

Future Story G

In Harm's Way?

Are YOU Possibly In Harm's Way?

A Consideration Of Worldly Bondages

Issue of Concern:

God counsels us to be free from worldly cares. Consider the “American dream,” for example. Is it really? We buy into worldly perspectives so easily. What Counsel does God graciously give concerning worldly yokes? There are many insights allowing us the benefits of successful living – as He defines it – IF we’d but do it His way. Warning: The story below offers many personal (life-changing) applications, so read on only if you’re willing to prayerfully consider making some major changes.

“Come on, Jack, I know you know what I’m talking about. Why is it you’re not willing to acknowledge what you see factually taking place all around you?” Jack noticed Paul was speaking in his very serious, if not, righteous-anger tone.

“Are you telling me simple house-owning is going to determine my eternal state? Are you telling me my other contractual obligations will keep me out of heaven? I am a believing Christian, Paul. I go to church. I’m involved in ministry and I love Jesus Christ. Don’t tell me these common-to-all cares of life will determine whether or not I get to heaven because it’s not by works of righteousness that one is saved. Paul, you’re almost beginning to sound like one who believes in the heresy of works salvation.”

“NO, Jack, you know me better than that! But as a Bible believer, we need to more thoroughly ponder what Jesus Christ says concerning the end-time attitude our Lord wants us have. It includes the command not to be ‘weighed down with the cares of this life.’ You’re right, it’s only through Jesus Christ that one gets to heaven; It’s not by works. But if people (even Christians!) have worldly bondages they cannot (or, when it gets down to the moment of decision, choose not to) get out from under during this time – mainly due to what it will cost them – and I’m not talking only financial – then yes, having these worldly ties is not wise. In fact, it could be most dangerous. The context of this passage is end times, dear friend. Read Luke 21 and take note how verse 34 is included in this heavy passage. It really does tie to the issue of ‘falling away.’ Jack, I only bring up these concerns because I care about you. I’m not judging you. I’m only trying to help encourage you to get out of these worldly bondages that will be so difficult – if not seemingly impossible for some – to get out of during the time of the very last days before our Lord Jesus returns.”

“Thanks Paul,” were the only two words Jack uttered in response. He then simply walked away.

It was years later when Paul and Jack met up again. Jack couldn’t stop telling his story. Literally an hour after Jack started sharing, Paul, a patient listener, was finally able to inject a few words without

interrupting his friend. “So would you say it was worth all the sacrifices you’ve make to get to the place where you are today?”

“Without a doubt, Paul,” Jack said with a big grin. “Even though our Lord has yet to come, I know that my being here with you today is only because I did decide to heed your counsel years ago. I did get out from under those worldly ties, and yet, I know of four personal friends who have not gotten to the mental state where they would be willing, as hard as it will be, to walk away from all the material things to which they’re presently tied. Two of them are Rod and Peter. You know them, don’t you?”

“Yes, but it’s like this ...” as Jack noticed Paul was confused. “... Rod, Peter, Rich and Scott know that when the time comes that they will be issued a choice to either join the world system and take the mark or suffer major consequences, they will forsake the material for the eternal. They are sincerely ready for that day.”

“Okay, Jack, but please understand the position you’re in – actually having heeded the passage to throw off the worldly cares by being as unattached to the system as possible – is actually a much better state to be in. We are counseled to come out from among them. I guess I’m just concerned that when the consequences of failing to meet these contractual obligations are spelled out to people (who’ve decided to enjoy the pleasures of life as long as they can), some won’t be able to follow through with their plans!”

“You’re right and I sincerely tried to help these others see that. But they weren’t willing to go to this, what seemed to them, extreme. As a result, I’ve done all I can do to paint a picture which warns them about living in this dangerous realm. Having finally discerned the extent of that danger is what helped me decide to apply the advice you gave me five years ago. And I’m feeling so free as a result of doing so – thank you again dear Brother in Christ! But I also know that in the danger of postponing the decision to throw off the worldly cares, God will help those who truly uphold Him as #1 priority over temporal, worldly stuff. I know of many who have determined ahead of time to suffer the consequences – whatever they be – and reject the mark when it’s being globally implemented.”

That concluded that part of their conversation that day. Six years later as Jack and Paul continued in regular contact through the years of tribulation, it was Jack’s awful experience to share with Paul that three of his four friends – two of whom Paul knew well from church (Rod and Peter) – had actually gone on to accept the system of darkness by taking the mark of the beast in order to keep what *treasured possessions* were theirs ... for just a few more years anyway.

Do you remember Jim Elliot’s contribution to wisdom literature? “He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep in order to gain what he cannot lose.” Our Lord Jesus also talked of the pearl of great price, the field with treasure, etc. May we be His faithful stewards who, upon His return, are found to be those walking in loving obedience.

Yes, it will cost each of us to take further steps to separate from the worldly hooks presently (and deeply in some cases) holding us on the worldly line. This is bondage from which our Lord Jesus wishes us to be free. May each of us take out the satanic hooks by following the Fisher of mankind’s Counsel whereby we are truly set free. We would suggest beginning the journey by reading Luke 21. Pray, asking God to disclose to you the areas where you have to *unhook*. Don’t forget: With God, all things are possible and it will be worth it all. God is so good to His people in Christ Jesus His Son.

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