

Where Is Your Heart?

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. **—1 John 2:15-16**

There are Christians who are marked by worldliness. I believe worldliness comes down to three things: sensuality, sophistication, and secularization.

Sensuality is the lust of the flesh: people obsessed with sex, as opposed to a lifestyle of self-denial. Sophistication can be thought of as the lust of the eyes: people obsessed with culture, learning, and refinement as opposed to simplicity. Secularization—John calls it “pride of life”—is the obsession with material things as opposed to spirituality.

Worldly Christians who would rather stay home and watch television on Sunday night are nevertheless often the first to criticize things. They appear godly and righteous when they are, in fact, hypocrites.

This is why Christians do not tithe! They can look for every reason in the world why they should not have to do it. It is the worldly spirit that looks for a way not to tithe.

This is why they do not pray. I was talking to someone not long ago whose marriage is on the rocks. I just said to them, “How much do each of you pray?” I was not surprised to hear, “Not at all.” How much time do we spend in prayer, by ourselves? How much time do you take to be alone with God? Thirty minutes a day should be the minimum for each of us. I do not care how busy we are. It will give me no pleasure to stand beside you at the judgment seat of Christ and watch a videotape of these words flashed before you, when in fact you justified how busy you were at the time.

Rule of thumb: get immediate gratification because you want to enjoy the things of the world now, and you will erect a superstructure of straw; but if you have the love of the Father in you, it will be a superstructure of gold.

Excerpted from *When God Says "Well Done!"* (Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 1993).