

WORLDLINESS IS WRONG! DEAR CHURCH

A MESSAGE TO A CHURCH THAT IS IN ADULTERY WITH THE WORLD

Horatius Bonar said over 200 years ago: "I looked for the Church and I found it in the world, and I looked for the world and I found it in the Church." A worldly Church will never win the world. Keith Daniel said: "If we try to win the world by being like the world the world will win you!" A peculiar people is a powerful people! God anoints a set apart Church with the Power of His Spirit, there is no other way. - Greg Gordon

PECULIAR PEOPLE

The world is too much amongst us! God has called his church to be separate from the world. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." God desires a Church that is "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Scripture says in another place: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Horatius Bonar said over 200 years ago: "I looked for the Church and I found it in the world, and I looked for the world and I found it in the Church." A worldly Church will never win the world. Keith Daniel said: "If we try to win the world by being like the world the world will win you!" A peculiar people is a powerful people! God anoints a set apart Church with the Power of His Spirit, there is no other way. We must be a peculiar people in these "last days," God is calling apart a people that love the "things of God" more then the "things of the world."

THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD

The Church and the World walked far apart. On the changing shore of time; The World was singing a giddy song, The Church a hymn sublime. "Come give me your hand," said the merry World, "And walk with me this way," But the good Church hid her snowy hand, And solemnly answered, "Nay; I will not give you my hand at all, And I will not walk with you; Your way is the way of eternal death, And your words are all untrue." "Nay, walk with me a little space," Said the World with a kindly air, The road I walk is a pleasant road, And the sun shines always there. Your way is narrow and thorny and rough, While mine is flowery and smooth; Your lot is sad with reproach and toil, But in rounds of joy I move. My way, you can see, is a broad, fair one, And my gate is high and wide; There is room enough for you and me, And we'll travel side by side."

Half shyly the Church approached the World, And gave him her hand of snow; And the false World grasped it, and walked along, And whispered in accents low, "Your dress is too simple to please my taste; I have gold and pearls to wear; Rich velvets and silks for your graceful form, And diamonds to deck your hair." The Church looked down at her plain white robes, And then at the dazzling World, And blushed as she saw his handsome lip. With a smile contemptuous curled; "I will change my dress for a costlier one," Said the Church with a smile of grace; Then her pure white garments drifted away, And the World gave in their place Beautiful satins, and fashionable silks, And roses and gems and pearls; And over her forehead her bright hair fell. And waved in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World, "I will build you one like mine, With kitchen for feasting and parlor for play, And furniture never so fine." So he built her a costly and beautiful house- Splendid it was to behold; Her sons and her daughters met frequently there, Shining in purple and gold. The Angel of mercy flew over the Church, And whispered, "I know thy sin;" Then the Church looked sad, and anxiously longed. To gather her children in. But some were away at the midnight ball, And others were at the play; And some were drinking in gay saloons, So she quietly went her way.

Then said the World in soothing tones, "Your children mean no harm-Merely indulging in innocent sports," So she leaned on his proffered arm, And smiled, and chatted, and gathered flowers, And walked along with the World, While countless millions of precious souls. Over the fearful brink were hurled. "Your preachers are all too old and plain," Said the gay World with a sneer; "They frighten my children with dreadful tales, Which I like not for them to hear. They talk of judgments and fire and pain, And the doom of darkest night; They warn of a place that should not be. Mentioned to ears polite! I will send you some of a better stamp, More brilliant and gay and fast, Who will show how men may live as they list. And then go to heaven at last."

"The Father is merciful, great, and good, Loving and tender and kind; Do you think He would take one child to heaven, And leave another behind?" So she called for pleasing and gay divines. Deemed gifted, and great, and learned; And the plain old men that had preached the cross, Were out of her pulpits turned. Then Mammon came in and supported the Church, And rented a prominent pew; And preaching and singing and floral display. Soon proclaimed a gospel new. "You give too much to the poor," said the World, "Far more than you ought to do; Though the poor need shelter, food, and clothes, Why need it trouble you?" "Go, take your money and buy rich robes. And horses and carriages fine; And pearls and jewels and dainty food, The rarest and costliest wine. My children, they dote on all such things. And if you their love would win, You must do as they do, and walk in the way. Which they are walking in."

Then the Church drew tightly the strings of her purse, And gracefully lowered her head, And simpered, "I've given too much away, I will do, sir, as you have said." So the poor were turned from her door in scorn, She heard not the orphans' cry; And she drew her beautiful robes aside. As the widows went weeping by. So they of the Church and they of the World. Journeyed closely, hand and heart, And none but the Master, who knows all, Could discern the two apart. Then the Church sat down at her ease and said, "I am rich and in goods increased; I have need of nothing, and naught to do, But to laugh and dance and feast."

The sly World heard her and laughed within, And mockingly said aside, "The Church is fallen, the beautiful Church, Her shame is her boast and pride." A voice came down from the courts of heaven, From Him who sat on the throne; "I know thy works and what thou hast said, But alas! thou hast not known That thou art poor and naked and blind, With pride and ruin enthralled; The expectant bride of a heavenly Groom. Is companion of the world! Humble thy heart, confess thy sin, Let shame now cover thy face; Or else, alas! I must cast thee out, And blot thy name from its place."

(Author Unknown)

"Adulterers and adulteresses! Know you not that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself the enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, 'The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously?'" (James 4:4,5)

WORLDLINESS IN THE CHURCH

Leonard Ravenhill gives a litmus test for a man walking with God: "The true man of God is heartsick, grieved at the worldliness of the Church...grieved at the toleration of sin in the Church, grieved at the prayerlessness in the Church. He is disturbed that the corporate prayer of the Church no longer pulls

down the strongholds of the devil." Truly today it is a time of "weeping" and "shame" of how the world is triumphing over the Church and walking over us. Christ said "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." What a fearful statement: "trodden under foot" Do we not see this today as the world is mocking and walking over all decency and any standard the Church stands for? The cry of the world is "Where is their God?" They do not see God in the Church, for the Church is powerless!

Samuel Chadwick said: "The Holy Ghost cannot conquer the world with unbelief, nor can He save the world with a worldly Church. He calls for a crusade, a campaign, and an adventure of saving passion. For this enterprise He wants a separated, sanctified and sacrificial people." Alas Christian do you find yourself not separated from the world? Read the words of A.W. Pink to see where your heart is at: "The nature of Christ's salvation is woefully misrepresented by the present-day evangelist. He announces a Savior from hell rather than a Savior from sin. And that is why so many are fatally deceived, for there are multitudes who wish to escape the Lake of fire who have no desire to be delivered from their carnality and worldliness."

A CHRISTIAN AND YET A WORLTLING?

Horatius Bonar speaks forth a rebuke to a worldly complacent Church: "Go on in your worldliness; fling yourselves headlong into the torrent of earth's vanities; but know that the end of these things is death! "Do not love the world or the things that belong to the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15) "You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with this world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again, that if your aim is to enjoy this world, you can't be a friend of God." (James 4:4). The point is settled. The Christian cannot take part with the world in its follies, and gaieties, and sins! What! A Christian and yet a worldling! singing its idle songs, hurrying through its mazy dance, partaking in its mirth and revelry! Impossible! We have ceased to be citizens of earth's polluted cities; we are citizens of heaven! We have a home--but not in the palaces or haunts of the world. We have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens! 'But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ!'"

Thomas Brooks said: "The honors, splendor, and all the glory of this world, are but sweet poisons. which will much endanger us, if they do not eternally destroy us." Yet how many Churchmen without any anguish indulge in the worlds ways. How many Churches offer the people these "poisons" mixed with divine truth. What a deadly mixture! Church depart from the world, may we be able to say with the Apostle Paul: "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world!" May it be so.