

The Holiness Series, Pt.1 The Challenge of Holiness

Intro

'In' the world + 'of' the world = no help 'to' the world

2 Pet 2:7-8

Gen 19:4-18; 23-38

Lot's life according to the narrative account

- No weight to his words
- No impact on the people around him

"The very woman who bore his children, who was on most intimate terms with him, who knew the contours of his soul, saw nothing in him or in his faith to point her from earth to heaven.... Lot's folly was this: thought the worldliness of Sodom vexed his righteous soul, he lived as close to the world as he could, hanging on to it for dear life until the bitter end." –R. Kent Hughes, *Set Apart*, p.14-15

- What is the impact of our lives?

1 Jn 2:15-17

James 4:4-5

The call to holiness is issued from a God who is jealous to have a people with an undivided heart.

– **The divided heart of adultery/idolatry**

Ex 34:11-16, 27 "Observe what I command you this day: Behold, I will drive out before you the Amorites ... Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it become a snare in your midst. You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut down their Asherim (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and when they whore after their gods and sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice. 27 And the LORD said to Moses, 'Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.' "

The sobering realities

We are vulnerable to deception.

The World

- Worldliness doesn't have to do with geography but with the spiritual condition of humanity after the Fall.

Jn 3:19-20 "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the *world*, and *men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.* 20 "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed."

Jn 7:7-8 " *The world* cannot hate you, but it *hates Me* because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil."

Js 1:26-27 "Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to *keep oneself unstained by the world.*"

The Flesh

John 14:30 "I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me."

→ Confessions of a paranoid dreamer

Temptations and occasions put nothing into a man, but only draw out what was in him before. -John Owen

→ Proverbs 7 – Let not your heart turn aside!

The Devil

1 Pet. 5:8-9 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith..."

John 12:31-32 "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out."

Eph 2:1-3 "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."

1 John 5:19-20 "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."

- ♣ He will be looking for ways to trip us up until we die.

— Planet ToysRUs

Ideas have consequences.

- Few concerns get more 'press' in the Bible than God's concern for a holy people.
- What we do with these truths will impact our lives.
 - marriage; job considerations; parenting
- 2 alternatives in dealing w/worldliness.

Deny the cross, take up your 'self', and follow cravings

OR

Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Christ. (Gal 6:14)

The call to be 'distinct'

- The Church MUST preserve its leverage to redeem the culture around it.

"... The church is becoming indistinct from the world—worldly. And more, the failure of its increasing numbers to make a difference in the world shouts of compromise. Indeed, what we see now may be an Indian summer, the last gasp of the warm, sunny days before a long, dark spiritual winter.... We must lay this to heart: a worldly church cannot and will not reach the world. The church must be distinct from the world to reach the world. We must set ourselves apart to God if we hope to reach the world. In a word, the only hope for us and the lost world is a holy church."

R. Kent Hughes, *Set Apart*, p.16-17