

Travesty – Part III Review

How does the secular mindset affect the call, the cross, and ultimately the compromise it brings into our lives? The word ‘**secular**’ is an adjective denoting attitudes, activities, or other things that have no religious or spiritual basis. Synonyms are: nonreligious, areligious, lay, temporal, worldly, earthly and profane. Here is what James says about earthly wisdom, **James 3:15**; “*This [superficial] wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly (secular), natural (unspiritual), even demonic.*”

Steven’s life is turned around as he comes to realize that secularism had crept into his life and had affected his calling and revealed compromises he had made. Secular business principals of a+b=c had governed his life. Everything was calculated. Jesus says to give up on a+b=c and watch Him move in miraculous and supernatural ways. Our flesh or carnal man wants the secure way of following the Lord knowing that if we market our gifts as the secular do, we have the security of a certain amount of income based on sales. Steven stepped out in faith and out of the worldly secular mindset and started giving freely. Jesus talks clearly about denying yourself once you take up the cross and follow Him since He has called you.

Luke 9:23, “*And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to follow Me [as My disciple], he must deny himself [set aside selfish interests], and take up his cross daily [expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come] and follow Me [believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me].” Luke 14:25-27; “Now large crowds were going along with Jesus; and He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life [in the sense of indifference to or relative disregard for them in comparison with his attitude toward God]—he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross [expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come] and follow after Me [believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me] cannot be My disciple.” Matthew 8:18-22; “Now when Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to cast off for the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Then [on His way to board the boat] a scribe [who was a respected and authoritative interpreter of the Law] came and said to Him, “Master, I will accompany You [as Your student] wherever You go.” Jesus replied to him, “Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.” Another of the disciples said to Him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father (collect my inheritance).” But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me [believing in Me as Master and Teacher], and allow the [spiritually] dead to bury their own dead.”*

On a side note, there is a lot of talk and chatter about ‘being true to yourself’. Let’s be **true to Jesus** and deny our ‘self’.

As a Christian what does the cross mean to us? We wear the cross in jewelry, people get it tattooed on their bodies, and they think it’s cool and not saying that it’s wrong. But if we identify with the cross of Calvary, here are some verses from the Amplified Bible we need to meditate on to see its power and influence on our lives. **I Corinthians 1:18**; “[*The Wisdom of God*] For the message of the cross is foolishness [absurd and illogical] to those who are perishing and spiritually dead [because they reject it], but to us who are being saved [by God’s grace] it is [*the manifestation of*] the power of God.” **I Corinthians 15:31**; “*I assure you, believers, by the pride which I have in you in [your union with] Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily [I face death and die to self].” Colossians 3:5;* “So put to death and deprive of power the evil longings of your earthly body [with its sensual, self-centered instincts] immorality, impurity, sinful passion, evil desire, and greed, which is [a kind of] idolatry [because it replaces your devotion to God].” **Galatians 2:19-20**; “*For through the Law I died to the Law and its demands on me [because salvation is provided through the death and resurrection of Christ], so that I might [from now on] live to God. I have been crucified with Christ [that is, in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body I live by faith [by adhering to, relying on, and completely trusting] in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”*

I don’t want to be an enemy with God, do you? James, Jesus half-brother, head pastor of the church in Jerusalem and author of the Book of James says in **James 4:4**; “*You adulteresses [disloyal sinners—flirting with the world and breaking your vow to God]! Do you not know that being the world’s friend [that is, loving the things of the world] is being God’s enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*” It’s not saying to not love sinners or worldly people, but not to love the secular, carnal and the worldly things. Clearly, if we do love the secular, carnal and the world, we put ourselves at enmity with God!

Secular/carnal versus the Spirit of God; **Romans 8:5-8**; “*For those who are living according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh [which gratify the body], but those who are living according to the Spirit, [set their minds on the things of the Spirit [His will and purpose]. Now the mind of the flesh is death [both now and forever—because it pursues sin]; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace [the spiritual well-being that comes from walking with God—both now and forever]; the mind of the flesh [with its sinful pursuits] is actively hostile to God. It does not submit itself to God’s law, since it cannot, and those who are in the flesh [living a life that caters to sinful appetites and impulses] cannot please God.*” Paul says in **Romans 12:2**; “*And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed and progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].*”

Some closing thoughts to bring it home to our personal lives.

Is something **secular** deterring you from following after your call?

Have you compromised in your walk with God in your marriage, family, work ethics, finances by allowing a **secular** mindset to rule you?

Has the media world seduced your mind to think it's good and pleasant to allow **secular** movies, books, music, sports, media, sitcoms, diverting you from serving Jesus whole heartedly?

Are you trying to allow light and darkness (**secular**) to cohabit? **II Corinthians 6:14** says in the New Living Translation, “*Don’t team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness?*”

If so, all you need to do is repent of your sins and ask Jesus to wash you and cleanse you, and then He'll give you the grace and power to be able to change as He takes Lordship in your life!