

SEPARATION FROM THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD

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The Lord Jesus Christ has laid this message heavily on my heart. I don't write this as a person who mistakenly thinks himself not a sinner, but as a fellow Christian who has allowed himself to sink into the muck and mire of this world and what it has to offer. So please, take into your mind and heart what I am about to say and know that it comes out of concern for my fellow believers and my love for Jesus, and what He has done for us.

First, let us define what a Christian is. A person is not a Christian because they were born in a nation that professes Christianity. A person is not a Christian because they have Christian parents. A Christian is not a person who merely goes to church, although going to church is an important in the life of a Christian. No, a Christian is a person who at one point in their lives came to a point where they realized that they needed a Savior in their lives. That person realized that they were sinners, outcasts from the Glory of God, and they asked Jesus into their hearts and lives, in order to change them from worldly people to Sons and Daughters of Almighty God! These people realize that "Christian" is defined as "Christ-like," with all of the demands and blessings of that position. That is the definition of a Christian. That is also a characterization that is missing from the Church in modern day America and other western countries.

The Bible best describes what gets Christians into trouble when it says:

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 1 John 2: 16-17

When God created man with his five senses (yes, and only 5) he did so that man might behold the splendor of God and God's creation. After the fall of man, our senses became corrupted along with their uses.

When a man or woman humbles themselves and asks Jesus into their lives, a metamorphosis takes place. That person is changed to another person. In outward appearance the person is the same, but the inward person becomes a new creature. He gives us new minds and hearts, sort of a DNA exchange. That is why, for instance, a person is able to understand the Bible after conversion whereas it was not very clear before. Also, the converted person also acquires compassion and understanding of things that happen around him or her. If you are a Christian, you know what I am talking about.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 2 Corinthians 5: 17-18

As mentioned above, we have been given 5 senses by God. Those senses are: sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. Those 5 make up our sensory ability. Some try to attribute a sixth sense (clairvoyance) to human senses, but that is really demonic in nature and not a sense. The Bible, as mentioned above, says that three main things help us to fall into trouble. The lust of the flesh, which deals with hearing, smelling, tasting and touching is included there. The second, is sight, dealing with the eyes and the third is the pride of life; which is basically when a human stands and says, “look at what I have accomplished by myself,” not realizing we really accomplish everything good with the help of God. If you don’t believe me, ask yourself, what you would get done if God one day took the breath of life out of you? Every breath you take is a testament to the Glory and Mercy of God.

The Lust of The Eyes

Without a doubt, the eyes are the sense that we are most aware of. We use each of our senses all day long, but we are aware of our eyesight more than the other senses. For this reason, the world uses seduction of the eyes over all other senses. Since I am a man, I will be talking in this article from a man’s prospective because that is easier for me. Not a day goes by when we see a car that is better than ours and we would like one of those. We see the billboard with the sexy woman selling something that you don’t need sex to sell. We see the ladies wearing clothing that reveal more than should be revealed. We come home and turn on television to watch the news and see attractive models advertising everything from applesauce to yogurt. You pick up a magazine only to read that your computer is now outdated or that if you write to some millionaire, he can help you to become rich like him. In the same way women are enticed by

things that they see every day. There is always a nicer dress, a sportier car or a better looking man out there.

Women too are held to a higher standard by society. Where a man can get away with a bit of a belly, that is discouraged in feminine circles. Men can get away with any hair style but women can't. Let's face it, women judge women a lot harsher than men judge men, and the advertising and media industry capitalize on it to no end. It has a negative effect on the health of many women. Let's face it, you don't hear of many anorexic or bulimic men.

Hollywood and the television industry are presenting lustful movies and television shows that are fighting for the moral values of Christians everywhere. You see, the worldly industries don't need to tear down the secular society. The unbelievers are at the doors of hell already, doing and watching things that would make a sailor blush. But those of us who call ourselves righteous and set apart have to battle with these forces every day, and sadly I say that a lot of Christians fall by the sword (in a spiritual sense) because they weren't wise enough to discern good from evil.

Hollywood And the Film Industry:

Every year it seems that the production of wholesome movies is decreasing. About the only movies that you can find that are void of violence are kids cartoon movies, but even they are filled with New Age philosophy and psychobabble. Do you want to know why the quality of movies has gone down? It is because good people support bad movies.

Let me illustrate what I mean by what I have said above. The progression is a watering down of values, which I have personally seen in myself and other Christians. It started with movies way back in the 1940's. Back then most people are reasonably moral and movies are restricted to some hugging and kissing. Audiences figure that everyone does that and no one really said anything negative about the movie. Then come the 1950's where movies change very little. Some religious leaders are concerned that gang movies might lead to a rise in teenage gang membership. The movie industry ignores the warning and teen gang membership rises. Some movies of religious themes are even created to cause the Christian community to think that perhaps some movie makers are religious and have their best interest in mind. The 1960's arrive and some movie makers start putting mild sexual content in the movies. Some outcry from religious groups about the content is heard but ignored. Some Christians start going to these movies anyway using the excuse that some sex is normal in everyone's life; the water down

effect continues. In the 1970's movies become more violent with sex, rape and occult themes. Some Christians attend these movies, saying, "well, it is all around us anyway," or, "it's like life, it's reality," and the watering down is growing more. In the 80's and 90's the movies grow worse with a new addition, the New Age theme. Movies show frontal nudity and sometimes full nudity. The movies promote the disobedience of children toward parents, one parent families, divorce and homosexuality. Christians attend these events with a "that's just the way it is" attitude. You know, it's sort of like how a wild dog is caught and tamed. First, some meat is put at the perimeter of the camp. Then you keep putting it closer and closer until you can put a leash on the dog, then he is caught and is subservient to you. In the same way Christians are fed a little sin at a time until they are leashed with the bondage of sin.

Another example can be seen in something that happened to a crew of construction workers of which I was a part, back in the 1980's. We were laying a pipeline and there were two welders who were joining the pipes, on each side. Both welders liked to drink vodka all day long. The problem is that they would drink it over ice. Now, you ask why is that a problem? Well, every time they would dip their cups into the ice of the water dispenser, they would dump some vodka into the water supply. It was not noticeable on Monday, but by Friday all of the men who drank from the water supply had a pretty good high. You see, over the period of a week, a little vodka here and a little vodka there added up causing quite a cocktail by the weeks end. In the same way a little sin here and a little sin there works itself into the human psyche. Even if the viewer is not directly participating in the sin, they are indirectly doing so. The Word Of God compares sin to leaven. Don't forget what Galatians says about leaven:

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Galatians 5:9

I can imagine that many Christians would say that it really didn't matter if they saw these movies. They would muse that they weren't supporting anything by viewing the celluloids. Wrong! You are supporting it in at least three ways:

1. By viewing a film at the theater you are paying money that eventually gets back to the producers. What do they do with the money that they receive? They produce more movies that push the envelope even farther. They also contribute to a variety of causes that are anti-Christian, such as homosexual and New Age causes.

2. The money goes to the actors, almost all who have anti-Christian philosophies and they donate to organizations with the same agenda.

3. You become a statistic. All films receive ratings by how many people go to see them. By adding your number to the roster you promote the film, possibly causing others to see it.

As mentioned above, many actors in Hollywood, Broadway and other areas hold a very anti-Christian perspective. People like Shirley McClain and Barbara Streisand promote a New Age – One World agenda, with McClain running around telling everyone that they can become their own god. People like Whoopie Goldberg and Alec Baldwin promote communistic anti-God values for all to hear. Baldwin went as far as suggesting that people stone Senator Henry Hyde and his family to death. He later retracted what he said, but what if a group of wackos decided to oblige Mr. Baldwin.

Actors promote a liberal marriage lifestyle, often divorcing many times. Who knows what damage that Liz Taylor and Zsa Zsa Gabor caused by all of their divorces? There are people out there who look to celebrities like they are minor gods and emulate what they say and do. Other actors and actresses promote homosexual lifestyles. Take for instance the case of Ellen Degeneris. She and her female lover were all the rage in Hollywood. Some said they were so brave for coming out of the closet like they did. The point is, do you want your children to emulate the lifestyles of these people?

Now take for instance the health risk for holding these people in such high esteem, especially for children. Children see movie stars and their lifestyle and they want to be just like them. When I was a young boy I wanted to be like John Wayne because he was so cool. The little girls in the neighborhood wanted to be like Marilyn Monroe or Natalie Wood, both whose lives came to a tragic end. And what about the little girls today who starve themselves to be in beauty pageants or for that try in Hollywood, only to suffer from anorexia or bulimia for the rest of their lives. Do you want your kids to emulate that lifestyle? Hollywood, and Broadway are a lifestyle that we should be pushing away from us, not adhering to.

Television:

Television has been trying to keep pace with the Hollywood establishment for many years. The only thing that has kept it on a slower pace is that children have more access to televisions than the theater. Television is split into three basic divisions: information, entertainment and sports. All three of these things are trying to tear you away from God.

Information:

It is no secret that the news media has been slanted toward the leftist anti-God campaign. Did you ever notice how abortionists are called “pro-choice,” while those opposing the murder of newborns are called “anti-abortion?” The liberal media does that to make those who love life look like villains while trying to bolster those whose support child murder. The true labels should be “pro-life” or “pro-murder.”

If you don't believe that the press is slanted toward an anti-God elite, just read the text below, then read the book of Revelation:

“We are grateful to the Washington Post, the New York Times, Time Magazine and other great publications whose directors have attended our meetings and respected their promises of discretion for almost forty years.” He went on to explain: “It would have been impossible for us to develop our plan for the world if we had been subjected to the lights of publicity during those years. But, the world is more sophisticated and prepared to march towards a world government. The supernational sovereignty of an intellectual elite and world bankers is surely preferable to the national auto determination practiced in past centuries.”

David Rockefeller speaking at the June 1991 Bilderberger meeting in Baden Baden, Germany (a meeting also attended by then Governor Bill Clinton and Dan Quayle).

Another form of information that can be found on television is the documentary. I am fond of the documentary, basically because I like to learn facts and am sort of a closet geologist and historian. In the past, these programs were a source of fact and learning. Now, they leave the viewer with more questions than answers. Dozens of documentaries have aired over the past twenty years concerning the subject of UFO's. Some channels even have weekends where they have marathons of these shows. Other shows bombard us with the dinosaur question. The UFO shows try to indoctrinate us that there are beings on other planets, making man seem more like an animal than a special creation. This idea demeans God and tries to make him seem invalid. The dinosaur programs try to make us think that evolution is correct, which would invalidate the Bible, and ultimately God Himself.

Entertainment:

This category is split into three categories: Comedy, Drama and Adventure.

Personally, I like comedy and I do watch it. I am very selective though at what I watch. I avoid shows that use foul language or might show nudity. I think that a lot of the situation comedies on television these days should be monitored for content. I think that the question should be asked with viewing anything, is, “would I feel comfortable if Jesus was at my house guest and was sitting next to me watching this?” You might remember that He is always there, whether you like it or not, or believe it or not. That should be the litmus test for everything we do.

Sports:

Gentlemen, I know the allure of sports. I am a Yankee fan and given the chance I would be at every game. If given the chance I would have a room dedicated to the Yankees and have every artifact that I could. But you know what? That would be stupid wouldn't it. Well, that is how some of you sports fanatics look like to your friends and family. God gave you a family and friends and you just sit in front of that tube wasting your life away. When you die and hopefully get to heaven, God isn't going to give a darn if you knew all the statistics for your team, or how many times that driver won the Indy-500. He doesn't care how many times the Yankees won the World Series or how many home runs Mark McGuire had in 1999. He does care though that you don't devote time to your wife and children. He does care that all the time you spent watching those games could have been donated to feeding the poor or helping widowed women. So, turn the game off, read your Bible, have Bible studies with your family and prepare yourselves for the times that are coming. Enough said.

The Other Four Senses

Hearing:

If you don't believe that hearing can lead a person down the road to hell then just read the book of Genesis. Eve listened to the serpent, believed what he said and acted on it. Adam listened to Eve and acted on what she said and the world had been a bad place ever since. Incidentally, the incident also illustrates the “Pride of Life” aspect mentioned at the beginning of this document. The prospect of being “like God” must have been a great influence on their decision to disobey.

Likewise, in a modern-day scenario, consider all of the people who died in Jonestown, down in Guiana because they listened to Jim Jones and his message of lies. Like all false

prophets, he talked a lot of truth mixed with little lies. Once he gained the confidence of his flock he could lie more readily, even convincing his followers that they should drink poison for him.

Satan and his minions know that if you are told a lie long enough you will believe it. You might hear it from friends at work who compel you to go out for a drink with them, using phrases like, “come on, one little drink won’t hurt you,” and such things. Then you might get comfortable doing such things. One drink turns into two drinks and soon you find that you are getting looped every day after work.

The big problem today is that people can’t discern truth from lies. Christians have gone for so long without reading their Bibles and spending time in prayer that they are open to every little whim of the devil. For many years in this society we have let government and the media do out thinking for us. We just sit in front of the television or radio and let people we don’t even know tell us what we should think the truth is. The saying says, “a mind is a terrible thing to waste,” and that truth is quite evident. We have become so lazy that we don’t even want to think for ourselves.

Touch:

Touch is a very powerful sense. Touch tells us about our surrounds. You wake up in the morning and go out to get the paper. When your skin touches the outside air, you can tell somewhat the conditions outside and can determine what the day will be like. You touch boiling water and you get burned. You touch your tongue to a metal pole in the dead of winter and you will stay there until some kind soul brings out warm water to get it off of there. Touch is a barometer of pain or pleasure.

Because touch brings such pleasure it can be used by people and the minions of Satan to bring a Christian to their knees. Consider all of the televangelists back in the 1980’s and 90’s who came to ruin because they could not control their lust for the sensation of touch. The lust for the sensation of touch in many instances is triggered by other senses like sight and hearing, but sometimes outside things like the memory of what something or someone felt like can trigger the lust for the sensation of lust. It stands to reason that since other senses trigger most of the lust of touch those senses should be controlled. If television causes lust, don’t watch it. If it is the Internet, do go to those sites, and so on and so forth. If it is an addiction, get help from a trained Christian therapist.

Smell:

Smell is a very powerful sense that activates the lust of the flesh. If this were not so then perfume and cologne companies would not exist. They come out with scents with names like “sex appeal” and “passion” to name a couple. Some researchers have also found that males and females put out unnoticeable scents when they are sexually attracted to each other. So, what can a person do to avoid the lure of scents? Well, my Christian friend, don’t forget that God has written His laws on our hearts and we do know the difference between right and wrong. Exercise your knowledge.

Taste:

Taste is one of the worst of the senses for me because I like to eat. I give directions using restaurants as landmarks. Between smell and taste I would be destined for disaster were it not for Jesus and the self-control he gives me. With a lot of people, the sensation of taste leads to obesity, a very bad health hazard. Also, with a lot of people, their many trips to the refrigerator are due to boredom and inactivity. One way that I have found to keep from eating so much is to keep my mind busy. Just think of all the prayer or Bible reading a person could get done if they just did those things when they got an urge to eat or over eat. Remember, gluttony is a sin too.

The Pride of Life

What is the pride of life? Basically, it is what we in America refer to as “keep up with the Joneses” and it is also outdoing the Joneses. Keeping up with the Joneses is basically a contest. The Jones family on the block gets a new Cadillac, so you go out and buy a new Cadillac. Outdoing the Joneses would be to outdo them by buying a Cadillac and a Mercedes at the same time. Then, the ultimate pride of life would be to say, “look at what we have done, and we did it all by ourselves,” which leaves God out of the equation. It is becoming the god of your own condition.

This isn’t just a material problem, but can be a spiritual problem too. I have known many pastors who have taken over failing churches and have taken claim for its rebirth. It is a cyclical process that I have seen end in disaster many times. Pastor comes in and preaches good messages. Membership grows until the church can no longer contain the amount of people. Pastor initiates a building program for a new church building that will accommodate all the people. Pastor browbeats the congregation to give until the pressure explodes in the church. The

church splits, losing a lot of members. Meanwhile the pastor has become so wound up in building the new church that he loses his anointing and falls hard into sin or degradation. In a lot of cases the pastor will leave for another congregation in another area, but he leaves behind a devastated flock. Then the cycle repeats itself again.

Believe me, if you attend a church, a Bible Study, or any Christian event that thinks that they are favored by God over all the rest in town you should expect that church, study or event to fall, and fall hard. For as it is written:

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18

What Should We All Be Doing?

The prescription is really very easy. Don't get yourself into compromising positions. Remember, that you alone cannot overcome the world. The only way to overcome the world is with Jesus, both in you and as your guide. Be smart and do the following:

Abstain from all appearance of evil. I Thessalonians 5:22

Now I know that the word abstain might be foreign to modern language, so here are some other words that are more modern and better understood:

Avoid all the appearance of evil. Like avoiding someone you really don't like being around, and we all have experience in that.

Flee from all appearance of evil. This means that if you see it, you should go in an opposite direction quickly. To flee is to run quickly to get away from something or someone who has the potential to cause you pain or death.

Retreat from all appearance of evil. This doesn't mean to cowardly run away, but to back away with caution.

Recoil from all appearance of evil. This is my favorite word. It means that the appearance of evil should make you jump back away from it. When a firearm recoils, it is physically pushed away from a forward force. If a person is walking with Jesus in a correct manner then they should be able to jump back and take notice of evil and find it reprehensible.

Depart from all appearance of evil. To depart from something you had to be a part of it to begin with. The action of repentance is denoted here. It means to turn around and walk in the opposite direction.

Now, as I mentioned in an earlier section; you should live each moment just like Jesus is with you doing those things also. So, would you bring Jesus to a questionable movie or watch questionable programs on television with him sitting next to you? Would you read the latest issues of Playboy or Playgirl if Jesus was with you? Would you look at pornography on the Internet if Jesus was in the room? Well, if you walk with Jesus and are a Christian, I hope that your answer would have been “no” to those questions. We are to do everything as unto the Lord.

There are so many good Christian things that replace worldly and lustful things. Turn off the television and read your Bible. If you are a Christian, you know that it is the Living Word of God, never getting old and it always refreshes the soul. Turn off the secular radio stations and listen to Christian ones. If you're bored, then start praying. If you ask Jesus to help you pray you will have a continual download from the Lord about things to pray for.

The kids don't need to be in front of video games all day. They can watch Christian videos, read their Bibles, pray or any number of activities. Kids love to sing Christian songs because they can relate to a loving and caring God. Give your kids to Christ, and he will work with them and teach them love, obedience and understanding.

If a Christian has Internet access then the possibilities are endless. There are Christian magazines, study guides, prayer centers and music sites available. Kids activities abound on the Internet, with many Christian sites having links for kids' stuff. Between the Bible, prayer and the Internet, Christians have no excuse for being ignorant.

And finally, you have to have a mind of your own. Don't let worldly people sway the way you think about things. If friends try to persuade you to go to bars and such, think about all the things that happen in bars that are unholy. If someone says that you should see a movie or a particular thing on television, think about the life of the person who is advocating those activities. Remember, if a worldly person tells you that something is good, it might look good on the outside, but like the apple, it might have a big fat worm inside.

Just think of what God has done for us. He didn't leave us out in the cold. He gave us Christians the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and has written his laws on our hearts and minds. There's

no excuses on the day of judgment. In ending, I include below some promises that God gives to those who overcome this world:

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Revelation 2:7

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. Revelation 2:11

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Revelation 7:17

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Revelation 2: 26-29

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Revelation 3: 5-6

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. 13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Revelation 3:10-13

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Revelation 3: 21-22