

## Sunday Christians

Many believers have very little to do with God outside of their time in church on Sunday morning. Very few churchgoers seem to have a good understanding of scripture and, in fact, not many even take their Bible to church so the preacher can tell them almost anything and they will nod their heads. After the service, it is often hard to find people who are interested in discussing biblical matters as their interests are more in sport or whatever else is going on in the world. They are not being very wise as, firstly, they are putting their eternal salvation in the hands of a preacher who could be misleading them and, secondly, they clearly show that they have put God in second place to the things of the world. James 4:4 speaks harshly against this where it says, *"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."* Are you an adulterous enemy of God or a son of God?

### Sons Of God

When we first put our trust in Jesus, we become sons of God; we are born again and adopted into the family of God. But what sort of son limits the time he spends with his Father to one hour a week on Sunday? Or even less if an 'important' event prevents him going to church. The fact is, many churchgoers give their friends and entertainment far, far more time than they give God. In Mal. 1:6 the Lord says, *"A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?"* We greatly dishonour God when we allow the spirit of this world to control us and guide our thoughts to anything and everything other than the things of the Lord. Rom. 8:14 tells us that *"those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."* A son of God is led by the Holy Spirit and is focused on godly matters, not personal amusement and affairs of the world.

### The World

The Holy Spirit never leads us to be friends with the world. That is the Devil's job. He is very good at it and never gets tired so we have to be alert at all times. If we are to be the son God wants us to be then we must be led by the Spirit and resist all temptation to follow the world. Rom 12:1-2 tell us, *"I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God ... Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will."* God's will for us is that we become like Jesus and live holy lives. We can only do that by turning away from our fleshly lusts for the things of the world, which are temporary and bring sin and death to those who love them. The things of the world may bring short-term pleasure but the result of pursuing them may well be eternal sorrow.

In Ecclesiastes, King Solomon spoke of his search for happiness through worldly activities. Even though he had enormous wealth, absolute power and great wisdom, nothing satisfied him. He tried everything he could think of to find happiness but found that what the world had to offer was meaningless. In Ecc. 12:13 he said, *"Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."* The fact is, worldly pleasures and possessions are here today and gone tomorrow. Many in the church unwisely seek worldly pleasures, wealth and power but Solomon showed that even his exceedingly great wealth, power and wisdom failed to bring lasting happiness. After all his efforts, he came to understand that contentment could only be found in God. 1 Pet. 1:24-25 tell us how temporary men and their glory are: *"All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever."* And 1 John 2:17 tells us, *"The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever."*

## **Finally**

It's very unwise to expect God to welcome us with open arms if, most of the time, we have Him in second place while we are seeking to find satisfaction from the world. God takes no pleasure in part-time sons. In Rev. 3:16, Jesus warns casual believers, *"because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth."* 2 Cor. 13:5 urges us, *"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves."* If you are in the faith then you will be led by the Holy Spirit. If your focus is on what the world has to offer you then you are being led by the spirit of the world. In Hebrew, the word for faith and faithfulness are the same word so when Hab. 2:4 tells us that *"the righteous will live by his faith"* it also means that the *"the righteous will live by his faithfulness."* Does your faith have you faithful to the world and its lusts or faithful to the one who died for you? Are you in the faith or a Sunday Christian? I urge you to examine yourself and see if you are in the faith as Jesus said in Matt. 7:21, *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."* And 1 Thess. 4:3 tells us what God's will is: *"It is God's will that you should be sanctified [that is, live a holy, separated life]."*

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