

Love Not The World!

Text: [1 John 2:15-17 HCSB5](#) Do not love the world or the things that belong to the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. Because everything that belongs to the world--[16](#) the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one's lifestyle--is not from the Father, but is from the world. [17](#) And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does God's will remains forever.

Introduction

1. We have seen that fellowship with God requires that there be no room for hatred in our heart toward our brother:
 - [1 John 2:9 HCSB](#) The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother is in the darkness until now.
2. But there is one sense in which we are not to have love at all!
 - [1 John 2:15 HCSB](#) Do not love the world or the things that belong to the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. Because everything that belongs to the world—
3. A very simple imperative is therefore given to us: "Love not the world..."
 - a. But do we understand the meaning of this command?
 - b. Do we appreciate the importance of this command?
4. In this study, I hope to...
 - a. Shed some LIGHT on what John is saying
 - b. Provide some MOTIVATION to seriously heed what he commands in this passage

Let's begin by answering the question "Why should Christians not love the world?"

I. Because of what the world is (15a, 16)

A. The "world" in this passage...

1. It is NOT the "physical world"
 - a. It is, after all God's creation
 - [Genesis 1:1 HCSB](#) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
 - b. God declared it to be "very good"
 - [Genesis 1:31 HCSB](#) God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. Evening came, and then morning: the sixth day.
2. It is NOT the "human world" i.e., mankind
 - a. Indeed, God Himself loves the world of men
 - [John 3:16 HCSB](#) "For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.
 - b. Humanity's sinfulness has not stopped God's love and neither should it stop ours.
 - [Romans 5:8 HCSB](#) But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us!
3. RATHER, it is the world of "sin", the world of "evil!"
 - a. It is the "sphere of influence" in which sin, evil, and Satan dominates
 - b. Just as the phrase "the world of sports" describes the domain in which sports dominates, so this "world" is one in which sin dominates

B. Three things in particular make up this "world"...

1. "The lust of the flesh"

- a. This phrase refers to unbridled desires of the flesh

- **Galatians 5:19-21 HCSB** Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, 21 envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar, about which I tell you in advance--as I told you before--that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

b. Note that these desires can be expressed both:

- 1) Sexually (fornication, adultery, licentiousness)
- 2) Socially (hatred, contentions, jealousies)

2. "The lust of the eyes"

a. This refers to the unlawful longing for things which we can see

b. It can be summed up in one word: "covetousness"

c. A modern day expression could be "materialism"

d. How serious is this? Consider the following:

- **Ephesians 5:5-7 HCSB** For know and recognize this: no sexually immoral or impure or greedy person, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of the Messiah and of God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty arguments, for because of these things God's wrath is coming on the disobedient. 7 Therefore, do not become their partners.
- **Colossians 3:5-7 HCSB** Therefore, put to death whatever in you is worldly: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, God's wrath comes on the disobedient, 7 and you once walked in these things when you were living in them.

3. "The pride of life"

a. This would include pride based upon such things as:

- 1) Age
- 2) Experience
- 3) Ancestry
- 4) Past accomplishments
- 5) Money, position, power

b. The Bible clearly teaches that it is foolish to trust such things

- **1 Corinthians 1:26-31 HCSB** Brothers, consider your calling: not many are wise from a human perspective, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. 27 Instead, God has chosen the world's foolish things to shame the wise, and God has chosen the world's weak things to shame the strong. 28 God has chosen the world's insignificant and despised things--the things viewed as nothing--so He might bring to nothing the things that are viewed as something, 29 so that no one can boast in His presence. 30 But from Him you are in Christ Jesus, who for us became wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, 31 in order that, as it is written: **The one who boasts must boast in the Lord.**

c. A few passing observations...

1. Each of these three things often strike harder at different times in our life:

- a. The YOUNG are most often affected by the "lust of the flesh"
- b. The MIDDLE-AGED are usually afflicted by the "lust of the eyes"
- c. The AGED are likely to be plagued with the "pride of life"

2. There seems to be a tendency to consider one more serious than the others

- a. We seem more concerned about sins involving the "lust of the flesh" than sins in the other categories

1) E.g., which is worse, fornication or covetousness?

2) E.g., which do we consider more serious, adultery or jealousy?

b. If we are not careful...

- 1) While fighting strong against immorality...
- 2) ...materialism and pride may "sneak in" the back door!

Whether it be immorality, materialism or pride, it is still part of the "world" we are not to love! But why? We have noticed other passages which say why we shouldn't (cf. Galatians 5:19-21 above), but in our text John gives another reason...

II. Because of what loving the world does (15b)

A. It makes it impossible to love the Father...

1. "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."
 - a. I understand "the love of the Father" means "love for the Father"
 - b. Instead of "the Father's love for us", for He loves us even as sinners
 - **Romans 5:8 HCSB** But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us!
 2. John is not the only person to say that if we love the world, we cannot love God:
 - a. James taught that "friendship with the world is enmity with God"
 - **James 4:4 HCSB** Adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? So whoever wants to be the world's friend becomes God's enemy.
 - b. Jesus said that we cannot serve two masters
- **Matthew 6:24 HCSB** "No one can be a slave of two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot be slaves of God and of money.
3. Our sinful pride may rebel against this thought, but we simply are not able to love the world and God at the same time!

B. To see why, let's define "the love of the Father"...

1. What does it really mean for me to love the Father?
2. According to John, it means that I keep His commandments
 - **1 John 5:3 HCSB** For this is what love for God is: to keep His commands. Now His commands are not a burden,
3. To this Jesus agrees
 - **John 14:15, 21 HCSB** "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. 21 The one who has My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me. And the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father. I also will love him and will reveal Myself to him."
 - **John 15:10 HCSB** If you keep My commands you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commands and remain in His love.

C. If we love the world, we can't keep God's commandments!

1. If you are driven by "the lust of the flesh" to commit fornication, adultery, etc. then you can't keep God's command not to defraud your brother
 - **1 Thessalonians 4:3-6 HCSB** For this is God's will, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality, 4 so that each of you knows how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not with lustful desires, like the Gentiles who don't know God. 6 This means one must not transgress against and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger of all these offenses, as we also previously told and warned you.
2. If you are overcome by "lust of the eyes" so that you always want more, and to hold on to what you have then you won't keep God's command to help the needy

- **1 John 3:16-17 HCSB** This is how we have come to know love: He laid down His life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers. **17** If anyone has this world's goods and sees his brother in need but shuts off his compassion from him-- how can God's love reside in him?
- 3. If you are filled with "the pride of life" so that you consider yourself more important than others you will not be able to keep the command to imitate Christ
 - **Philippians 2:3-5 HCSB** Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. **4** Everyone should look out not *only* for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **5** Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus,

So it is impossible to faithfully serve Jesus, thereby showing our love for Him, if we allow ourselves to "love the world"! But John gives us another reason why we should not "love the world"...

III. Because of where the "world" is going (17)

A. "The world is passing away"

1. This is true in regards to our individual lives
 - **1 Peter 1:24 HCSB** For **All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like a flower of the grass. The grass withers, and the flower drops off,**
 - **James 4:13-14 HCSB** Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will travel to such and such a city and spend a year there and do business and make a profit." **14** You don't even know what tomorrow will bring--what your life will be! For you are a bit of smoke that appears for a little while, then vanishes.
2. It is also true concerning everything that we leave behind
 - **2 Peter 3:10 HCSB** But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief; on that *day* the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved, and the earth and the works on it will be disclosed.

B. In contrast, he who does the will of God abides forever

1. This is because he will be blessed to enter the heavenly kingdom
 - **Matthew 7:21 HCSB** "**Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but *only* the one who does the will of My Father in heaven.**
2. Even his "works" will follow with him
 - **Revelation 14:13 HCSB** Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "let them rest from their labors, for their works follow them!"

Conclusion

1. Isn't this what we all want? To one day hear these wonderful words,
 - **Matthew 25:21 HCSB** "**His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master's joy!'**
2. Even if we could gain the whole world in this lifetime...
 - a. Is it worth it?
 - **Matthew 16:26 HCSB** **What will it benefit a man if he gains the whole world yet loses his life? Or what will a man give in exchange for his life?**
 - b. Yet most people are selling their soul to the devil and this world for a whole lot less!
3. Let's give serious heed to John's admonition, and make sure that our affection is in the right place: loving the Father by keeping His commandments!

Are you keeping the commandments of God?

- [Matthew 28:18-20 HCSB](#) Then Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."