

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living
Leader's Guide

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORLDVIEW

LESSON 5: BE SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module entitled Christian Life and Worldview. This series of lessons examines the choices and practices that are essential for Christian living. To live as the Word of God teaches us means we understand that the choices we make each day affect our faith. It also means learning to pray, practising the commands of God and learning to serve others. These are important lessons for understanding the practice of Christianity. Include time to discuss these principles and how to effectively apply them to your life.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience for these lessons is new Christians, those who would like a refresher on the basics of Christianity, as well as those preparing to teach these Christian practices and beliefs. Also, those with an interest in Christian thought will find value in these lessons as they pertain to daily living and choices.

The Leader's Guide is intended to help you as a leader in your preparation. These lesson outlines may be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials found online at www.discipleshipessentials.org.

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CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORLDVIEW

LESSON 5: BE SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD

PURPOSE

The purpose of this lesson is to understand what it means to be separate from the world in order to be set apart for God.

LEADER'S NOTE

In many parts of the world being a Christian is risky. In choosing to serve God we may lose relationships, jobs, and even our lives. You know the particular struggles that your participants deal with, and the particular pressures of the world around them. In this lesson help them to see the ways in which we can serve God and not the world, even while we must be subject to our government, employers, or perhaps family. You may wish to add to this lesson a study of Daniel chapter 3 which shows how Daniel and His friends put God first, and yet were respectful to the authorities over them without compromising their faith. It may be difficult for new believers to see how this is possible. When we reject the world, the world rejects us. But because we acknowledge God as the master of our lives, He accepts us as His own and we are protected by Him.

INTRODUCTION

Select two or three of the following questions to ask the group.

- ❖ Have you ever been torn between trying to please two different people?
- ❖ What are some of the priorities in your life? What takes up a lot of your time? What do you wish you had more time for?
- ❖ What type of influence does the world have on you? What influence does the world have on other Christians you know?
- ❖ What are some ways that Christians should be different from those around them?

STUDY

Instruct the group on the following points.

TEACH

- ❖ **Set Apart from the World.** When you become a Christian you die to your old self, and experience a rebirth into the family of God. Just as different families have different rules, God has different rules for his children. There are many things in the world that will tempt you, but God wants us to run from those things and turn towards Him. The Bible tells us we cannot be devoted to both God and to the things in this world.



- James 4:4 says, "You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."
- Our devotion to the world may be subtle, but it can prevent us from following God with all we are. We may be afraid to follow God's ways because it will cause us to be different from those around us, perhaps lose opportunity for monetary gain, break relationships, or even cause persecution.
- ❖ **The Bible Tells Us To Be Set Apart:** It is God's desire for Christians to be set apart in order that they may please Him. We do this by acting differently from those around us who are not Christians because the world is full of sin, and people acting selfishly and in sin, which displeases God. The hope is that in doing this, we can keep ourselves from being tempted into sin, and people will notice something different in us and come to know Christ themselves. God wants us to live free from the traps of sin, and to be useful to Him. The Bible confirms this and answers questions about what it means to be set apart. Read the following verses:
 - Romans 12:2
 - 1 John 2:16
 - John 8:12
 - Matthew 5:16
 - Matthew 5

ASK PARTICIPANTS

- ❖ What does it mean to be the salt of the earth? What is salt useful for?
- ❖ According to the above verses, what is our conflict with the world? Why is following the ways of the world a problem?

TEACH

❖ How Can You Be Separate From The World :

- **Using Scripture:** In Romans 12:2 the Bible tells us that by the renewal of your mind you can test and discern the will of God. The Word of God would be a good place to start. Spending time in the word is one way that God's will is revealed to us.
 - Psalms 119:105
 - Psalms 119:10-11
 - Ephesians 6:17
- Jesus used the word of God as a sword against Satan when He was being tested in the wilderness. Read Matthew 4:1-11 to discover how Jesus quoted Scripture to set Himself apart from Satan.
- Additionally, we must flee from what is sinful. Sinful behaviours in the world and sinful environments will only cause us to be more comfortable with sin in our lives. We should hate sin in our lives, and examine our hearts to see where we are sinful.



- ❖ **Consider what is most Important:** People in our world put many different things first in their lives. Some value power, money, an ideal family, an important position, valuable goods, etc. What we put first in our life will determine our actions towards everything else.
 - Matthew 6:24 says, “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”
 - Ask the participants why some people put money before God and what this might look like in someone's life.
 - There are other things that people serve or worship that get in the way of being set apart for God. This is called idol worship. Anything that we hold in greater value than God becomes an idol and the Bible has lots to say on this subject. Here are a few verses to consider:
 - Exodus 20:1-15
 - Colossians 3:5
 - Psalms 96:5
 - Hebrews 13:5

- ❖ **Actively Moving towards God:** While we live in this world we will interact with people around us of various faiths and worldviews. It is important, however, to keep moving ourselves towards God instead of toward sinful things. Many people in the Bible who chose not to obey God first and hold separate values from those around them fell into sin and were punished by God.
 - God tells us to be careful what you set your heart and eyes on.
 - “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light” Matthew 6:22.
 - “But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart” Matthew 5:28.
 - Consider how you use your time. We spend more time on the things that are important to us. Demonstrate your commitment to being set apart for God by using your time wisely.
 - “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is” Ephesians 5:15-17.
 - As we separate ourselves from the world, and choose to not love the things the world loves, we will find that God Himself fulfills our desires and satisfies us!
 - Psalms 16:11, Philippians 4:19, Psalm 37:4



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ❖ Name two practical ways in which you can avoid sinful and worthless things in your life? How will this help you serve God better?
- ❖ If you chose to serve only God today, what would the consequences be? How would your life be different? What price would you have to pay?
- ❖ What are some of the things you put before God? How can you instead put God before those things?
- ❖ Do you have someone in your life that you can be accountable to for your actions, someone who can check up on decisions you have made related to your life as a Christian? How could you find someone to do this for you?

PRAYER

Pray that participants would see clearly God's call on their whole lives, not living a life devoted to conflicting matters and sinful behaviour. Pray they would see things in their lives that need to change and ways they can increase their devotion to God. Thank God that He reveals Himself to us and desires a relationship with us. He does not ask us to be perfect and follow Him in our own strength.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

As an optional homework assignment, allow participants to choose two verses from this week's lesson to memorize. Having the Word of God dwell in our minds can keep us focussed on God's ways.