

Chapter 7: The World

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Date: 01 April 2007

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[0:00] Well, good morning. Today we're studying the seventh chapter in A.W.Pink's little book, Profiting from the Word, and we're considering the world.

The world is one of the three members of the unholy trinity that all Christians have to fight and confront throughout their pilgrimage.

You have the flesh, the devil, and the world. And today we're going to be looking at the world and how our relationship to the world is going to be affected if we are truly profiting from the scripture.

Turn with me to 1 Peter 2.2. 1 Peter 2.2. And when one of you gentlemen find it, if you could read it for us. 1 Peter 2.2.

Like you born babies, make pure spiritual milk so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.

Okay. What is the pure spiritual milk that babies, that we as babies are supposed to crave?

[1:05] The Word. The Word of God is the milk. And we are compared to babies in that if we're going to grow, we have to drink the milk of the Word.

And Peter says that if we do that, then we will grow. And isn't that the goal or shouldn't that be the goal of every Christian? That we're growing more and more up in our salvation.

We don't want to grow just in head knowledge. We want to grow in our heart, in heart knowledge, in experiential knowledge of our salvation.

And that should be our goal. And so we need to test ourselves to see if we are growing like Peter wants us to grow, like our Lord wants us to grow. So how do we know if we're growing up in the Word in regards to the world?

Well, we're going to have six questions that we can ask ourselves to test ourselves to see if the milk of the Word is doing us good. And the first question is this.

[2:06] Do you understand the true character of the world? Do you understand the true character of the world? The Word of God is like a surgeon's light.

You know, they wear on their heads to see on the patient. And the patient is the world in this case. And before the surgeon can operate, he needs to see exactly what the problem is.

And so the Word of God shines on the patient. And what it sees is not a pretty sight. The Scripture tells us and shows us in its illustrations and its pictures what the world's true character is like.

And it's not all that it's cracked up to be. The world, we find, is under the control of the evil one. The world is Satan's kingdom ingrained in men's cultures and the way they live and their customs.

The world is the reflection of our own sinful hearts. And it's the reflection of Satan's own wickedness. And the Word of God is doing us good when we can see and when we can feel the true nature, the true character of the world.

[3:24] It is more than intellectual knowledge. It's the knowledge of the heart that we're talking about. We can all cognitively see, oh, the world has problems.

But if the Word of God is doing us good, then our hearts are going to see and feel the death and the poverty of the world.

And we're going to see and feel that the things that are highly esteemed among men are an abomination to God. If the Spirit of God is owning His Word in our hearts, then we will know in our souls and in our hearts that the world is an empty place.

It's a gigantic fraud, a wretched thing that is devoid of any beauty. The world puts on a lot of makeup, doesn't it? It puts on a lot of makeup and it makes itself look attractive.

When in reality it's not. One of my friends at work just got a brand new, high definition, super duper Jumbotron TV.

[4:28] And one of the first complaints that he had about his brand new purchase, within the first week he was complaining that one of the actresses that he thought was so beautiful and so hot on

one of these crime shows, all of a sudden he could see the makeup just caked on her.

And what appeared to be so beautiful before is really not that attractive. And the world, or the Word of God, does something like that for us.

It turns up the definition and so we see that the big show, the world that's all around us, that is putting on so much makeup, we see it for what it is.

It's not a beautiful thing, it's an ugly thing. And so let me ask you, what do you think of the world? What do you think of the world?

The systems of government, the culture that we live in, the way that we raise our families and generally out there in the world, our academic institutions, our forms of entertainment and our sports and our TV and our movies, all the things that people say it's good and it's worth living for.

[5:43] Have you seen in your heart, have you felt in your heart that those things are vain, they're empty, they're big frauds. And in reality, they're opposing the Lord of the universe.

So have you seen what the world is like? All of us at one time loved the world, didn't we? We were addicted to the world. We were slaves to the world and we enjoyed it.

But the word of God came to us in power by the Holy Spirit. And now we see that what we were once living for is not worth living for anymore.

And so it doesn't matter how much the Bible you've read, how many times you've read the Bible all the way through, or how many times you do your devotions or anything like that, how many sermons you hear.

If you still think the world is a beautiful place, if your heart is still in love with the world, you're not profiting from the scriptures. You're not profiting from the word of God.

[6:48] So have you learned the true character of the world? That's the first question. The second question is, have you seen the world to be an enemy, or have you seen that the world is an enemy to be resisted and overcome?

The world is an enemy to be resisted and to be overcome. So this takes it a step further. We don't only see that the world is a nasty place, but we see that it's an enemy to be overcome.

And once we have seen that the world is truly evil and it's truly bad, then in our hearts we will see that we want to overcome it. We will want to overcome it.

The scripture teaches us that the Christian's life is a soldier's life. It's a warrior's life. It's a fight. 1 Timothy 6.12, Paul tells Timothy to fight the good fight of the faith.

To fight the good fight of the faith. The world is a restless enemy. It's a huge, gigantic system that wants to absorb us.

[7:59] On the TV show Star Trek, there was this alien race. Maybe some of you are familiar with it. They were called the Borg, and they were half human, half machine people.

And they were all wired together. And so wherever one was, they all were. And their sole task, the thing that they were all living for, was to conquer everyone else and to make them just like them.

They wanted to make everyone join them. And the world is like that. It's an enemy that wants us to be wired into it. And if we refuse to be assimilated into the world, then the only option is that we will be destroyed.

The Christians have to fight against the world, or they will be overcome by the world. There's only two options. So no one can serve two masters.

Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. The world is vying for our hearts, our affections, and we are to serve God alone.

[9:07] And so if we are to serve God alone, we have to overcome and resist the world. And the world is going to show us beautiful things. It's going to show us good things and say that these things are worth living for instead of God.

It's going to show us a good job. It's going to show us a nice big house with a nice lawn and beautiful grass and wonderful landscape and say, this is really something worth living for.

Or it's going to show us children that are intellectually developed, socially apt, well-behaved children, and say, isn't this worth living for?

And there's a million other temptations, but we have to resist them. We must resist them, or we will be swept away by the allurements of the world.

The world is to be rejected and to be resisted because it resisted Jesus. It rejected Jesus. Jesus is diametrically opposed to the world.

[10:13] Help me, fill in the blank. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not know him, did not recognize him, did not know him.

The world is totally blind to Jesus' glory. The world is completely opposed to God himself. Paul says that we have received the spirit of God, not the spirit of the world.

And the world is at odds with God in all scores. The world says up, and God says down. The world says right, and God says left. What the world says is beautiful and exciting.

God sees no glory in it. If we are to fight on God's side, if we are to be going and walking with our Lord, then we have to fight against the world because the world is confronting us.

So if we are profiting from the scripture, then we will see that it is our duty to fight against the world as long as there is a world to fight against. In our homes, and in our schools, in our own hearts, we have to resist the world.

[11:25] We can't leave it unfought in any place that we find it. So how do we overcome the world? How do we overcome the world? 1 John 5, 4. Maybe you can help me.

You don't have to turn there. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Even our faith. Faith is the key that helps us to destroy the world, to fight the good faith, the good fight of faith.

And it's by the very means that we've already talked about. Faith puts on the glasses and helps us to see what the world is. It takes off the makeup, and so its allurements and its temptations are no longer powerful.

Faith sees past all the glitter. And it lays a hold of scripture. And where the scripture says, this is the path. Walk in this path. Faith says, this is the path.

Let's walk in this path. Faith lays a hold of God. Faith finds its delight in God and says, oh God, you are my joy and my delight.

[12:31] There is none on the earth that I desire besides thee. So let me ask you, how is it going with you? How is it going with you? Is there a struggle in your life against the world?

Does your faith cause you to wrestle against the world? And you need to listen to me carefully, brothers and sisters. If there is no fight, then it's very doubtful that there's any faith.

You either don't have the root of the matter in you, or you are very and severely sick. You have grown so in love with the world and you have breathed its air for so long that you can't hear your Savior's voice anymore.

So think for a moment. What is your heart's condition? Are you fooling yourself? Are you fooling yourself? Some of you, I'm sure, are not fighting like you ought.

And it's time to wake up. It's time to wake up. It's only those who overcome that earn the crown.

There's no crown waiting for those who are sleeping beside the path and who are leaving the world unfought.

[13:42] If you're sleeping beside the road that leads to eternal life, you need to realize that you're in a very precarious position. There is no salvation by sleeping by the road.

So that's the second question. The third question is this. Do you see that Christ died to deliver you from this present evil world?

Do you see that Christ died to deliver you from this present evil world? Scripture gives us several reasons why Jesus died on the cross and they all have to do with our salvation.

They're all different aspects of our salvation. He died to fulfill the requirements of the law. that were written against us. He died to destroy the work of the devil.

He died to deliver us from the wrath that is to come. And he died to deliver us from this present evil age. Galatians 1, 3, and 4.

[14:42] I'll just read this. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age.

So let's put on our thinking caps for a minute. And let me ask you how did Jesus dying on the cross deliver us from this evil world this evil age?

How does the death of Jesus work itself out so that we are delivered from the world? Roger. Roger. On the cross he made himself the reference point and he looked out at the world to compare it to what Christ represents and come up with a decision.

Okay. And what do you mean? Keep working on that. He becomes our point of reference and he becomes our authority and he becomes everything we can hear by two.

Okay. So when we see Christ dying on the cross it makes a fundamental change in us doesn't it? We when we see by faith what our Savior did to save us from this world then we see what real beauty is don't we?

[15:54] And we see really what is worth living for it's living for him that's worth living for. Jim. But look when it comes to one of the persons that was crucified next to him after he had gone to his senses because of the fact that had one.

Right. He admitted he deserved what he got. So it's when by faith when we see Christ that a change has worked in us and in our hearts right our fundamental allegiance to the world is broken. Once we were addicted we were slaves to the world and when Christ dies for us and we see that then now the allegiance is given to him. We can't serve two masters and when we see Jesus dying on the cross then our allegiance is shifted.

What else? Mickey. How did you fulfill the law on the very foundation of the earth and the way about this when it happened?

Without that without the sacrifice and the blood there is no forgiveness there is no so it's from beginning to end.

[17:14] Okay. Right. Jesus' death is the culmination of God's plan to have a people for himself isn't it?

and when he fulfills that plan there is something very basic that happens. We are taken out of Satan's kingdom and put into the kingdom of God's son.

Colossians 1.13 He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the son he loves in whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins.

So by Jesus' death our address is changed from you know living on the road that Satan lives on to living on the street where Christ lives on.

Our addresses are changed our kingdoms are changed we were once in Satan's kingdom which is the world and now we live in Christ's kingdom. You're using the word world meaning the world system that surrounds us by.

[18:22] The world of course also can be this planet and ultimately everyone who is in Christ will have a new world this globe will be made anew and also the world system will be done away with and a much better system a perfect system so ultimately being in Christ takes us into the world in a much broader sense.

Okay that's an interesting point I never thought of that but what does everyone understand that when Christ died it set in motion the culmination of the end of the world many times in the Bible it says we are living in the end times because we are when Christ died the history of the world was forever changed and now instead of going in the same way it was going it's now shifted and it's coming to an end and for us who are in Christ we are going to live in the new heavens in the new earth forever and ever and so we aren't going to live in the world forever because the world's going to be destroyed is there anything else that pretty much covered what I had thought of but I'm open to suggestions Galatians 6:14 says that we should glory in nothing but the cross because by it the world is crucified to us and we to it so there is something in the cross that takes the affection of the world for us away and also our affections for the world so once we have died to the world we no longer live in the world and live for the world we have been crucified with

Christ so if we are profiting from the word of God then we're going to see this change in us more and more we're going to desire to experience the deliverance from the world more and more we're going to be we aren't going to be satisfied with the world living in us and we're going to be we're going to be hoping and wishing and wanting for the day to come when the world is taken away from us and we will pray you know we will be praying Christ come quickly I'm tired of living in this world I'm tired of breathing the air I'm tired of seeing the sin so once we've seen that Jesus has died to deliver us from the present evil age we can no longer desire to live in a place where our Lord is so dishonored where his name is taken in vain and where he's considered rubbish that's the third question the fourth question is this if you is your heart being weaned from the world is your heart being weaned from the world so this is building we're building on top of each other and this is the next step and it's kind of what we are we've already been talking about but if you're profiting from the scripture you really will be less and less detached to the world so imagine that you're running a marathon you've been training for months and months and years and years maybe you've been training for it you wake up every morning and you run and you put in your miles and the day of the race comes and you put on your favorite running shoes you put on your favorite shorts and your

tank top and you've even put on your number and you go to the place where the race is going to start you stretch thoroughly you're ready to go and then before you start you put a huge 65 pound weight around your neck on an industrial sized chain and then you line up so there you are what chances do you have of winning what chances do you have of winning zero you will not win with that weight on you well the world is like a big weight and it bears us down and it will drag us down to the very ground and into hell unless we throw it off the world will wrap itself around our hearts and it will entangle and disease us until it's impossible for us to run the race and to win and Paul says run in such a way as to get the prize run in such a way as to get the prize so if a runner is going to win he's going to win the race the marathon he has to throw off everything that is weighing him down and

Christian we have to throw off the world the world will cause us to lose and not only are it will cause us to lose our own souls if we let it so how do I know if I'm being entangled by this world or if I'm throwing the world off if I'm being weaned from it well ask yourself what is your treasure what is your treasure because where your treasure is there will your heart be also are you in love with worldly things are you in love with temporal things do the things that you enjoy and you take delight in will you be able to have those with you a million years from now and after you're dead and after Christ has come will those things still be with you men do you love it's it's a final four season men do you love sports and games and the success of your team more than the success of the gospel more than the success of God's church when your team loses is a heartbreaking moment for you but when the gospel has a major setback you just shrug it off the world is not our home and so we have to be careful don't we our teams are gonna go the way of the dodo so to speak it's not our home and so if we can't say that we're enjoying

God and enjoying God's word and enjoying God's church more than we're enjoying our teams and our entertainment and our jobs and everything like that then we you are not profiting from the word or how about this we're gonna have 15 minutes or so 10 minutes or so after this and before our morning service starts and we'll have time after the morning service where you will all talk with each other what are you gonna be talking about what are you gonna be talking about do you find if you find no joy in talking about scripture and Jesus but you'd rather talk about the things of the world and politics and sports and money and TV and movies then your heart is still caught up in the world what are you talking about to your brothers and sisters what do you find enjoyment in if you are profiting from the word then your heart's gonna be moving more and more away from the world you'll be less attached to it you won't be concerned so much about its concerns the things of the temporal world will grow dim you won't be able to see any glory that you saw before in it so if you can say with Paul I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ

[26:10] Jesus my Lord for whose sake I have lost all things and consider them rubbish that I might gain Christ if that's your heart if your attitude is for me to live as Christ and to die is gain then you are profiting from the scriptures if you aren't loving and you aren't talking and you are enjoying divine things more than worldly things then no matter how much you read no matter how many good sermons you hear and you hear a lot they're not doing you any good so ask yourselves is your heart being weaned away from the world the fifth question is this do you walk in separation from the world do you walk in separation from the world so this goes even a step further we're not talking about what our hearts affections are anymore we're talking about how our life is ordered how we walk if our hearts are weaned from the world that natural outcome is that we will walk separately from the world the world is going one way and we will be going on a very different path and we'll you'll be able to see it in our lives that our lives are actually different than a person of this world's life

Robert Frost wrote the poet two roads diverged in a wood and I I took the one less traveled by and that has made all the difference so you have you stand at a crossroads and the world is going this way and it's a wide way it's worn down it's a nice path and then there's one less traveled by it's a narrow path a path that goes off on its own and it's a path that leads to glory so which path are you walking which path are you on if you're profiting from the scripture from the word of God then you'll be on the road less traveled there's millions and millions and billions of people on the world's path but there's only a few that find the path to heaven the less traveled one and the scripture indicts all those who are walking with the world and who love the world and act like the world James writes you adulterous people don't you know that the friendship with the world is hatred toward God anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes the enemy of God if you're friends with

someone you walk with them you walk down together the path are you walking with the world pink asks how can I fraternize with or seek my pleasure in that which condemn the son of God if I do then at once it identifies me with his enemies oh my reader make no mistake upon this point it is written if any man love the world the love of the father is not in him so men and women but men especially how's it going with you and with your family God has given the government of your family into your hands and is your family and the way you walk in the way you live any different than your unbelieving neighbors so if we could be a fly in your living room wall what would we see would we see that there's no difference between you and your neighbor would you be leading your family and family worship would the same TV shows be on your TV set as your neighbor's TV would we see Deuteronomy 6 6 lived out in your house with your children and remember Deuteronomy 6 6 these commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts impress them on your children talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road when you lie down and when you get up tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates is the word of God so overshadow in your life that the way you live and the way you walk it's like a never-ending conversation about God or do you walk as the world walks with a little religiosity a little church and you do some of the right things but your heart's not in it and you walk very differently you have to lead your family down the road less traveled by if you would save their souls if you would save your own soul and if you're not doing those things then brothers and sisters you're just basically taking your hands are taking your children handing them over to the world and having the world raise them for Satan and for his kingdom and to walk in this world is to damn your own soul and if you're profiting from the scriptures there's going to be big gaps in the way you live and how the world lives that's the fifth question the sixth and final question is this do you ever evoke the hatred of the world do you ever evoke the hatred of the world so let me ask you I'm looking for a response why would the world hate you if you're profiting from the scriptures why would the world hate you if you were profiting from the scriptures righteousness what do you mean right the world does not love God does not love the righteousness of God there's enmity there what else why else would the world hate you like Jesus right we shouldn't be surprised if they hated our teacher and hated our master they're going to hate us as well we're going to be more like Christ if we're profiting from the scriptures and when we're like Christ why is that so offensive to the world right I mean they're living according to their father's rules and Satan hates Christ and they hate Christ because of why what does our righteousness do to them Michael it exposes sin I mean if you're used to living in the dark and you love the dark when the light shines in and shows you what you are you hate it you're not saying oh let me get out of the dark and into the light you're saying turn off the light and Christians that's what the world is going to do to you you are the light of the world and they want to click you off and get rid of you so let me ask you another question who was it that killed our Savior was it just the world at large who was it exactly right it was the religious leaders the political leaders were their pawns it was the religious world that hates hated our Savior so why is the religious world going to hate us I mean why are other churches going to hate our church when we both have the Christian name or in our you know why are they going to hate us if we are profiting from the scriptures right there's differences the Bible so what is what it what's the religion that we find most out there in the world like the world I mean what were the Pharisees self-righteous and what do we say about self-righteousness if we're profiting from the scriptures it's wrong it's evil it's man honoring and God debasing the Bible condemns self-righteousness and that's what they're living for and when you condemn something that someone is living for the reaction is hatred the Bible exalts God and it debases man and you just have to have your eyes open for 10 minutes when you see that the norm in the world and the norm in this world's religions is to exalt man to make much of him and you can fit God in where you want so there's one sure sign or this is one sure sign that the word of God is doing you good they hated your Savior and they'll hate you as well Romans calls the natural man God haters the word of God is doing you good then they will hate you second Timothy 3:12 says everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted so do you know persecution in your life for righteousness sake if you do that's a good sign it's not a comfortable thing but it's a good sign that you are profiting from the word of God and that you are living a godly life so those are six questions that we need to look at this morning and we need to ask ourselves those questions and we need to keep up asking ourselves we need to check up on ourselves from time to time and say is my heart being weaned away from the world am I more in love for Christ do I want to live for Christ or do I want to live for

the world and we need to evaluate our spiritual health that way so let me finish up with a rather long quote from our author from Pink and it's so good that I just want to read the whole thing and if you would just listen carefully this is his last paragraph in this chapter now my reader do you really wish to measure yourself by the contents of this chapter then seek honest answers to the following questions first what are the objects before your mind in times of recreation what do your thoughts most run upon second what are the objects of your choice when you have to decide how to spend an evening or the Sabbath afternoon what do you select so think about that question this afternoon what am I selecting with my free time third which occasions you the most sorrow the loss of earthly things or the lack of communion with God what causes greater grief or chagrin the spoiling of your plans or the coldness of your heart to Christ fourth what is your favorite topic of conversation do you hanker after the news of the day or to meet with those who talk of the altogether lovely one fifth do your good intentions materialize do your good intentions materialize or are they nothing but empty dreams are you spending more or less time than formerly on your knees is the word sweeter to your taste or has your soul lost its relish for it so those are questions you need to ask yourselves we've asked ourselves a lot of questions this morning a lot of searching questions so may God give us grace to overcome this world and if you are struggling with your attraction to the world if your heart is starting to hanker after those things then take up the word of God again with a renewed desire it's the word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit when we lay hold of it by faith that can break the chains that bind us to the world so if you are chained to this world and you want to be away from it read your word read the word of God and pray for help so may God give us grace to profit from the word let's pray heavenly father there is still much of the world in us and that should not be your son died for us and it's only because we forget that so often we pretend like that is not real that the world is allowed to live in us unfought we use strengthen us strengthen our faith that we might lay a hold of your word that it might do us good that this world's chains around us would be broken and that we would be able to live for you and live consistent Christian lives that would seek your glory in all things and all matters of how we live that we would be different from the world and more like Jesus father thank you that there is an atonement for sin we have [39 : 58] participated in the world and its rebellion against you will you forgive us and renew our obedience give us strength give us vision and give us eyes to see where we fail and help us by the power of your holy spirit to be sanctified pray in Jesus name amen