliness:

- **as a challenge of the heart.** It is not only something OUT THERE but also IN HERE.
- **as a spiritual virus.** The “Gospel vaccine” may not keep you from contracting the virus but it can keep you from dying by it.
- **as exposed by unmet longings.** Our sense of alienation can draw us to the world or the Cross.

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The difference between



Stumbling Blocks & Stepping Stones

is how we see & use them.

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*Jeremiah 2:13*

“For My people have committed two evils. They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”



*Worldliness is faith, hope, & love in this world's cisterns.*

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1 John

Next week  
2:18-24

The Antichrist spirit



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