

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John**

Chapter 9- Love Not the World

71. Part 6

WAOY Friday/Monday 08/17-20/07; WOSM Monday 01/09/23

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about not loving this present world. So, let's turn in our Bibles and let's read **1John 2:15-17** again together:

15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

17 The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

Now we are called by God's Word here in these passages to examine and consider the issue of worldliness or of loving this present evil world. And we cannot escape this issue and must not shirk from it. Now in these three verses are the answers to three very important questions:

- 1. What Do You Love?**
- 2. Where Does Your Love Come From?**
- 3. Where is Your Love Taking You?**

So, let's go over these together.

1. What Do You Love?

Now here in verse 15, God, the Holy Spirit moved upon the Apostle John to confront us all with a very forthright challenge:

Do not love the world, ...

And then he goes even further and says:

... nor the things in the world.

Now your first thought may be, *“What a minute. It was John himself who quotes Jesus in **John 3:16:**”*

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

So, John quotes Jesus Who said that God Himself loved the World but here John is telling Christians to *not* love the world- so what gives?

Is there maybe another Greek word for “world”? No. But just as in English, the same word can very well have different meanings.

Here in **1John**, the Apostle is not talking about the world in the sense of the collection of all the people who are made in God’s Image, but here it is the world *system*- that is opposed to God- and which typifies this fallen world. And here, John speaks in the present tense, such as: we are to stop loving the world; we are not to be in the habit of loving the world.

Now first of all- we must realize that John was writing this about not loving the world to those who were already saved and who have already experienced the miracle of the new birth. And due to the fact that we are living in the last days and that we are living in the time of the great falling away and that we are living in the time when people are lovers of themselves more than lovers of God that even to us- these words are very challenging:

Do not love the world- do not set your heart on the world or anything in it.

So, what does that mean for you? Well, it means that God should have no effective rivals for your affections. It means that God alone should be chief. It means that nothing should compete with our love for God. So, that brings up the question:

What are those rivals for your affections? What things in your life is in competition for your love for God? Can you find them?

Christian brothers and sisters, if you look honestly, you *will* find things in your life that compete with your love for God. And I suggest to you that if it is hard for you to find those things that actively competing with God for your affections- it isn't because they are not there- but I suggest that if it is hard for you to find those things that are in competition for your love for God- it is because those things have already deceived you and blinded you so that you cannot see them easily. Beloved, when we look inwardly, we must remember the counsel of our Lord when He spoke to those lukewarm souls in **The Revelation 3:17:**

Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

But if God would be merciful to us so that He may open our eyes and we can see and know and identify those things which *are* rivals in our lives for our affections which rightly belong only to God- we would be so blessed. So, I encourage all of us today to earnestly pray that God will open our hearts and minds and eyes so that we may see and fix our eyes on that competition- that we may learn the name of that rival- not just now- not just today- but all during the week- pray that God would grace you with eyes to see because we must understand, brothers and sisters, that one of sins main attributes is that it is sly; it is stealthy; it is hard to see- so that the one who sins does not see it as sin.

So, for a Christian to live his life never asking to see his own sin is to arrogantly walk through this life deceived and wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

I mean can any of us say that sin has ever walked up to us and presented his card to identify himself as sin, saying, "*I am sin, and I have come to get you to disobey God and to live in a terribly self-destructing way*"? Satan didn't approach Eve like that in the Garden and he has continued to be more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God made ever since. No, if we would be honest with ourselves, we usually see our sin through our mistakes and our agonies and our solitude and our pain and in our sufferings.

So, for believers to pray and ask God to open our eyes and to reveal our sin to us would be a great blessing and a great help in our

walk with God. Now take heed as you pray this way because God may well answer that prayer- so make your mind up ahead of time that whatever God Sovereignly brings into your life to use to open your eyes is a blessing and not a curse.

Jesus said that we should know ourselves and not be deceived about ourselves- so look at where your time goes; look at what you are passionate about; what you spend time involved in; what you have given yourself to; and where your money goes; and how about this thing that is called “discretionary” time or “discretionary” money? Listen to the words that come out of your own mouth. We need to pay attention to all of these ongoing reports about the contents and condition of our own hearts.

After all, Jesus said in **Matthew 12:34b**:

... the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.

Friends, we as Christians face temptations all the time and the Bible says that we are greatly helped; we are strengthened *in* our temptation to love the world- *if* we know what those temptations are; if we can name them; and then self-consciously oppose them.

We all certainly face temptation as we care too much about what other people think of us. Sometimes we will be well thought of over something wonderful that the Lord has done for us or in our lives or through us or in our ministry. Sometimes we will be thought poorly of because of the very same things.

Brothers and sisters, we should care more that we present a corporate witness that isn't worldly- that has stopped loving the world and John tells us why this should be the case; why we all should stop loving the world- he tells us here that we should stop loving the world because the love of the world is mutually exclusive with the Love of the Father- that these two loves are in competition with each other for our affections and our time and our loyalty and our devotion. Look with me at the second half of verse 15:

... If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

And the “**Anyone**” here is you and me. So, there are no allowances made here- no exceptions. No human born of woman is excluded from

being “**anyone.**” So, please do not make the mistake, dear friends, of saying that this does not apply to you because you are saved. John wrote this verse and this passage, yea this entire Epistle only to those who are saved.

Now this isn't true unless it *is* true. We are not guilty of loving the world- unless we actually *do* love the world. And this is important to all of us because if anyone; if you; if I; if anyone does in fact love the world- the Bible says that love of the Father is not in him.

Now I can just imagine how uncomfortable preaching like this might make *you* feel because I know all too well how uncomfortable this makes *me* feel. And if I was the only one who said it- you would be right to quickly ignore it. If the President of the United States or the King of England had said this- then you could rightly argue with them. But it was God Who said, “**Do not love the world**”. And we must take heed that as the sheep of His pasture, we do not ignore what God has said and we must take heed that as the people of God that we do not argue with what God has said or whitewash it or bypass it; or wave our hand and say, “*This doesn't apply to me*”, because it *does* apply to you and it *does* apply to me.

You see, you and I, as believers, are not to brush off the Words of God, but we are to squarely face what God has said and be confronted with what God has said and to bow before what God has said.

John tells us here that a *persistence* of this kind of “world love” proves beyond any doubt that God is not in your heart because it is *impossible* for two loves to co-exist in the same vessel at the same time- which was exactly what John had heard himself from Jesus.

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

So, we can see that the Bible teaches from cover to cover that the human soul *cannot* love God and love the world at the same time. It will *always* choose one over the other because God consciously made the

soul to exclusively love and worship and serve only one object at a time. Any attempt by anyone at loving two things or worshipping two things or serving two things at the same time will always result in a schizophrenic life; a diseased life; a fruitless life; a wasted life. No, we must choose; we must decide; we must consciously abandon one love for the other. Either you must abandon the world and love God, or you must abandon God and love the world. But you cannot do both.

And the kicker is that you will choose whichever one is the more *valuable* to you. You will choose to love the world because you value the world more than you value God. Or you will chose the love of the Father because you value His love more than the love for the world.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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