

# **Worldliness Or Godliness**

*By Ron Boatwright*

Worldliness is being like the world. Godliness is godlike in behavior. As free moral agents we decide whether we are going to be worldly or godly. This is a decision all people make. Worldliness begins by wanting to conform to this world. "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" (1 John 2:16). And we see that, "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). Many people are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power" (2 Timothy 3:4-5). They have become so accustomed to sin that, "They were not at all ashamed; nor did they know how to blush" (Jeremiah 6:15).

There were many Christians in the church at Corinth that seemed to have become comfortable with sin in their congregation. Paul in rebuking them says, "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much named among the Gentiles" (1 Corinthians 5:1). They were not ashamed of what was happening in their congregation for Paul says, "And you are puffed up and have not mourned" (1 Corinthians 5:2).

We cannot be both worldly and godly; they do not mix. "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4). To be worldly is to love the sinful things of the world. But we are warned, "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" (1 John 2:15). We are to "Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11). "For if you live according to the flesh you will die" (Romans 8:13). This is a spiritual death, which is being separated from God in the eternal fires of Hell.

We are not to "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25), but "let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh" (2 Corinthians 7:1). If we want to go to Heaven and avoid Hell we are to, "lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). God in His word "has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). To be godly we must study and follow God's "word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). To live a life that is pleasing to God we are "exercise yourself toward godliness" (1 Timothy 4:7) for "godliness with

contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6). We are to "be in behavior as becometh holiness" (Titus 2:3).

In living a worldly life there are no little sins or big sins. For example there are no little lies or big lies. In God's eyes a liar is just as bad as a murderer. God says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and **all** liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). Another example is some try to justify "social drinking" by arguing that a little drinking is not wrong. But you cannot do wrong in moderation. One cannot lie or steal in moderation. One cannot commit adultery every now and then and still go to heaven. Drunkenness is wrong and is a matter of degree of intoxication. If 5 drinks will make one "sot drunk"; one drink certainly impairs one to a certain degree. One is simply more incapacitated than the other. Alcohol is a narcotic drug requiring more and more consumption to satisfy the craving it creates. Even a small amount is sufficient to start deadening the control centers in the brain. Galatians 5:19-21 says one of the works of the flesh is "drunkenness" and "those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

In living a godly life we must "not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2), so "that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Philippians 2:15). We are to "let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Philippians 1:27), as we "Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22). We must live a godly life so we can go to Heaven when this life is over.