

New Life in Christ "Turned to God"

I Thessalonians Series Part # 5

Paul entered one of the largest cities in the world in the middle of the 1st Century. There at that cross road of land and sea trading routes he nurtured a group of believers that literally turned the world upside down. What a refreshing and challenging truth we can learn as we see what made them so different, what made them so powerful, and what made them so "Turned to God"!

The Apostle Paul is celebrating the new life Christ brings to all who come to Him. No less than 10 times he points out freshness of this new life in Christ. Let me just trace them across the pages of this letter.

1. They had A NEW PLAN IN LIFE: Walk worthy of God [2.12]
2. They had A NEW AUTHORITY IN LIFE: Take God at His Word [2.13]
3. They had A NEW MEASURING STICK IN LIFE: Measure all by Christ's coming [2.19-20]
4. They had A NEW PERSPECTIVE IN LIFE: Accept suffering from God [3.3-4]
5. They had A NEW RESOURCE IN LIFE: Abound in love [3.12]
6. They had A NEW APPETITE IN LIFE: Stay pure [4.3]
7. They had A NEW LIFESTYLE: Be quiet, Mind own business, Work [4.11]
8. They had A NEW OCCUPATION IN LIFE - MINISTRY : Comfort one another [4.18]; Edify one another [5.11]
9. They had A NEW HABIT IN LIFE: Rejoice always [5.16]

10.They had A NEW AWARENESS IN LIFE - CONTACT WITH GOD:
Pray always [5.17]; Be thankful [5.18]

What kind of world did they live in? Galatians 4:4-5 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (KJV). In God's estimation it was the fullness of times. This meant:

1. GLOBAL LANGUAGE Koine
2. GLOBAL TRANSPORTATION Roman Roads
3. GLOBAL LAW AND PEACE Pax Romana
4. GLOBAL RELIGION Pantheon
5. GLOBAL CULTURE Games

I. A New Way of Life - CITIZEN OF HEAVEN OR EARTHDWELLERS? They had A NEW ORIENTATION: 1 Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; (KJV)
The lost person has an entirely different orientation than we do.

A. Earthdwellers:

1. Earthdwellers live for their APPETITES Philippians 3:19a Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. (NIV).
2. Earthdwellers lived for their APPEARANCE Philippians 3:19a and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. (NIV).
3. Earthdwellers live for their ADDRESS Philippians 3:19c Their mind is on earthly things. (NIV). Did you know that in the book Revelation the word the Holy Spirit uses to describe lost people most often is "earthdwellers", people who only live for the here and now.

B. Citizens of Heaven:

1. What would this communicate to these saints?
Citizens of Rome were little fragments of Roman society. They:
 - a) spoke the language
 - b) wore the dress
 - c) observed the customs
 - d) bore the titles
 - e) kept the laws
 2. Thus, a clear concept came to the mind. Now, they were to use that concept to know how to live in the world. "Romans were stubbornly and unalterably Roman - never dreaming of being assimilated into the people around them." Acts 16:20-21.
- C. How do we live in the world as citizens of Heaven?
What is it?
- a) Our language changes
 - (1) SPEAK TO YOUR SELF SPIRITUAL WORDS Ephesians 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; (KJV)
 - (2) SPEAK TO OTHERS TRUTHFUL WORDS Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (KJV)
 - (3) SPEAK TO NOONE EVIL WORDS Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (KJV)
 - (4) SPEAK TO ALL HEALTHY WORDS Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: (KJV)
- II. They had A NEW DIRECTION IN LIFE: First Thessalonians 1:9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from

idols to serve the living and true God; (KJV) Psalm 17:14 From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes. (KJV)

A. Worldliness: The Bible¹ defines worldliness by centering morality where we intuitively know it should be. Worldliness is the lust of the flesh (a passion for sensual satisfaction), the lust of the eyes (an inordinate desire for the finer things of life), and the pride of life (self-satisfaction in who we are, what we have, and what we have done).

1. Worldliness, then, is a preoccupation with ease and affluence.
2. Worldliness elevates creature comforts to the point of idolatry;
3. Worldliness wants a large salary;
4. Worldliness believes a comfortable life style has become a necessity of life.
5. Worldliness is reading magazines about people who live pleasure seeking (hedonistic) lives and spend too much money on themselves and wanting to be like them.
6. But more importantly , worldliness is simply pride and selfishness in disguise.
7. Worldliness is being resentful when someone snubs us or patronizes us or shows off.
8. Worldliness means smarting under every slight, challenging every word spoken against us, cringing when another is preferred before us.
9. Worldliness is harboring grudges, nursing grievances, and wallowing in self-pity.
10. These are the ways in which we are most like the world."

B. **WORLDLINESS IS A SIGN OF LOSTNESS** 1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world, nor the things in the

¹ Dave Roper, The Strength of a Man, RBC, p. 95.

world. If anyone loves 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 boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.
(NASB)

1. LOVE NOT a preoccupation with ease and affluence.
2. LOVE NOT elevates creature comforts to the point of idolatry;
3. LOVE NOT a large salary;
4. LOVE NOT a comfortable life style has become a necessity of life.
5. LOVE NOT reading magazines about people who live pleasure seeking (hedonistic) lives and spend too much money on themselves and wanting to be like them.
6. LOVE NOT pride and selfishness in disguise.
7. LOVE NOT being resentful when someone snubs us or patronizes us or shows off.
8. LOVE NOT smarting under every slight, challenging every word spoken against us, cringing when another is preferred before us.