

Worldliness

Part II

Sexual immorality, Covetousness, and Drunkenness

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Introduction:

Though the Christian lives in the world (I Cor. 5:10) and fellowships the world in flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14) we are commanded not to be “*of the world*” (I Jn. 2:15-17). Those of the world are characterized by their being ruled by the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 6:12), by “*mindings things of the flesh*” (Rom. 8:5-7), and hating Jesus and those who follow him (Jn. 7:7; 15:18-19; 17:14; I Jn. 3:13). The lesson shall examine the mind controlled by the passions of sexual immorality, covetousness, and drunkenness.

I. The Christian’s struggle:

- A. Self control is a fruit of the spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:23 whereby we may bring glory to the name of Jehovah God (Jn. 15:8).
- B. Each individual who allows the passions of the flesh to overtake them has given in to the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). We must thereby exercise control when the hour of temptation comes (James 1:12-15).
- C. We are not alone in this struggle. Jesus himself was tempted again and again (Matt. 4:1ff, Luke 4:1ff [cf. Lk. 4:13]).
- D. A struggle there will be (cf. Rom. 7:14-25; Gal. 5:16-17).
- E. The worldly are those who give in to the lust of the flesh and do not serve Christ with their mind (Rom. 8:6ff). These have their “*conscience seared with a hot iron*” by the process of sin and a love of the world (I Tim. 4:2).

II. A seared conscience leads to sexual immorality (Rom. 1:21):

- A. Lust (lasciviousness) is part of the worlds character (Matt. 5:28; Gal. 5:19; I Jn. 5:16).
 - 1. The look leads to the action and is thereby just as sinful (James 1:12ff).
 - 2. Pornography, dancing, lewd gestures, and filthy jokes.
 - 3. The Psalmist concluded that we should put no base thing before our eyes (Ps. 101:3).
- B. Immodest dress (cf. I Tim. 2:8-9; I Pet. 3:3-5):
 - 1. Lack of shame (Isa. 3:9; Jer. 6:15-19; Rev. 3:17, 16:15).
 - 2. What is being naked? Consider Gen. 3:7, 21; Ex. 20:26; 28:42; Isa. 20:2-4; 47:3
- C. Fornication (I Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:19).
- D. Adultery (Lev. 20:10; I Cor. 6:9).
- E. Homosexuality (Lev. 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; I Cor. 6:9).
- F. Individuals given over to lust that goes against God’s design for his creation; i.e., bestiality (Lev. 18:23-24; 20:15; Rom. 1:24).
- G. Inventors of evil things (Rom. 1:30).

III. A seared conscience leads to Covetousness (Rom. 1:21):

- A. Covetousness (*pleonexia*) is “the **character** and conduct of greediness, grasping, assumption, arrogance... gain, advantage... with a view to one’s own advantage” (LS 645) (Rom. 1:29; I Cor. 6:10).
- B. The apostle John sums up covetousness saying, “*For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world*” (I Jn. 2:16).
 - 1. “*The lust of the flesh.*” The word “*lust*” (*epithumia*) is “to set one’s heart upon a thing, lust after, long for, covet, desire” (LS 292). That which one longs for or desires is things of the “*flesh.*” The word “*flesh*” (*sarx*) is “flesh as the seat of passion and frailty; Rom. 8:1-5” (Moulton 363). Paul speaks of sins of the flesh (the seat or source of man’s passion) in Galatians 5:16-21.
 - 2. “*The lust of the eyes.*” What the eye sees the flesh often desires and longs for (cf. Matt. 5:27-28). The fleshly eye looks to sin but the spiritual eye to study and observance of the beauty of creation.
 - 3. “*The vainglory of life.*” The word “*vainglory*” (*alazoneia*) means “false pretension (a claim to something...making an extravagant outward show), imposture (the act or practice of deceiving by the assumption of a false identity), quackery (someone pretending to be something they are not)” (LS 32). Those associated with the realm of darkness seek aggrandizement and elevation in the eyes of their peers.
- C. Man’s lust after fame, notoriety, fortune, and unlawful sexual gratification is the mind of the god of this world (cf. I Tim. 6:6-10).

IV. A seared conscience leads to drunkenness (Rom. 1:21):

- A. Drunkards have no place in heaven (I Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:21).
- B. Consider these effects of drinking alcohol:
 - 1. Loss of mastery over one’s self (Prov. 20:1; “*Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever errs thereby is not wise*” or Greek Septuigent rendering, “wine is an undisciplined thing and only the fool is involved in such.” The word “*err*” in Prov. 20:1 is equivalent to the word “*err*” found in Heb. 3:10 which means to be “led aside from the path of virtue, to go astray, sin: Tit. 3:3; Heb. 3:10; 5:2” (Thayer 514). “To wander in mind, to be at a loss” (LS 643).
 - 2. Seduces (Prov. 23:32-33).
 - 3. Perverts judgment (Prov. 31:5).
 - 4. Causes one to err in vision and clouds judgments dulling the senses (Isa. 28:7-8).
 - 5. Causes a loss of physical abilities (Isa. 29:9-12).
 - 6. Takes away the understanding (Hosea 4:11).
 - 7. Makes one sick (Isa. 28:7-8; Hosea 7:5).
- C. Prohibitions in the word of God regarding drinking alcohol:
 - 1. Lev. 10:9 (priest).
 - 2. Numb. 6 (Nazarites).
 - 3. Prov. 20:1 (causes one to err)
 - 4. Prov. 23:31 (don’t even look at its seducing colors).
 - 5. Hab. 2:15-16 (the prophets state the shame in drinking intoxicants).
 - 6. I Thess. 5:6, 8; II Tim. 4:5; I Pet. 1:13; I Pet. 4:7; I Pet. 5:8 (a command to be sober; i.e., “To drink no wine” [LS 532]).
 - 7. I Peter 4:3 (drinking parties)

Conclusion:

The conscience of man is to be trained in divine revelation as opposed to human reasoning (Rom. 1:21; II Cor. 1:12; 2:17 etc.). To let human reason govern your life is to be ruled by the devil, the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). Each is to have the attitude of giving diligence (II Pet. 1:10-11) and to purify ourselves when our self control is not as it should be (I Jn. 3:3).