

Lessons from Old Testament Biblical History and Characters -- Wanting a King Excursus on Worldliness

Review:

The request for a king. 1 Samuel 8:5; 12:12

The problem with their request. It revealed their rejection of God. 8:7-8; 10:19; 12:12;

1. They could not wait for God's timing.

2. They could not wait for God's man.

3. They didn't trust God's protection and leadership. They were unsatisfied with the man God raised up.

It was not just a poor choice, it was wickedness. 12:17

They wanted to be like the nations around them. 8:5,19-20

Their desire was so powerful that they were:

1. Willing to submit to a king's demands and the hardship it would cause. 8:9-20; esp. v.18

2. Willing to settle for less than God's blessing.

In asking for a king, they wrongly thought a change of government would change their lives and circumstances, not realizing that their circumstances were due to their sin. They looked for solutions to their problems apart from God.

God gives them their request.

God sovereignly allows them to have what they want even though it is not what He wanted. He allowed them to have their choice, but it came at a cost to them; 8:21-22. Sometimes God, in His sovereign and perfect chastening, gives us what WE want, but it comes with costly consequences. Psalm 106:15; 81:12; 78:41

Presenting the Issue of Worldliness

In our culture and time, the temptation and battle are not in wanting a king, (although I sometimes wonder with the passion for political involvement of some Christians), but in wanting to be _____ the _____ around us, so that we fit in and are liked by them. Those desires aptly summarize the present day "Evangelical Consensus"; the way of thinking overwhelmingly assumed or held to be true and what God wants. Evangelicals are driven by what they see as social and cultural mandates, the redemption of culture, or the advancement of the kingdom.

It has always been necessary for biblical Christians to know and recognize what the world and worldliness is, and to know how to apply biblical truth to our lives. It is vital that we understand God's intended relationship for us to have with this world in which we live. (If the commitment to the authority of Scripture is real and more than words, then we commit to pursuing obedience to and application of its truth).

I am not to Conform my life to it. Romans 12:2

I am not to be taken captive by it. Colossians 2:8

I am not to become friends with it. James 4:4

I am not to Love it. 1 John 2: 15, 16; 2 Timothy 4:10

I am not to allow it to "spot" my life, becoming what is noticed about me. James 1:27; Jude 23; 2 Peter 3:14.

It is possible for a believer to do these things therefore we should not settle for or make it our goal to be like other Christians.

If I am going to pursue a vibrant walk with Christ, I will need to care about what constitutes worldliness. A real and very big issue in our contemporary Christian climate, is that we know these things in our head, but we really don't care. We become content being and living like the world. We think it really doesn't matter.

An Exercise: Is there such a thing as “worldly” _____ ? What makes it “worldly”?

Music

Movies/TV

Dress/look

Speech

Attitudes

Thinking

Values

Christians still live in this world, John 15: 18, 19; 17: 14-18; but are fundamentally different than the world. They are not of the world. They are new creatures, 2 Corinthians 5:17, with new life. They are constituted differently and are delivered from the power of darkness, Colossians 1:13. After the new birth the sin nature still exists, which sets up a battle/war within the Christian, Romans 7: 14-25. Worldly desires and ways of thinking are the “factory” or “default” settings, therefore they must deliberately “reset” them. They are saved out of the world but the thinking and ways of the world that they have learned are still etched in their life.

The world and worldliness are all around me, and I must live life and function in this world. I am to live the new life I have, not the old life, Ephesians 4:17 -5:21; esp. 4:17; 5:1; 5:8. The biblical instruction is to live the new life I have, which will make me different than the world, Cp. 1 Peter 1:17; 2:11; Philippians 2:15. Because we are different, the world will relate to us in a definite way, John 15:18-19; 1 Peter 4:4. I am never commanded to seek to change the world’s view of me.