

# Live for the Glory of God

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*We are growing into a more modern and affluent society as our country continues to develop and grow. It is possible to fall into a materialistic culture. It becomes a matter of concern when we begin to lose the "good Samaritan" culture where we care for one another, recognize our neighbours, and help one another when we see the need. We are in danger of losing the caring, the reaching out, the relationship, the oneness and the concern for one another.*

The Bible warns us that when we allow the materialistic culture to come into our lives, we will soon lose the right priorities, our judgments are compromised and we will no longer have faith in God. The Bible says, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other, you cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24). Jesus said that we cannot serve both God and mammon. "Mammon" simply means anything other than God; it can be money, material possessions, friendships that take the rightful place of God in our lives.

Jesus relates an incident of a rich young ruler who came to Him, wanting to know how to have eternal life: "Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, 'Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' So Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery', 'do not murder', 'do not steal', 'do not bear false witness', 'honor your father and your mother'. And he said, 'All these things I have kept from my youth'. So when Jesus heard this he heard all these things, He said to him, 'You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.' But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich" (Luke 18:18-23). How easy we can be deceived without realizing it. Like this young ruler, we can be bound by materialism and yet do not know it. The Bible says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can destroy and where thieves do not break in or steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:19-21). Jesus is not against having riches. This young ruler needed to put his treasures in the right place. It was certain that his master was not God. Though he was "sorrowful", he did nothing to change the situation when he was made aware of it.

## **Danger of a Materialistic Culture**

In a materialistic culture, possessions are not the only thing we need to be concerned about. There is something else which is even more destructive and Paul pointed that out to us in Galatians, "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lust against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law" (Galatians 5:16-18). When we accept the materialistic culture, the natural man or our flesh controls us, so that we do not do the things that we wish but instead we do the works of the flesh. "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, revellies, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).

The Danger of this materialistic culture is that when we allow it to rule over us, we become its slaves just like the rich young ruler. This is the deception of Satan and we must not let God's grace and power be denied in our lives. Instead, we should seek God with repentance and bear the fruits of repentance.

## **Four Steps**

There are four steps to help us avoid this materialistic culture. Paul said "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

**Firstly**, we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. We are to live for the Glory of God daily.

**Secondly**, do not be conformed to this world. Do not let the world mould you but be conformed by Jesus.

**Thirdly**, be transformed by the renewing of your minds. Whatsoever we think, so we are. We need to fill our minds with His thoughts.

**Fourthly**, we need to put God first as it is said in Matthews 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

All these four steps involve an act of the will. God never forces us to do anything. We need to choose what we want to do. If we want to be blessed by God, we need to make up our minds as James said, "For let not the man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways" (James 1:7-8). Do not halt between two opinions like the people during Elijah's time (1 Kings 18:21). As Joshua said, "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that

both you and your descendants may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19). So choose whom you will obey; and I encourage you to choose Jesus and live for the glory of God! By doing so, the "good Samaritan" culture in you will be a formidable witness for Jesus.

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