

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living
Study Guide

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORLDVIEW

LESSON 5: BE SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Disciple Essentials module titled 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 and how to live out our faith within our Church community.

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on www.discipleshipessentials.org.

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CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORLDVIEW

LESSON 5: BE SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

This lesson will help you understand what it means to be separate from the world as a child of God.

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

Christians use the term 'the world' to refer to everything around us that is contrary to God. The world can easily influence us and wants to control us, but if we want to follow God, we must not let it! 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; when we reject the world, the world will reject us. This is the cost of discipleship (following Jesus). But because we acknowledge God as the master of our lives, He accepts us as His own and we are protected by Him. This lesson will help you learn how to live in this world and yet be separate from it, as God calls us to be.

GETTING STARTED

1. Have you ever been torn between trying to please two different people?

2. What are some ways that Christians should be different from those around them?



STUDY

❖ **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 families have rules, God has rules for His children. There are many things in the world that will tempt you, but God wants you 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.

- What does James 4:4 say about the world?

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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.

❖ **GOD’S COMMAND IN THE BIBLE:** It is God’s desire for Christians to be set apart in order to please Him. We do this by modeling Christ – acting differently from those around us who are not Christians. The hope is that in doing this, we can keep ourselves from yielding to sin. People will then notice something different in us and hopefully desire to know Christ themselves. God wants us to be free from the bondage of sin and to be useful to Him. The Bible confirms this and answers questions about what it means to be set apart.

- What do the following verses tell us about the challenges of being set apart from the world? What are the results when we do this?

Romans 12:2	
1 John 2:16	

- Read Matthew 5: 1-16. What are Christians meant to be like in this world?

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- What does it mean that we are to be ‘salt’? What is salt good for?



Our conflict with the world is that it is in darkness and we have the light and the truth. Those who are in the world cannot understand the truth of God. Salt is good for many things – it purifies, preserves, enhances the flavour of foods. It is also required in our diet in order to maintain good health. Christians are needed to bring the Gospel and hope to a world that is in need of salvation. But just as salt can dissolve and become diluted by water, we must remain separate from the world so that we do not lose our ‘saltiness’ and dissolve into the world.

❖ **HOW YOU CAN BE SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD:**

USING SCRIPTURE: In Romans 12:2 the Bible tells us that by the renewal of our mind we can test and discern the will of God. The Word of God is a good place to start. Spending time in the Word will renew our mind and allow God to reveal His will to us.

- Read Psalm 119:105 and Psalm 119:10-11. What do these verses say about the Bible and how it can impact the way we live?

- Jesus used the Word of God as a weapon against Satan when He was being tested in the wilderness. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How did Jesus use Scripture to defeat Satan’s temptations? What would you have to do to be able to use Scripture in this way?

Additionally, we must flee from what is sinful. The world is characterized by sinful behaviours and environments which we should not feel comfortable in. We should hate sin in our lives, and constantly examine our hearts to make sure we are living holy lives before God.

❖ **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.

- Read Matthew 6:24. What would it look like for someone to put money before God in their life? Why might some people do this?



- There are other things that people serve or worship that get in the way of being set apart for God. Even though a physical idol might not be involved, this is called idol worship. Anything we hold in greater value than God becomes an idol. The Bible has much to say on this topic. What do you learn from the following verses?

Colossians 3:5	
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 for us, however, to keep moving closer to God instead of toward worldly things. Many people in the Bible who chose not to obey God (but instead held on to worldly values) fell into sin and were punished by God.

- God tells us to be careful what we set our heart and eyes on. Read Matthew 6:22 and Matthew 5:22. How is what we look at connected to our heart?

- 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. Read 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! Read Psalms 16:11, Philippians 4:19, Psalm 37:4. What will God provide us with if we put Him first?



IN SUMMARY

- ❖ When we become a Christian, we die to our old self and experience a rebirth into the family of God.
- ❖ We must follow the ways of God rather than the world – we cannot be devoted to both.
- ❖ The Bible tells us to be set apart so that we can please God. We must not put anything or anyone before God.
- ❖ We can be separate from the world by meditating on God’s Word, considering what is most important in every situation, and by actively moving towards God in our thoughts

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. 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?

2. Do you have someone in your life that you can be accountable to for your actions, someone who can check up on decisions you make relative to your Christian life? How could you find someone to do this for you?

3. Name two practical ways in which you can avoid sinful and worthless things in your life? How will they help you serve God better?