



STORY:

The classic film *The Matrix* posed the question: “Which world are you in?” Unless you followed closely, or watched the movie more than once, it was (and, for some, still is) a difficult question to answer.

Amphibians live in two worlds at once. Some, like hibernating frogs, can live in one world for an extended time before emerging to the other, then casually slip in and out of each environment when active.

The StewardLife is amphibious. You slip in and out of the world of the secular and the spiritual. The worlds are completely different, but you easily cross from one to the other.

The balance for the Christian steward is to live totally in the spiritual world while being in the secular world.

“Standing around in a garage does not make you a car,” someone once said.

The environment in which you find yourself is real, but that environment does not describe you. What a frog is does not depend on being in or out of water. A frog is a frog, and conducts its life in two environments without changing its nature.

As a child of God, your spiritual nature lives itself out in the physical world. God created and preserves the physical world as a place for you to exist. He expects you to manage it. Being part of society and contributing to its betterment are noble goals of Christian service. Every contribution you make within the church or outside the church witnesses to God's gifts within you.

INSIGHT OUT

Pomegranates and bells. Read Exodus 28:33-35. (The hem of the priests' robes had alternating bells and pomegranates.) The pomegranates kept the bells from clashing. Therefore, each bell could be heard clearly. Can you make an application of bells and pomegranates to Christians in the world? If you are in the world and not influenced by the world, how do you influence the world? What do you think—are Christians the pomegranates or the bells?

EXERCISE:

As you travel the highways this week, try these exercises:

Watch out for that pothole! If it wasn't there just then, you will encounter one sometime today as you drive. Auto manufacturers have tried to help us avoid at least the jolt of a pothole through new computer sensors in suspension systems. When you see the next one--and I hope you see it before you hit it--see that pothole with spiritual eyes. You know that life is full of spiritual potholes. Sin causes them to pop up unexpectedly all over our path. But the Lord promises His Spirit to steer around them, or, at least, soften the jolt. Think about that today and thank God for His care and concern for your life's potholes.

Watch out for a burned out traffic light today. If you don't see one, you may see a malfunctioning signal. When signal lights are out, drivers seem to forget how to drive. An intersection can end up in gridlock. The world will present you with many signals today. They can take the form of commands, requests, criticisms or opinions. They can be written, verbal or non-verbal. As a driver you always obey every signal. But as a Christian, some of the signals you receive from others can require you to perform questionable activities. Christians take their signals from the Lord, from His Word and from its commands.

May God grant you always to see clearly each of His signals and the perseverance and strength to follow His direction.

STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES--PRINCIPLE FIVE

God's stewards are in the world but not of the world. God's stewards recognize that the Lord sets them apart from the world and by the transforming power of the Gospel sends them into the world to live out the Gospel. See Romans 12:2; John 17:15-18; John 20:21-23; Genesis 12:1-3; John 16:33. The Gospel transforms steward's attitudes about the world, the decisions they make and their activities, and is not limited to "church-related" projects and activities.

*This site is maintained through the Board for Congregational Services,
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