

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

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WORLDLINESS OF CHURCH MEMBERS

By: Dr. C. D. Cole

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.”*

John 15:18-20, *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 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. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.”*

The human race has split over God, and as a result of this split, there are, everywhere, two communities or groups of people. Christ speaks of one group as “my disciples,” and of the other as “the world.” These two communities are, by the very nature of things, as well as by the will and command of Christ, estranged from each other. The spirit that binds us to Christ separates us from those who do not share his life. Attachment

to Christ is detachment from the world. To be in accord with Christ is to be in discord with the world. The antagonism between God’s people and the world is deep, fundamental, and perpetual. Christ informed his disciples at the very beginning that they might expect the hostility of the world. Our Lord is here speaking with special reference to his apostles, and if we may trust tradition, everyone of that little company with the possible exception of John died a martyr’s death. But, be that as it may, our Lord here lays down a universal statement of the permanent condition of things; and there is no more reason to restrict the force of the meaning of these words to the original hearers than to restrict the force of the rest of this beautiful discourse to them. Let us raise this question: What is the explanation of so little opposition from the world to the average?

CAUSE OF HOSTILITY

The cause of this hostility, *“Because ye are not of the world.”* The world loves its own. The need of God’s people is to recognize the difference between them and the

world, and to practice a separated life.

ESCAPE HOSTILITY

How to escape this hostility. If you want to escape the hostility of the world, drop a flag, button your coat over the badge that shows you belong to Christ, and do the things that the world does, and you will have a perfectly easy and undisturbed life. Christ was talking about out and out Christians being the object of the world’s enmity. Of course, a Christianity that does not bother the bootlegger will not have his enmity. Of course, a Christianity that winks at commercialized vice will get along with the crooked politicians, worldly church members, etc.

To be worldly is to be like the world in thought, in purpose, and in conduct. It is to set our affection on things on the earth, and not on things above. It is to unite and agree with the world in its attitude towards God. The Bible represents worldliness:

As rebellion against God as seen in our text, James 4:4. Jehu

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REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE

By: C. D. Cole

Introduction: Repentance as a duty is to preach to the lost for God has commanded all men every where to repent. Duty because God has commanded it. It is to be preached as a grace to the saved to develop humility. No man can boast of having repented, for it was an attitude of mind wrought in him by the grace of God. Repentance includes hatred of sin and of self and no man naturally hates sin as such. He may hate his vicious ways because he sees it hurts him, but he does not hate sin because it dishonors God.

REPENTANCE BELONGS TO SCHEME OF GRACE

No place for repentance under law. Law: Do and live, sin and die. Law: *“The man which doeth those things shall live.”* A man may commit murder and repent of it in tears before the judge, but that will not satisfy the law and justify acquittal. If law remains just and he is freed grace will have to come in somebody else will have to suffer for him. Luke 24:47, *“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations...”*

Repentance involves two facts: sin and grace. If man is not a sinner he would not need to repent; if God is not gracious it would do no good to repent. And Christ is channel of grace. Beecher: *“A person might as well repent towards a crocodile as towards law.”*

NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE

The Bible emphasizes the necessity of repentance. Luke 13:3, Jesus speaking, *“I tell you,*

Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Salvation without repentance would fill heaven with people who hate God and love sin. It would perpetuate rebellion by transferring rebels from earth to heaven. Salvation would be nothing more than a change of environment. One element in repentance is hatred of sin. And to hate sin is to love God.

Refusal to repent is worse than the sin for which we ought to repent. Illustration: A man tells a lie. That’s an awful sin, but refusal to repent of it is worse than the act of lying. Why? Because in the act of lying, he might have acted impulsively without taking time to think. But refusal to repent is to justify lying; it is contending for the right to lie, an attempt to justify the sin.

NATURE OF REPENTANCE

Negatively:

(1) Not a work to be done by the sinner in order to salvation. This would conflict with many Bible passages. Ephesians 2:8, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”* Titus 3:5, *“Not of works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”* II Timothy 1:9, *“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”*

(2) Not self torture of the body. This confounds repentance with

penance as something meritorious. Monk does penance by sleeping on a hard bed or by wearing a hair shirt. When Ansel of Canterbury died, his garments were found to be full of vermin he had harbored in doing penance.

(3) Not bodily exercise.

Inward attitude of mind rather than outward exercise of body. Position of body not of great importance. One person may repent sitting in dust and ashes as Job did; another may repent standing in the temple as publican did; and still another may repent sitting in a church pew while hearing the gospel.

(4) Not internal grief and sorrow as the price of salvation. Not a meritorious act but the conscious lack of merit. The man who asks God to save him because he cries is denying the blood of Christ as the only ground of salvation. No man can sail to heaven on the salt sea of his tears; he sails to heaven on the red sea of Christ’s blood. There is grief and sorrow in repentance, but it is the result of seeing oneself as bad in the sight of God.

(5) Not some hard term imposed by God. This would make it inconsistent with God’s way of salvation, which is not a hard way but an easy way. If salvation were by a hard way, nobody could be saved because by nature man is without strength. If salvation is by grace through faith; if it is the gift of God; if it is without money and without price, how can it be said to be on hard terms? The way of salvation is made hard, not by God, but by pride of natural heart. It is pride and self-sufficiency that leads a man to ask, What good

thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" We must indeed strive to enter in at the strait gate but this striving is not with an unwilling Saviour, but against a nature that wants ground for boasting. Everything in our old self-centered and self-confident nature fights against the way of salvation by grace through faith.

Positively:

(1) A change of mind and is the result of after thought or reflection on past conduct. Substitute change of mind for word repentance is any given text and it will preserve the truth and clarify the meaning. Matthew 21:28-29, "*But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.*" Hebrews 12:16-17, "*Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, through he sought it carefully with tears.*"

(2) Evangelical repentance, or repentance unto life is a change of mind by self as a sinner before God. Saving repentance has a moral aspect. Change of view, of feeling, and of purpose concerning sin.

Three elements:

Intellectual element in which sin is perceived or recognized. No repentance until sin is realized. Nobody but a conscious sinner can repent. Luke 5:31-32, "*And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician: but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but*

sinners to repentance." A self righteous neighbor. But recognition of sin is not all of repentance. There may be a confession of sin without repentance. The confession, "I have sinned," was made by hardened Pharaoh, by double minded Balaam; by remorseful Achan, by insincere King Saul, and by despairing Judas. But none of these men repented.

Emotional element or a change of feeling about sin. Sorrow for sin and hatred of it. This must be a godly sorrow, or sorrow towards God; not towards death or punishment. Drunkard sees that his drink is ruining him and his family and because of natural affection he hates the sin of drink. He hates it from a selfish motive, not because it is against God, but because it hurts him and his family. Much so-called repentance is illustrated in prayer of the little girl: "O God, make me good; not too good, nor real good; but just good enough to keep from being whipped." In true repentance the sinner takes sides with God against himself. But this is not all of repentance.

There is a **volitional element**, or a change of purpose. Purpose to forsake sin, a change of living, a turning away from sin. If a man hates sin he will turn from it in his heart. He will mean to quit sinning. Exemplified in prodigal son: he came to himself, realized what he had done; and he felt differently; he was sorry for what he had done; and he acted differently; he said, I will arise and go to my father.

Worldliness of Church Members
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to Jehoshaphat, II Chronicles 19:2.
"And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer

went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD."

Worldliness is adultery. If God's people were not so worldly they would not have so much time and money to spend in the adulterous embrace of this world. Worldliness is a robber of time and money. It zaps financial as well as spiritual strength.

Worldliness is wearing an unequal yoke. II Corinthians 6:14, "*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*" This is a call to godly separation. In each dispensation this demand has been made. The Lord separated Abraham, Genesis 12:1, "*Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.*" Israel was separated, Nehemiah 9:1-2 "*Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers...*"

FORMS OF WORLDLINESS

Some forms of worldliness. Some of the ways in which worldliness is manifested:

Worldly associates. Worldly associations will lead to worldly indulgences; temptations to dance, lottery, drinking, drugs, theaters, etc., come through associations. I Corinthians 6:9-10, "*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*" I Corinthians 15:33, "*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*" In other

words, bad company is the ruin of good character. Beware...

Worldliness is getting things... more, more, more. Let's look at the example of Solomon in Ecclesiastes 2:4-11; what was the outcome? "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." The Lord taught his disciples to pray, Matthew 6:11, "Give us this day our daily bread." Matthew 6:19-21, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Lack of prayer is worldliness. James 5:13-16, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him...

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Worldliness is failure to recognize God's providence. James 4:13-14, "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

I John 2:15-17, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 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."

As a rule those who are the least worldly are the first to confess to the sin of worldliness.