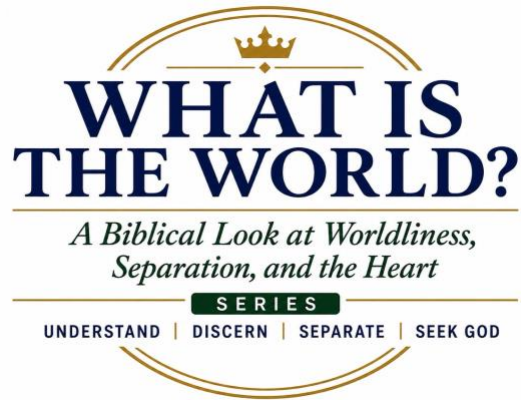




Lesson 3: The Sins We Do Not Always Call Worldly

1. What Does the Bible Mean by “The World”?	5. The Fear of Man and the Danger of Tradition
2. Plain on the Outside, Worldly on the Inside	6. Modesty, Technology, and Christian Liberty
3. The Sins We Do Not Always Call Worldly	7. Born Amish Is Not the Same as Born Again
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Lesson Overview

Worldliness is often measured by things that are easy to see, such as a car, electric lights, or store clothing. Yet the Bible also speaks clearly about lying, gossip, bitterness, envy, and greed. These sins can live in a very plain home and in a person who follows every outward rule.

This lesson looks at sins we may not always call worldly and the harm they bring. True separation means putting away the sins God names, not only avoiding the objects people notice. We need Jesus Christ to forgive us, change us, and produce His fruit in our lives.

Main Scripture

Colossians 3:8-10

“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. ⁹ Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; ¹⁰ And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:”

Main Truth

A changed life puts away lying, gossip, bitterness, envy, and greed and becomes more like Jesus Christ.

Memory Verse

Proverbs 12:22

“Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.”

Section 1: The Worldliness of Dishonest Words

Jonas owns a small construction business. He dresses plain, drives a horse and buggy, and follows the rules of his church. When he gives a customer an estimate, however, he charges for materials he did not use. When a job goes wrong, he blames a worker rather than admitting his mistake. When someone asks about money he received, he tells only part of the truth.

Jonas still looks plain, but God is not fooled by his clothing or buggy. Lying and cheating are worldly because they follow the sinful ways of the old life. A lie does not become less sinful when it is spoken by someone holding a Bible or wearing a plain coat.

God Delights in Truth

Proverbs 12:22

“Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.”

The word abomination means something God hates. This is strong language. God wants truth in our business, taxes, promises, family talks, and church life. Honesty matters even when the truth costs us money or makes us admit that we were wrong.

Ephesians 4:25

“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”

A church may quickly notice an outward rule that has been broken, but a hidden business lie may continue for years. We must not give more weight to a human rule than to God's clear command. A Christian should be known as someone whose word can be trusted.

Gossip and Backbiting

Lydia would never wear jewelry or bright clothing. She is known as a quiet woman, but she enjoys talking about other people. She knows which families are having trouble and which young people have made mistakes. Sometimes the stories are true, sometimes they are only partly true, and sometimes Lydia adds her own opinion. Each time the story is passed along, another person's name is harmed.

Proverbs 16:28

“A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.”

Gossip can divide friends, trouble marriages, and hurt a whole church. It may be spoken softly at a kitchen table, but it can spread like fire. It is possible to be plain in clothing and worldly in speech. Before repeating a story, we should ask whether it is true, kind, needed, and ours to tell.

James 3:5

“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”

The answer is not only to speak less. We need Christ to rule our hearts and words. Truth should replace lying. Kindness should replace gossip. When our words have hurt someone, we should confess it, ask forgiveness, and do what we can to correct the harm.

Discussion Questions

1. Why can lying in business be worldly even when the dishonest person looks very plain?
2. What kinds of half truths or hidden dishonesty are easy for people to excuse?
3. How can gossip harm a person, a family, or a church even when the story is partly true?
4. Is there a lie or harmful word that you need to confess and make right before God and another person?

Section 2: The Worldliness of Bitterness and Envy

Samuel and Eli are brothers. After their father died, they argued about a piece of land. Hurtful words were spoken, and both men felt wronged. Years later, Samuel still refuses to forgive Eli. They attend the same church,

but Samuel avoids him. At family meals everyone feels the strain. Samuel tells himself that Eli was wrong, so he has a right to remain bitter.

Samuel may follow every church rule, yet bitterness is ruling his heart. Unforgiveness does not stay in one corner of life. It affects a marriage, children, worship, prayer, and other family members. A grudge that is protected for years can poison many hearts.

Put Away Bitterness

Ephesians 4:31-32

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: ³² And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

God does not tell us to feed bitterness until the other person deserves forgiveness. He points us to the forgiveness we have received through Christ. Forgiveness does not call wrong things right, and it does not always remove every result of sin. It means we release revenge, stop feeding the hurt, and place the matter in God's hands.

Sometimes a person needs time, prayer, wise counsel, or a safe plan before a broken relationship can be repaired. Yet the heart must still be willing to obey God. We cannot claim to be separate from the world while keeping anger and malice as welcome guests.

Envy and Competition

A simple community can still be full of competition. One farmer wants better horses. Another wants more land. One family compares its home, garden, children, or business with another family. The possessions may be plain, but the desire to appear better can still control the heart.

David becomes jealous when his neighbor Mose buys another farm. David thinks, “Why should he have that? I work as hard as he does.” Soon David begins pointing out Mose's faults. He feels pleased when Mose has trouble. Envy has turned a neighbor's blessing into a reason for anger.

James 3:14-16

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. ¹⁶ For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”

James calls envy earthly. That is a Bible word for worldliness. Envy does not disappear because we compete over farms, horses, businesses, workmanship, or reputation instead of modern things. Contentment thanks God for what He has given and can rejoice when another person is blessed.

Discussion Questions

1. How can bitterness between two people spread pain through an entire family or church?
2. What does Christ's forgiveness teach us about forgiving someone who has hurt us?
3. What plain things can become objects of pride, envy, or competition in a community?
4. Whom do you need to forgive, encourage, or thank God for instead of comparing yourself with that person?

Section 3: The Worldliness of Greed and the Need for a Changed Heart

John has built a successful shop. Hard work and a profitable business are not wrong, but money has slowly become the most important thing in his life. He works long hours when his family needs him. He becomes angry when someone costs him money. He cuts corners when he thinks no one will notice, gives very little, and thinks constantly about more land, more work, and larger savings.

John does not own a luxury car or wear expensive jewelry. His home and clothing may be simple, but he can still worship money. Greed does not require fancy possessions. A person can be greedy for farmland, horses, tools, equipment, cash, business success, or an inheritance.

The Love of Money

1 Timothy 6:10

“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

The Bible does not say money itself is the root of all evil. It warns about the love of money. Money is a tool, but it becomes a master when it rules our choices, time, honesty, giving, and family life. The problem is not having money. The problem is money having our heart.

Luke 12:15

“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”

Jesus tells us to beware because greed can hide behind careful work and saving. We should ask whether work is helping us serve God and care for our family or whether the desire for more has taken control. Generosity, honesty, and contentment show that money is in its proper place.

God Sees What People Miss

Visible things are easy to regulate. People can see a clothing color, a vehicle, or the kind of equipment being used. It is harder to see greed, envy, bitterness, or a lie. That is why outward religion may feel easier than inward holiness. Outward rules can be checked, but heart sins require honesty before God.

Hebrews 4:13

“Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

God sees the full truth. He sees the honest deal that costs us money and the hidden lie that earns us money. He sees the quiet act of forgiveness and the grudge we protect. He sees contentment and envy. His perfect sight should lead us to confession, not to hiding.

The Fruit of a Changed Heart

We need more than a stronger promise to behave. We need Jesus Christ to forgive our sin and make us new. When a person trusts Christ, the Holy Spirit begins producing a different kind of life. Truth replaces lying, kindness replaces gossip, forgiveness replaces bitterness, contentment replaces envy, and generosity replaces greed.

Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

This is what real separation from the world begins to look like. The goal is not simply to appear different from the world. The goal is to belong to Christ and become more like Him. We should bring every hidden sin to Jesus, trust His saving grace, and follow Him in honest obedience.

Discussion Questions

1. How can the love of money control a person who lives in a simple home and wears plain clothing?
2. What signs may show that work, land, business, or savings have become too important in a person's heart?
3. Which fruit of the Spirit would replace lying, gossip, bitterness, envy, or greed in your daily life?
4. Have you trusted Jesus Christ to forgive your sin and give you a new heart, and what change is He asking you to make now?