

Intro:

Previous conclusions:

Godliness is a manner of life dominated by reverence for God displayed in respect for others that is visible to outside observers and is not confused with worldliness.

Something is worldly when it belongs to the affairs of life on this earth, especially as opposed to the life of the spirit or of heaven.

Worldliness is the setting of one's heart on temporal or worldly things, valuing things that don't last more than things that do last.

Some remaining questions:

How do I know if I am worldly? Or how do I know if a particular desire is worldly or spiritual?

I. The believer's place in the world

A. We are part of the world (Mt 13.24-30, 36-43, KEY VERSE: 38)

^{KJV} **Matthew 13.38** The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*;

B. We have a gracious function in the world

1. Mt 5.11-16, KEY VERSE: 14

^{KJV} **Matthew 5.14** Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

2. Jn 17.20-23, KEY VERSES: 21, 23

^{KJV} **John 17.21** That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

^{KJV} **John 17.23** I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

3. Jn 16.7-11, KEY VERSE: 8

^{KJV} **John 16.8** And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

The Holy Spirit does his work in and through the believers he indwells. This work begins when he is come, not before (though he is omni-present).

- C. We can gain nothing from the world [or its way of thinking]
(Mt 16.13-28, KEY VERSE: 26;
Mk 8.27-38, KEY VERSE: 36;
Lk 9.18-27, KEY VERSE: 25)

^{KJV} **Matthew 16.26** For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

^{KJV} **Mark 8.36** For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

^{KJV} **Luke 9.25** For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

One of Peter's problems with the Lord's teaching concerning the crucifixion is thinking like the world thinks.

- D. We can be distracted from our mission in the world

1. Lk 12.27-34, KEY VERSE: 30

^{KJV} **Luke 12.30** For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. (*cf.* Mt 6.28-34)

2. 1 Cor 7.29-35, KEY VERSES: 31, 33-34

^{KJV} **1 Corinthians 7.31** And they that use this world, as not abusing *it*: for the fashion of this world passeth away. (*cf.* 7.29-31)

^{KJV} **1 Corinthians 7.33-34** But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife. ³⁴ There is difference *also* between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please *her* husband.

II. The believer's stance toward the world

- A. The world is antagonistic to Christ and therefore to Christians

1. Jn 8.22-24, KEY VERSE: 23

^{KJV} **John 8.23** And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

2. Jn 15.18-25, KEY VERSES: 18-19

^{KJV} **John 15.18-19** If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you.¹⁹ If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

3. Jn 16.33

^{KJV} **John 16.33** These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

B. The thinking of the world (philosophy) is incompatible with the mind of God

1. 1 Cor 1.18-31, KEY VERSES: 20-21, 27-28

^{KJV} **1 Corinthians 1.20-21** Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?²¹ For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

^{KJV} **1 Corinthians 1.27-28** But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

2. 1 Cor 3.18-23, KEY VERSE: 19

^{KJV} **1 Corinthians 3.19** For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

C. The believer was immersed in the world's thinking but has been changed (Eph 2.1-5, KEY VERSE: 2)

^{KJV} **Ephesians 2.2** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

- D. The world's thinking can trouble a Christian testimony (Col 2.6-3.17, KEY VERSES: 2.8, 2.20)

^{KJV} **Colossians 2.8** Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

^{KJV} **Colossians 2.20** Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

Col 2.6-23 and 3.1-17 is a very important passage for distinguishing between worldliness and godliness. The 'ordinances' of v. 20 are not just any rules, but rules by which men think they gain standing with God. On the other hand, if our affections are set above (Col 3.1ff.), we will put to death our evil desires and put off all kinds of evil behaviours and put on the walk of the Spirit. The section is connected with Rm 6.

See also Titus 2.12, a one verse summary.

- E. The believer is given all spiritual equipment for a growing Christian life and mind (2 Pt 1.3-11, KEY VERSES: 3-4)

^{KJV} **2 Peter 1.3-4** According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:⁴ Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

III. A case study: Demas

- A. His place with Paul (Col 4.14, Phile 24)

^{KJV} **Colossians 4.14** Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

^{KJV} **Philemon 1.24** Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.

- B. His departure for the world (2 Tim 4.10)

^{KJV} **2 Timothy 4.10** For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

C. Some final warnings (Jas 1.27, 4.4)

^{KJV} **James 1.27** Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

^{KJV} **James 4.4** Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Conclusion:

Our opening question was: How do I know if I am worldly? Or how do I know if a particular desire is worldly or spiritual?

Some tests:

1. Does the world hate the way you live and think?
2. Do you argue for things in this world with the same arguments the world makes?
3. Do you give a priority of time or money to things-in-the-world over the exercises of spiritual life? [Bible reading, prayer, church attendance]
4. Does your Christian conscience ever bother you when you describe one of the things you love to a new Christian? To an unbeliever?