

WORLDLINESS AND WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS

[BIBLE TEXT](#) : John 15:11-13; James 4:4; I John 2:15-17; Matthew 5:8; I Corinthians 6:20;

LESSON 265 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

[BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

John 15:11-13

¹¹ These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

¹² This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

James 4:4

⁴ Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

1 John 2:15-17

¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Matthew 5:8

⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

1 Corinthians 6:20

²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

[BIBLE REFERENCES:](#)

[NOTES:](#)

Friends

Jesus wants His followers to be a happy people. When He closed His last conversation with His Apostles before He was crucified, He said: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11). He was giving them something that would fill them with joy.

Salvation from sin, and the deeper spiritual experiences bring great joy into our lives; but we are still human beings and we need companionship and recreation to keep us happy while we live here on earth.

Jesus realised the importance of having friends, and He wanted His people to enjoy one another. He spent most of His time with the people except when He went alone to pray. He loved to go to the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus to visit them. Some of the Pharisees who wanted to find fault with Him, falsely called Him a "gluttonous man, and a winebibber" (Luke 7:34), because He enjoyed going to dinner with His friends and with those He hoped would become His friends when they knew Him.

A Christian must pay attention to the kind of friends he chooses. They should want to do what is right and not entice him into sinful pleasures. The Psalmist wrote: "I am a companion of all them that fear thee" (Psalm 119:63). God said: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). So we see the importance of choosing our friends from among those who love the Lord.

Outdoor Recreation

Now that we have friends, what pleasures are there that we can enjoy and that will leave a happy memory? God has given us the beautiful, great out-of-doors to delight us. Many children enjoy hiking, mountain climbing, skiing, camping out, cooking over campfires, hunting, fishing, swimming, and bicycle riding.

Some children enjoy collecting butterflies and other insects, or rocks. In the wintertime when they have to stay indoors they can classify and mount what they found during the summer. In books they can learn of the mysterious habits of animals and insects with their God-given instinct to live, build, and reproduce in miraculous ways. In museums, too, they can find collections others have made which show the whole life span of those tiny creatures that God has made so wise.

Photography can become a fascinating hobby, beginning with a simple camera with which even a child can take good pictures out-of-doors in clear weather. Later he can learn the more complicated indoor and colour photography. Many happy evenings can be spent showing his pictures to his friends.

We must add a note of caution, however. Remember, our first responsibility is to God; and all our pleasures will be more keenly enjoyed if we first take time to be holy, and to speak oft with our Lord. He will teach us fresh and inspiring things as we study His Word.

Music

Music has made the lives of many young people happy. Some begin their music lessons before they enter school. In school they begin playing together in orchestras. This gives them an opportunity to become better acquainted with other children who enjoy the same things they do. And their talent can be used in worship to the Lord, too, which brings an added happiness. As one's knowledge of good music increases, he will enjoy listening to symphony concerts, expert soloists, and ensembles.

Young people can become much engrossed in collecting phonograph records of good musicians. And by lending to one another, they can enjoy more than they could afford to buy. Some public libraries, too, have good records to lend.

But all music is not good. The purpose of swing bands and be-bop is to stir unholy passions in the hearts of the audience. The steady rhythm of syncopated time can, in the extreme, excite emotions to immorality and other hateful sins. Close your ears to that which turns your thoughts from the pure and holy.

Unselfishness

There are other things besides play that make us happy. In order truly to enjoy anything we must be unselfish and consider the happiness of others in our activities. When Jesus spoke of us as His friends, He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). He proved that He loved us that much. He came to set up His Kingdom in the hearts of men, and then He sacrificed Himself to redeem us. It was His pleasure to do the will of the Father, and we too will find joy in doing the will of God.

While other people were spending their time in getting wealth, education, or amusement, Jesus was devoting all His energy to teaching people about His love to all men. He was healing the sick, speaking words of cheer, lifting up the poor, and making them feel that there was a place of respect for them in the world. By doing this He made innumerable people happy, and His humanity has brought greater happiness to all the generations that followed.

Missionaries who have to go through great hardships to carry the Gospel to the heathen are sometimes pitied because of their sacrifice. But the joy they receive from their unselfish service makes them so happy that when a person has once been a God-sent missionary he seldom turns from that work for the Lord. His joy is expressed in the line of a song: "Just to see a saved man smile makes the effort well worth while."

Popular Amusements

The true Christian who has learned to enjoy a close fellowship with Christ is thinking something like this: "My life is going to be lived for God and for others, rather than for myself. I want the people of the world to see Jesus in my life." A person who has that purpose will have no trouble in getting the Lord's point of view concerning popular worldly amusements. He will see how shallow, how useless are the pleasures of this world when compared with what he can do for the Lord.

God's Word teaches: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:15-17).

The Theatre

Some ask, "What harm is there in going to the theatre?" Stop and consider what thoughts, what emotions, are stirred by such amusement. You see an artificial way of life portrayed on the screen. People who live as those in the picture are not as happy as they pretend to be. They are living as Satan wants them to live, to satisfy their fleshly desires — and the wages of sin is death.

Much money, beautiful clothes, expensive homes and cars are not the goal of living. Reading the stories man has made up, one would think that money was the root of all pleasure. And the people who do the acting are publicised in all their sins. Multiple marriages and broken homes are glamorised. The heartaches and grief cause by breaking God's laws, and the insecurity suffered by the children, are not talked about, but be sure they are very real to those who live such lives. Jesus said, "Take heed what ye hear" (Mark 4:24). He knew that there would be many sinful things that would try to draw our minds and attention from His Word, and if we were not careful we could be easily influenced by hearing and seeing the things Satan has set as a bait to trap us into his net.

Our reading material should be clean. Some magazines and "comic" books are not good. They influence children and young people to think and do evil. Jesus said one time to His followers: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (Matthew 13:16). They were hearing and seeing the things of God that would give them eternal life. Our eyes and ears should be kept open and clean so we can take into our inmost being the things that will make us ready for Heaven.

The Pure in Heart

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). The pure in heart are not enjoying jokes that are off-colour, nor are they trying to dress in such a way as to attract attention to themselves. Some girls may dress modestly enough, but by their manner, their walk, or their look will display their sensual desires. Such conduct does not come from a pure heart. Paul warned: "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (II Timothy 2:22).

Some of the movies which parents show in their homes may seem to be all right, but they should consider what desires the picture will stir in their children. Will it create in them a greater desire to live clean and do their service for the Lord, or will it cause a longing for the things the people of the world are doing? Television is bringing many kinds of movies into the home, and the devil is using this effective tool to lure the minds of the young into sinful pleasures. Children are fascinated by what they see on the screen; and the little good that may be derived from it certainly does not compensate for the evil influence that is absorbed.

Games

Everyone likes to play games, and we can learn teamwork and good sportsmanship if we play in the right attitude. But we must be careful what we play. Satan is ready to corrupt us and lead us astray by what seems to be innocent pleasure, if we do not watch.

There is a difference between games of chance and games of skill. It is in games of chance — card games and bingo and such — that gambling is born. And when once gambling takes hold of a person, it seems that nothing but the Lord can break it.

Sometimes it leads to such desperate circumstances that many people suffer hardships and want through one person's gambling. Penny ante and punchboards may seem small and harmless, but a great deal of money can be lost when playing becomes a habit. And soon one finds himself playing for increasingly bigger stakes.

Games of skill are of another character. One must practice to become good, and it is not just luck. But when such games become organised and overemphasised, we again find corruption, cheating, deceit, and hatred, which have soiled the games for those who regard truth and purity.

Adorning the Gospel

If we could realise the value of a soul, and our responsibility to tell that soul about Jesus, the pleasures of the world would not attract us at all. Even the things that might seem harmless in themselves would become a waste of time. We should give as much time to wholesome recreation as we need to keep healthy - – but no more. Remember, we shall have to give an account before God of how we have spent our time. The Lord is watching everything we do. We are precious in His sight. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Corinthians 6:20).

Many people in the world are not reading the Bible. They are watching the man or woman, boy or girl, who says he is a Christian. Are you an adornment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Would someone watching you be attracted by your purity and wholesomeness? Or do you try to mingle with the world and do as they do, so as not to be different? "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

If our hearts are set on making Heaven our home we are not hankering after the pleasures of the world. We will be far too busy purifying ourselves in order to be the Bride of Christ.

QUESTIONS

1. What kind of friends should a Christian choose?
2. What kind of amusements do you enjoy? Why?
3. How much did Jesus love us?
4. How much should we love one another?
5. What is the great joy of a missionary?
6. Who is going to see God?
7. What does the Bible say about the love of money?
8. Can the sinners see that you are a Christian by the way you live?