

Common Worldly Philosophies To Be Avoided By The Christian

- ❖ James 4:4
- ❖ Colossians 2:8
- ❖ 1 John 4:1
- ❖ 1 Timothy 4:1
- ❖ 1 John 2:15-16
- ❖ Jude 1:3
- ❖ John 15:19
- ❖ 1 John 3:13
- ❖ **Romans 1:25:**
 - **Humanism** - evolution (man result of constantly improving system)
 - - man is capable of anything if he tries hard enough
 - **Relativism** - all beliefs are valid, or none is exclusively valid
 - - there is no absolute truth
 - - Existentialism - we determine right and wrong
- ❖ **1. The world says: You only go around once, so...**(why many can't come to church faithfully, especially in nice weather)
 - - this is the only life we'll have, so live it to the fullest
 - "the pursuit of happiness is the most important thing in life"
 - "avoid suffering at all costs"
 - i.e. Lot, Solomon
 - II Ti 3:4, "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"
 - - if happiness comes through favorable circumstances, we're in trouble because we cannot control them
- ❖ **God says: the pursuit of God produces true happiness**
 - (happiness is a gift to those who follow God's truth)
 - (happiness isn't found by pursuing it, it is a by-product of pursuing God)
 - (joy depends on accepting God's will and focusing on His love)
 - (complete happiness will only be available in the next life)
 - (suffering can be good for us)
 - - Ps 16:11
 - - Ps 42:1-2
 - - Ecc 12:13
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks
 - Ps 144:15
 - Pr 16:20
 - Ps 146:5
 - Pr 28:14
 - Pr 29:18
 - Job 5:17
 - John 13:17
- ❖ **2. The World Says: Take care of myself first!**
 - - focus on pleasing me (i.e. worldly marital counselling) - Mk 10:37; II Ti 3:2
 - selfishness is natural
- ❖ **God Says: True joy comes from serving God and others, Ac 20:35**

- We're Not To Please Ourselves First, But Put God First:
 - Mt 6:33
- Jesus our example:
 - Phil. 2:5-7,
 - Mark 10:45
- Servant-hood a sign of greatness in God's eyes:
 - Mt 20:26-28
 - Mt 23:11
- We're Not To Please Ourselves First, But Put Others First (Serve Them):
 - Rom. 12:10
 - Rom 15:1-3
 - 1Co 9:19
 - 1Co 10:24
 - 1Co 10:33
 - 1Co 13:5
 - Ga 5:13
 - Phil 2:3-4,
 - 1Tim 6:18
 - James 2:8
- Biblical Principle: Give and God will return more
 - Pr 11:24-25
 - Pr 13:7
 - Pr 22:9
 - Pr 28:27
 - Lu 6:38
 - 2Co 9:6-8
 - 1Joh. 3:17
 - i.e. slothfulness/laziness more important than sacrifice
- ❖ **3. You Can Always Fake It (appearance is most important)**
 - - emphasis on the external
 - The World Says:
 - There is no God, or God can't see what we're doing, or He doesn't care
 - 2 Timothy 3:5
 - Matthew 23:28
 - I Sam. 16:7
 - The World and carnal Christians tend to trivialize and rate sin, II Cor 10:12
 - Bitterness
 - Easily offended (anger and bad temper)
 - Hypocrisy Gal 2:11-14 (doing things for man's eyes; fear of man)
 - Rebellion/not submissive to authority
 - Neglect of the Word Lack of faith/unbelief/worry Mat 6:31-34
 - Ingratitude/moaning(negativity)/discontentment(always something wrong); Heb 13:5
 - Complacency(lukewarm)/idleness
 - Lack of a quality prayer life
 - Hindering others from being useful (incl. not helping or not praying for others)

- Unforgiveness/holding grudges - Mk 11:25-26
- Judgmentalism/critical - Mat 7:3-5
- Gossip/slander(malicious)/whispering/backbiting/tattling
- ❖ **God says: The Right Way To Live is to Live Right!**
 - Mt 23:23-28
 - I Pe 1:15-16
 - God says: True spirituality means that the Spirit of God is in control!
 - Romans 8:29
 - If our lives are not exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit, we are not walking with the Lord!
 - God says: - True joy comes from obedience
 - Jn 15:10-11
 - God says: God sees everything and we reap what we sow (Ga 6:9)
 - I Sam 16:7
 - 2 Chronicles 16:9
- ❖ **4. The World Says: We are just as good or better than the next guy**
 - example: Lk 18:9-14
 - - self-righteousness always causes us to look down upon others
 - - we tend to look at others and judge them based on appearances
 - - it is always easy to see the sins of others vs. our own sins
 - - We tend to externalize sin; Matt 23:23-28
 - - everyone is tempted to come up with a measuring system to make themselves look spiritual
 - - We tend to trivialize and rate sin
 - 2 Cor. 10:12
 - - people who pride themselves in their rightness with God, based on their outward performance or conformity to some external standard of right and wrong
 - - We tend to ignore sin - especially in the heart (stress the outward things while not addressing the heart things, (Jn. 8:3-9)
 - Lk. 8:14, he that exalteth himself (even in his thoughts) shall be abased
- ❖ **God Says: We're Sinners and He Uses Us Because He Loves Us, Not Because We Deserve It**
- ❖ **God Says: We Should Only Compare Ourselves to Jesus Christ**
 - - we are good at declaring to ourselves our own righteousness, we have none!
 - - I Tim. 1:15, Paul had the right attitude (chief of sinners)
 - - Eph. 4:13
 - - Gal. 6:3
 - - Isa. 65:5, self-righteousness is smoke in God's nose
 - - we must honest about what we are as David was, Ps 51:4-10
 - - 1 Cor. 10:12
 - - we were not righteous when we got saved and we're not now, stop trying to earn God's favor!!
 - Pr.16:2
 - Pr 20:6
 - Pr 21:2
 - Pr 27:2

- ❖ **5. The World Says: The one with the most toys wins** (materialism, covetousness)
 - Lk 12:15-21, beware of covetousness
 - a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.
 - Lk 14:17-20, don't want to give up covetousness (it will be what keeps many from heaven, the feast)
 - Lu 18:18-23, the ruler who loved money more than anything
- ❖ **God Says: covetousness, which is idolatry Col. 3:5**
 - - Mt 6:21
 - - Eph. 5:5, "covetousness which is idolatry"
 - - I Tim. 6:10, "For the love of money is the root of all evil."
 - - I Jn 2:15-17 (sins of the world, Satan is god of this world, II Cor. 4:4)
 - - lust of the eyes (covetousness sidetracks many)
 - **God Says: Things Don't Give Happiness**
 - Pr 15:16
 - Pr 16:8
 - Pr 28:6
 - Psalms 37:16
 - **God Says: Seek Heavenly Riches (Affections)**
 - Col. 3:1-2
 - **God Says: Be Content - God Will Provide**
 - Heb 13:5
 - Mt. 6:31-34 Basic Needs
 - Phil. 4:11
 - Phil. 4:19 All our needs
 - 1Tim. 6:6-9
 - **God Says: Give and it will bring joy**
 - Pr. 11:24-25
 - Pr. 13:7
 - Pr. 22:9
 - Lu 6:38
- ❖ **6. The World Says: The Lord helps those who help themselves**
 - - why pray when you can worry and work yourself do death
 - The example of King Asa in II Chr 16:1-13
 - - hired Benhadad, king of Syria; then because of wrong attitude died seeking physicians
 - The example of King Amaziah in II Chr 25:1-13
 - hired unrighteous soldiers to help with the battle
 - listened to the prophet and did not use those soldiers and won the battle because of God's help
 - Lk 18:9, he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves (self-reliant heart)
 - - one of the worst and most subtle sins of Christianity (pride, straight from Satan)
 - When we don't pray for God's guidance or victory, we are trusting in ourselves!!
 - - Jesus said to pray that we enter not into temptation, pray for guidance, etc.
 - - if we start the day without Him, we are saying that we are trusting our selves

- Mt 6:30-33 (vs. 30 little faith when we worry)
- ❖ **God Says: Don't Worry but Trust Him**
 - - worrying reveals: Don't trust God; don't believe in his power
 - Wrong to trust man (even ourselves)
 - Jer 17:5
 - Pr 12:15
 - Pr 23:4
 - Pr 26:12
 - Pr 28:26
 - Philippians 3:3
 - Right To Trust God
 - Phil. 4:6-7
 - Philippians 4:13
 - Ps 118:8
 - Pr 3:5
 - Ps 37:5
 - Jer 17:7
 - 1 Peter 5:7
- ❖ **7. The World Says: We Can Do Anything**
 - - we're all powerful, just tap the power inside
 - Ge 3:1-5, "ye shall be as gods"
 - Ge 11:1-4, Babel
 - Il Chr 26:15-16
 - Ps 2:1-3, "take counsel against the LORD"
 - Psalms 106:39
 - Re 20:7-9, man will go to battle against God's city
 - Technology/Computer Age - man believes he can do anything
 - Does Jesus Care About Technology?
 - He did not change it, even though He could have medical, transportation, communication, energy (i.e. nuclear), conveniences, information (i.e. computers)
 - Satan is the god of this world, he's smart, he is behind technology explosion because it keeps people (saved and unsaved) away from God and spiritual things.
- ❖ **God Says: Without Me Ye Can Do Nothing, Jn 15:5**
 - - He Controls Life and Death
 - Pr 19:21
 - Pr 21:30
 - Pr 25:14
 - Romans 9:20
 - Matthew 6:27
 - Hebrews 9:27
 - God Reveals His Omnipotence Through
 - - Ge 17:1, I am the Almighty God (El Shaddai): all sufficient, nourisher, strength-giver
- ❖ **Pluralism/relativism - all beliefs are valid, or none is exclusively valid**
 - - no absolute truth
 - **1. The World Says: Truth is what I decide it is (or there is no absolute truth)**
 - - the single most agreed-upon truth in universities today is that truth is relative

- - Ge 3:1, yea hath God said
- Jud. 21:25, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."
- John 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?
- Col. 2:8, Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
- Mk 7:13, Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.
- When we reject absolute truth:
 - - The Bible is not reliable
 - - social order disintegrates (no moral obligation)
 - - there is no right or wrong (i.e. Hitler)
 - - examples: homosexuality, discipline of children
- God says: Truth is True, no matter what you think, believe, or feel
 - - and it is found in the Bible and Jesus (Jn 14:6)
 - Romans 3:4
 - Jude 3, "contend for the faith"
- What we can trust: The Word, Ps 119:105, the Word is a lamp and light
 - - II Pe 1:20, no Bible is of private interpretation, it must interpret itself
 - 2 Timothy 2:15
 - Jn 17:17, Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.
 - Truth sets us free!, Jn 8:32
 - Josh 1:8, success comes from knowing the truth
 - Proverbs 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof [are] the ways of death.
- What we cannot trust:
 - 1) What we see, II Co 5:7, we walk by faith, not by sight
 - - Deuteronomy 13:3, a sign or a wonder or a dream is not the final authority
 - - Mt 24:24, if it were possible, they shall deceive the elect with their miracles
 - 2) What we hear, II Pe 3:16, those who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction
 - - Mt 4:6, Satan is a master at misapplying Scripture
 - - Eph 4:14, we must be grounded or we will be led astray by those who "lie in wait to deceive"
 - - II Ti 4:3, itching ear syndrome, looking until find verses to justify behaviour instead of following clear doctrine
 - 3) What we feel, I Jn 4:1, try the spirits, not experience
 - - Mt 7:21-23, ability to cast out devils etc. not evidence of salvation
 - - I Th 5:21, prove all things
 - - people think that experiences are not subject to error, that they are infallible
 - - Jer 10:23; 17:9, we cannot trust our feelings, heart, or emotions, they can be wrong
 - ◆ - i.e. "I have a peace about it", etc.
 - ◆ - i.e. "God told me to"
 - - Phil. 4:7 only true if rejoicing always, moderate (temperate), praying for all things with thanksgiving
- Absolute truth exists whether we know the truth or not; therefore, it is dangerous unless we know what is true.
- ❖ **Follow on to #1:**
- ❖ **The World Says: There are many ways to heaven, they are each just different roads to the same place**

- Mark 10:17
- Luke 10:25
- Luke 18:18
- ❖ **God Says that His Son is the Only Way**
 - John 14:6
 - Acts 4:12
 - 1 Timothy 2:5
 - 1 John 5:12
- ❖ **2. The World Says: If it works, it can't be wrong (pragmatism)**
 - the end justifies the means (I Sa 15:13-15)
 - - "it's never right to do wrong in order to get a chance to do right"
 - - i.e. Uzza and the cart
 - - i.e. Nehemiah tempted to go into the temple to protect himself
 - - i.e. don't treat people in a Christ-like manner because "that's the way that I am"
 - - i.e. don't give to the LORD to have enough finances
 - - i.e. not faithful to church to get the kids in bed for school
 - - i.e. gossiping and calling it prayer requests
 - - i.e. breaking tax laws (disobeying government) to put more food on the table for family
 - - the goodness of anything is directly related to visible success
 - - In the Christian community this translates to "whatever is successful has been blessed by God."
 - - More than one spiritual teacher on the national scene today is saying that Christians should determine their theology (their understanding of God and spiritual things) by what "works."
 - - compromising with the world system to get spiritual results
 - - The dictionary defines pragmatism as "a philosophic method that makes practical consequences the test of truth."
 - - the church now tries to lure and cater to the unsaved, rather than remain separate from the world and go out to reach the unsaved.
 - - the church adopts unorthodox methods to get people to pray and then justifies it with the "results"
 - It is the temptation of this age to presume that technique is the secret of evangelism.
 - 1 Timothy 4:1
 - Jeremiah 44:17
 - Act t 5:34-39
 - Mal 1:7, 10
 - Lk 4:5-6
 - Judges the moral or spiritual value of anything solely by its success - where success is determined by winning a contest, or by earning a great deal of wealth, or by gaining a large following.
 - By this system, people who cheat, steal, or are immoral can be judged to be acceptable if they profit from what they do - people to envy and emulate.
 - Church growth: do we really understand the growth of the local church when we believe that simply "finding the right method" will do the trick?
 - We bring in Christian rappers, jugglers, clowns, acrobats ... and "whatever works" we hang on to.
 - It's called pragmatism, and it is a horrible philosophy. Pragmatism knows no bounds, and will go as far as need be until something "works."
 - It's a dangerous playground, pragmatism.
 - We use marketing techniques to draw the crowds to our churches.

- We tone down the difficult parts of the gospel and emphasize the feel-good parts so that we don't scare off potential converts.
- We avoid difficult doctrines and give shorter messages that focus on how people can succeed in life, because that's what people want to hear.
- We use psychological counseling and 12 Step Groups instead of submission to the lordship of Christ to help people cope with life's problems, because these techniques seem to work.
- Pastors flock to conferences that share the latest methods that are proven to build your church.
- "If some good comes out of a man's ministry, what does it matter if some of his methods are ungodly"?
- The Majority: Matthew 7:13 "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide [is] the gate, and broad [is] the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:"
- Lenin said. "Good ends justify evil means".
- ❖ **God says: We should measure the moral or spiritual value of anything by how it measures up to God's holiness, His commandments, His teachings, and His plan.**
 - - the means justifies the end (read where the means is given and then the end: Josh 1:8; Jas 1:22-25)
 - - It is not a matter of favoring "failure" over "success;" it is a matter of measuring success by what pleases God.
 - We must decide to do right no matter what the circumstances
 - - Jn 14:15, If ye love me, keep my commandments.
 - - Jas 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God
 - - "right is right even if everyone is against it, and wrong is wrong even if everyone is for it"
 - Any plan of innovation must be God's plan.
 - It doesn't matter if it produces positive results, such as numerical growth, or -- look out now! this is controversial --- or even conversions.
 - Ro 1:16, preaching is enough! (He 4:12)
 - The gospel does not always produce positive results:
 - 1 Corinthians 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;
 - Ga 5:11, the cross causes offence, not comfort in the unsaved (I Co 1:18, 23)
 - Il Ti 4:2-4, we're not to tell people what they want to hear, but what they need!
 - I Cor. 3:6-7, God saves and He does not need our help to win a sinner!
 - 1 Corinthians 2:4 And my speech and my preaching [was] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:
 - Galatians 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.
 - God never contradicts His Word (there are no situational ethics with God)
 - Sometimes Satan may even try to use someone we trust - i.e. Nehemiah's friends (the Word must be supreme)
 - Satan will tempt most when most convenient to do wrong
 - Through failure we deepen our discernment:
 - One of our problems in ministry that we may be driving for the wrong goals.
 - We often assume that things which bring more results, like greater numbers, are the will of God.
 - We may think certain types of people are best suited to lead.
 - These assumptions may be partly right, but they often overlook important exceptions that could lead to unfairness or corruption in the church.
 - God often shows us through failure that we are looking at things superficially and that we need goals more in harmony with the deeper picture.

- ❖ **3. The World Says: It's only wrong if you get caught**
 - Achan - took of the stuff they were not allowed to take and hid it
 - - God had to point it out
 - David - watching a nude woman; committing adultery with her; trying to cover it up by encouraging her husband to go into her; having her husband killed
 - - God had to send Nathan to rebuke David because he thought he was getting away with it
 - Letting the mind think on wrong things
 - - media is attacking us through our minds - we must guard the inputs
 - - what we dwell on in our thought life
 - Pr 23:7
 - Ro 12:2, renew our minds
 - Phil 4:8, think on right things
 - Privately involved in pornography (God knows)
 - Mt 5:28
 - Cheating on taxes (God knows)
 - Romans 13:6
 - Gossiping/Slandering Behind Closed Doors (even under the guise of prayer requests)
 - - or listening to it!!
 - Matthew 12:36
 - 1Pe 4:15
 - Pr 17:4
- ❖ **God Says: It Is Wrong If It Violates God's Holiness and Righteousness as Defined in the Word of God**
 - - He Knows and Sees Everything
 - Psalms 90:8
 - Ecclesiastes 12:14
 - Romans 2:16
 - 2 Chronicles 16:9
 - Pr 5:21
 - Hebrews 4:13
- ❖ **4. The World Says: Everyone else is doing it**
 - - a way to rationalize sin
 - - the standard for right and wrong is an external authority (majority of people's actions)
 - - authority internal (feelings); external (results, others); or eternal (the Bible)
 - Examples:
 - Daniel and bowing down to the idol
 - Lot/Sodom
 - The Jews (go back to Egypt, etc.) and Moses
 - The Jews and Aaron (golden calf)
 - 2 Corinthians 10:12
 - Pr 12:26
 - pornography
 - ladies not submitting to husbands
 - children not obeying parents
 - teen clothing
 - TV programs and music
 - premarital sex and drugs
- ❖ **God Says: Right is Defined in His Word, not by the crowd!**
 - - don't follow the crowd
 - Proverbs 1:10
 - Pr 12:11

- Exodus 23:2
- "The greatest want of the world is the want of men,
 - --men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall."
 - "It is human to stand with the crowd; it is divine to stand alone."
- 2 Timothy 4:16
- 1 Peter 2:9-12, peculiar; time past
- Matthew 7:13-14
- ❖ **5. The World Says: If you can't beat them, join them**
 - "When you lie down with dogs, you get up with fleas"
 - Many people have this attitude about the world (i.e. the media) and the unsaved - they have given up speaking out for truth.
 - This happened when carbon dating first came out - theologians started coming up with theories to accommodate long periods of time.
 - Since Balaam could not curse Israel for Balak, what advice did he give?
 - Nu 25:1-18; 31:7, 16; Rev. 2:14
 - Why did he give this advice?
 - II Pe 2:15; Jude 11
 - During the first three centuries the devil attacked the Christian church.
 - Stephen was the first victim (Acts 7:54-60).
 - Later James was put to death (Acts 12:1-2). Saul of Tarsus led the attack against believers (Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-2).
 - At first the greatest persecutors of the church were unbelieving Jews (see 1 Thess. 2:14-16 and Romans 11:28).
 - Later the Romans became the great persecutors.
 - Paul and Peter were both put to death by the Roman Emperor Nero.
 - As we study the early history of the church we learn that there were 10 different periods of persecution under 10 different Roman emperors:
 - What did these attacks and persecutions really do to the Church?
 - Was the church destroyed?
 - Were all true believers killed off? Did believers become an "endangered species"?
 - Was the church fatally wounded and about to die?
 - Actually the very opposite happened.
 - The more the church was persecuted and attacked, the more it grew and prospered.
 - "The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church." When Stephen died the church lost a great warrior, but his death led to the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and Paul the great apostle accomplished what Stephen never would have been able to do.
 - The martyrs died, but others were saved and took their place.
 - Christianity not only spread but it thrived and prospered!
 - The church of Jesus Christ could not be exterminated.
 - It survived each and every persecution against it (compare Matthew 16:18 "and the gates of hell (hades) shall not prevail against it").
 - The Church could not be defeated. It came out of every persecution victorious and strong.
 - The devil knew that the Church was surviving and thriving.
 - The Satan-inspired attacks against the Christian church were unsuccessful.
 - Even men were beginning to realize this.
 - In the year 311 A.D. Galerius (along with his co-emperors, Constantine and Licinius) signed the Edict of Toleration, a law which granted toleration to all religions including Christianity. Galerius was not a fan of the Christians, nor

- was he a friend. He was a foe of the Christians but he was smart enough to realize that the past persecutions under the Romans had not accomplished anything.
- The more the believers suffered the more they multiplied.
 - The devil still wanted to destroy the church, but persecution was not the way to do it.
 - Instead he came up with a much better plan.
 - Instead of attacking the church from the outside he would corrupt the church and destroy it FROM THE INSIDE.
 - The devil's new strategy was very simple: "IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM, JOIN THEM!"
 - Don't fight them, just shake hands with them and JOIN THEIR TEAM! Infiltrate their ranks!
 - There is a great danger whenever the church becomes POPULAR!
 - In the days of Constantine it was no longer a shame to be a Christian, it was an honor. It was to your advantage to become a Christian.
 - It was the fashionable thing to do.
 - After all, everyone was doing it and the government put its blessing upon it. (Note: During the years that Jimmy Carter was President 1976 to 1980 it became very fashionable to say that you were BORN AGAIN.
 - Many people started saying they were born again including many who did not even understand what the new birth really means).
 - In earlier years the church stayed pure because it COST SOMETHING TO BE A CHRISTIAN.
 - Often it meant suffering and persecution. Believers were not popular with the world.
 - But in Constantine's day it did not cost anything to be a Christian.
 - It was to your advantage to do so!
 - Today in our country it is somewhat easy to be a Christian.
 - There is little persecution and little cost.
 - Suppose the government suddenly made a law that every Christian would lose his head.
 - Do you think you would soon find out who the true Christians really are?
- ❖ **God Says: Stay Separate From the World and It's Philosophies**
- see II Cor 6:14-17; Ro 12:2
 - Rev. 2:20