

DAILY READING

WEEK 7 DEALING WITH SINS AND DEALING WITH THE WORLD

WEEK 7 — DAY 4

Scripture Reading

2 Tim. 4:10 For Demas has abandoned me, having loved the present age....

James 4:4 Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever determines to be a friend of the world is constituted an enemy of God.

Dealing with the World

The Difference between Sin and the World

Immediately after our consecration, sin should first be dealt with and then the world. Because both are defiling in our lives and are abominable unto God, they need to be dealt with and purged. However, the defilement of these two aspects differs. The contamination of sin is savage, rough and ugly, while the contamination of the world is cultured and refined, often appearing beautiful in the sight of man.

Furthermore, the damage caused by sin and the world upon man differ greatly: sin contaminates man, whereas the world both contaminates and possesses man. It is far more serious for man's life to be possessed by the world than to be contaminated by sin....Satan corrupts man by using sin, but he gains man by employing the world, thus causing him to depart from the presence of God and become lost. A study of Genesis makes this difference apparent. Although Adam was corrupted by sin, he had not left the presence of God. It was not until Genesis 4, when man invented civilization and formed the worldly system, that he was not only corrupted but usurped and gained by Satan through the world. Hence, man no longer belonged to God.

Although Abraham had repeatedly failed in the matter of claiming his wife as his sister, that was but a sin which merely contaminated him but did not usurp him. He could still be one who served the Lord and prayed for others in a heathen land (see Gen. 12 and 20). However, Demas, a co-worker of Paul, was deprived of his usefulness before God because he loved the present world and became usurped by it (2 Tim. 4:10).

Generally, people feel only the damage of sin, but not that of the world, because sin is against morality, whereas the world does not oppose morality but God Himself. Man is destitute of the concept of God; he has only a moral concept within him. For this reason he has a little knowledge concerning sin, that which is against morality, and is conscious of its contamination. But as for the world, which is in opposition to God, he has no knowledge of it, neither is he conscious of its usurpation. For example, a drunkard— licentious, wanton and lustful, fearing neither God nor man—is considered immoral and condemned by men. But if someone is daily occupied with poetry and recitation and steeped in literature, being completely indifferent to the

things of God and unwilling to be gained by Him, men will praise him, having no feeling that he is usurped by literature. This is due to the fact that men neither know God nor have the concept of God, and therefore are ignorant of Satan's usurpation of man by the world.

When we see the differences between sin and the world, we will perceive that the world's damaging scope is greater, its harmful effect more serious, and its opposition to God more hostile than that of sin. Because the world is in direct opposition to God Himself, it has become God's enemy. Sin is contrary to God's law and His procedure, that is, His righteousness, whereas the world is contrary to God Himself and His divine nature, that is, His holiness. Sin opposes the law of God, and the world opposes God Himself. For this reason the Bible states that the friendship of the world is enmity with God (James 4:4).

Sin is the primitive, superficial, and initial step of the fall. The world is the final, serious, and last step of the fall. Many people stress only victory over sin, but the Bible stresses even more the overcoming of the world (1 John 5:4)...If we desire to grow in life and be gained by the Lord, we must make an effort to deal with the world that enslaves us.