

# “HOW MUCH DOES GOD WEIGH?”

Bible Message, David E. Strobe, James 4, January 31, 2010  
"Does God rest inconsequentially upon our lives and church?"

Curmudgeon? A bad-tempered, difficult, cantankerous person.

DMR Article, January 31, 2010 – “A Different Way to Do Church”

Previously...

Josiah’s vision  
There Early Church  
Shining as lights  
What now hinders us?

Worldliness...the church captured by the world. Consider...

- James 1:21
- James 4:4
- 2 Peter 1:4
- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 John 5:21
- Romans 12:1-2

James on “worldliness”

James’ Tests of Authentic Faith: James & “justification” – the exhibition of genuine faith!

Test #1 – How are you receiving the ministry of the Word of God? – James 1:21

Test #2 – How are you treating people? Do you discriminate and show partiality? James 2:1-13

Test #3 – Does your life exhibit that Christ truly is more than a talisman, but King of kings and Lord of lords?  
James 2:14-26

Test #4 – What does your speech say about your heart? James 3

Test #5 – What is your relationship with the world? Are you “worldly” or are you “godly?” James 4

James 4:1-17

1. Your worldliness is seen in your iniquity! (4:1-6)

- Wars
- Fights
- Sinful pleasures; demand for self-expression!
- Lust
- Murder
- Coveting
- Perverted praying!

Adulterers & adulteresses! You have become the enemy of God (while purporting to believe in and follow Him)

Worldliness is the display of arrogant, ungodly behavior!

2. Your worldliness is seen in your insubordination! (4:7-12)
  - Submit to God! (4:7-10)
  - You've become judges of others when God alone judges! (4:11-12).

Worldliness is the possession of a rebellious, censorious attitude!

3. Your worldliness is seen in your independence from God! (4:13-17)
  - a. Here are those quite unlike those who noted at the beginning of the chapter. There it was open, blatant sinful behavior. Here it is people not living in open enmity against God, but living with an "...arrogant attitude of self-sufficiency in planning daily life activities in total disregard for God. *"Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make profit."* – *All without any regard for God, His desires or expressed will!*  
"The language reflects self-assurance and self-confidence; they assume that its execution is entirely in their control. No thought is given to their dependence upon God or to the uncertainty of life." Independence, pride, arrogance is behind it all. The whole year will be theirs to use as they decide. D. Edmond Hiebert says of this text "...the fatal defect in their planning and their presumptuous self-centeredness, resulting in the effective exclusion of God from the practical affairs of their daily lives.
  - b. Replace your arrogance with submission to God's will (4:15)!
  - c. See your independence from God, your worldliness for what it is—evil! (4:16).

Worldliness is living independently from God!

Because God rests inconsequentially upon the church...

- ...believers and the church live as if they are independent of God.
- ...believers and the church care more about personal pursuits than the souls of lost people.
- ...believers and the church become angry when reproved by God's Word and those who teach it.
- ...believers and the church become consumed with the frivolity of pop culture.
- ...believers and the church orient not only their personal lives, but the purposes, structures and methods of the church
- ...little evidence of justification is seen.
- ...God exists for us, not we for the church.
- ...believers and the church become just like the world with no effective, transforming witness to the world.
- ...believers and the church display little genuine love of God; any pursuit of "religion" is deleterious duty.

We must be "other-worldly." If we avoid the plague of worldliness, i.e. to be genuinely spiritual (using a biblical definition of "spiritual") we must...

1. ...possess faith that is passionate about truth and righteousness.
2. ...God must rest consequentially in a pervasive manner upon our individual life and corporate church life.
3. ...possess a vivid "other worldliness", a Christ-centered heavenly mindset. Often it is stated that Christians can be too heavenly minded to be of any earthly good. Rather it seems that the modern church is too earthly minded to be of any heavenly good.

To gain this "other worldliness" we must...

- a. ...recover the lost Word of God in both belief and practice. The Word of God is sufficient; we may be sustained, nourished and disciplined by it, and it is profitable for all things pertaining to life & godliness (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3-4).
- b. ...recover the lost vision of God as holy. “The holiness of God is not peripheral. It is central, and without this holiness our faith loses its meaning entirely. ‘Sin is but the defiance of God’s holiness, grace is but its action upon sin, the cross is but its victory, and faith is but its worship’ (P. T. Forsyth). Without a compelling vision of God’s holiness worship inevitably loses its awe, the truth of God’s Word loses its interest, obedience loses its virtue, and the Church loses its moral authority.... Without the holiness of God, sin is just failure – but not failure before God! It is failure without the presumption of guilt, without retribution, indeed without any serious moral meaning at all. And without the holiness of God, grace is no longer grace. It is not grace from God, grace from God who, against his own holy nature has reconciled sinners to himself in Christ. And without justification there is no gospel and with the gospel, there is no Christianity. So if we lose sight of the holiness of God, we lost sight of the entire faith....!
- c. ...learn to detect our own worldliness!
- d. ...get serious about being God’s church...lights in the middle of a crooked and perverse world!