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The Pursuit Of Lying Vanities

One of the characteristics of being a Christian is that we find ourselves on the outside of many situations; academic, vocational, social etc. If we are strong willed, and faithful in our service to God, we will do what is needed to maintain our strength. It is important however to convey this to those who are younger, and to remind ourselves of these things as well, so that we can be prepared for those moments when we may think that perhaps we just don't measure up in comparison to the rest of the world.

At each stage of our life, these pressures take on different forms and expressions by those about us. When we are younger this may be expressed by outright statements about us as being Christians. As we mature, we may find that the pressures are exerted in more subtle ways. We may find ourselves not informed of events that are happening, included in some things or perhaps we may encounter those who offer other remarks that, while they may not seem to be ill intended, are nevertheless meant to convey other meanings. A look at our lives, if we are serving God as we should, and the lives of those who are not, will help to keep us on the right track.

Around us we see those who spend their lives pursuing their careers, jobs and recreational interests, without God. We find that organizations schedule events at leisure times, that coincidentally occur at times that are scheduled for services to meet with the saints. In the belly of the great fish, Jonah stated, "***They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.***" (Jonah 2.8). Forsaking God, or limiting one's devotion to serving Him, places the world as our priority. There is a place in our lives for jobs, education and leisure, but this should not be at the expense of our immortal soul. Peter warns that all the things that are in the world are to be burned up (2 Pet 3.10-11). Since this is the fate of the world, only our service to God will survive.

Paul spoke of a time when even those who claim to be Christians would be lovers of pleasures (2 Tim 3.4) among other things. This places a premium on doing what we want rather than performing the will of God. People begin to see serving God as an imposition on their lives and there are many religious organizations that will aid in the formation of this line of thinking by appealing more to the desires of humans than true service to the Lord.

This may in turn cause us to feel deprived at some point in our lives. The Psalmist touches on this feeling when he writes, "***For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.***" (Psm 73.3). We must remind ourselves that worldly things are temporary. Paul states, "***If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.***" (Col 3.1-3). Others may not understand the need to place God first at all times in our lives, and we, by way of example, need to live in such a way that convey to them that we prize the promises of God and wish to share that with them.

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