

# So That You May Know

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

### Chapter 9- Love Not the World **1John 2: 15-17**

#### 75. Part 10

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WAOY Friday/Monday 08/24-27/07; WOSM Friday 01/13/23

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 worldliness. We cannot escape this issue and must not shirk from it. 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?**

Now on the last broadcast, we were going over the second question- Where Does Your Love Come From? And on today's broadcast, I want to look at the third question- Where is Your Love Taking You? So, let's read **1John 2:17** again together:

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

Now verse 17 says that there are two different results that come from these two different loves. John told his first century audience that no matter how attached they might have been to their goods and their possessions and their dreams and their desires and their boastings- John reminded them here that the earth is the Lord's and not ours and that they would one day lose everything.

We who live here in America have to deal with worldliness perhaps more than other believers in much poorer and much less developed nations because of how easy it is for us to gain wealth and material goods under our system of capitalism. America has been given the greatest economic engine that the world has ever known whereby more people have access to more of this world's goods here in this country than in any country in the history of the world. And that is both good and bad.

Now when I say that I am very aware that not everyone in America is wealthy- I am not wealthy- but in comparison to other people of other nations- the poorest man in this nation is far better off and he is safer, and he is healthier and he has more opportunity than some of the wealthiest people of other countries.

So here in the American Church- because of our great wealth- to preach and teach that worldliness is a sin or to teach that covetousness is evil; or to say that materialism is wicked is hard to hear and very unpopular. It seems that it just goes against the grain of what so many others are saying, and it just seems to be counterproductive to how so many people view God and the things of God, and the purpose of the Church and what Christianity is all about.

But what do we do about the fact that God's Word does indeed cry out against greed and covetousness and materialism and worldliness as being horrible and destructive sins? Do we ignore what the Creator of the Universe has said simply because it is unpopular or because it may require many of us to alter the way that we view life and how we live? Is God's Word something that we can choose to obey or choose to ignore with no impact on our relationship to Jesus Himself?

No, we really have no options here- worldliness is sin and John was very clear about the danger of worldliness- when he said in verse 15:

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

So if we love God and if we desire to live our lives in humble submission to God and if we desire to give God the Glory that He is rightly entitled to receive from us- we must reject the love of the world and we must reject the love for the things of the world so that we may love God instead- because like I said earlier- God has made us to be able to love and worship and be devoted to only one object at a time- so please hear me, beloved- we have to consciously choose to totally and completely abandon the love of the word and the love for the things of the world and choose to love God or else we must choose to abandon our love for God in order to love the world and the things of the world- but we cannot do both.

Now I also realize that *having* things and *loving* things- has the ability to *not* be the same thing in everybody's life. I will acknowledge that it is *theoretically* possible for human beings to be all around the world and enriched by the world and involved in the world yet still maintain our purity and not love the world- But while it may be theoretically possible- how many of us are actually doing that successfully?

Truthfully, how many of us have the spiritual insight and the godly discernment and the God given gift to be able to see when we go from simply having things that "meet our needs" which is *not* sin- to crossing over the line into actually and practically loving the world which *is* sin?

And when you think about it- how often do we carefully and prayerfully look at our own hearts to even see if we might be guilty of this terrible offense to God? How long has it been since you took the time to get away with God to actually take the time to look at your own life and actions to see if your love for God is being co-mingled with love for the world?

See, I discovered to my own horror that I myself have been terribly guilty of this sin when I went into my own prayer closet and simply began to pray that God would show me where my loves and affections truly lay.

When you combine the unarguable fact that our flesh loves to covet and loves the world and literally craves the things of this world with the fact that so many today are actually teaching that gaining more of this world's goods is a sign of spirituality rather than a dangerous competition for our love for God- it is a wonder that any of us

are free from this sin.

I don't believe for a second that the reason the sin of worldliness is not taught and preached against today as being evil is because we have all risen to a great spiritual maturity where we are no longer troubled by it. On the contrary- I believe that the reason that worldliness is basically ignored today is because we are all so neck deep in it that we are not able to even see it for what it really is.

We have been so bombarded over the last 60 years with the mantra- "*God wants to bless you!*" and "*God wants you to have the best*" and "*God wants you to excel in this life*" to the point where basic Christian attributes like denial of flesh and the love of money and the perilous danger of worldliness sound odd and strange and weird to us today.

But let me also say that I am certainly not promoting poverty as being a noble and righteous alternative to worldliness. But what I am doing here is the very same thing that faithful men of God have done for 2,000 years and warning you and myself that if anyone loves the world – the love of the Father is not in him.

And I want to remind you that you are free to argue and disagree with me all day long about this issue and still be in right standing with God. You may have a far better insight into this evil than I do- and perhaps you should be teaching me about this. But what neither you nor I are able to do is to argue with or ignore or rebel against the inspired Words that John wrote here and still be in right standing with God. And John said:

**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.**

So here are some questions that all of us need to know the answer to. Is worldliness a real issue that we all need to understand and comprehend? Is worldliness a good thing or bad thing? Is worldliness a real and serious threat to our souls? Do we need to watch out for it? Does it pose a real threat to our walk with God? Is it possible for us to love the world and love God at the same time? And if it is possible- then why did John say that it was not possible?

Christian brothers and sisters, if we are to even discuss the issue of worldliness intelligently and Biblically- we must first acknowledge that all of us have a natural tendency to allow our hearts to become attached to the temporary and the material and the finite objects of this life and we also have a tendency to crave and desire and covet more and more of this world's goods for no other reason than because our flesh lusts after them.

And to ignore this reality; to whitewash this natural human tendency to love this present world and to love the things of this world- even after we are saved- is to stick our head in the sand and to risk our souls.

Now I am going to leave you to answer these questions yourself just as I am endeavoring to do for myself, and I want to look again at verse 17:

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

John says here that everything that those who love the world and the things of the world crave and seek after- is at this very moment passing away and would eventually all pass away. The correct Greek language in verse 17 is,

The world is passing away- and its' desires.

This is a *huge* statement which should dictate our affections and loves. Why put our love and devotion and allegiance into something that is at this present moment passing and shall eventually pass away?

This verse doesn't say that one day it shall pass away- but that it is at this present moment in the process of passing away already.

The Bible tells us that the day is coming when the world itself with all the affections; all the loves ; all the lusts; all the desires; which are in direct competition with the love of the Father is going to pass away. It is going to be destroyed; it is going to come of naught. But the same Bible which promises that also promises that he that does the will of God; he which loves God with all his heart; he which denied his flesh and loved God and was not divided in his love and devotion and affections will abide forever- with God- in heaven- forever.

So, I have said all of that to ask this- Do you love the world? Has the world robbed God of your love? And just whatever happened to worldliness? How come it is seldom discussed anymore? Sadly, my brothers and sisters, worldliness is very much alive today and it is actually doing quite well. And even more sadly is the fact that there are many within the modern Church who actually think that worldliness is a virtue and a sign of great spiritual advancement. And I beg you today- to run from those who teach that because what is at stake here with the issue of worldliness is not that you agree with me but that we all agree with God Who spoke through the Apostle John and said,

**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.**

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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