

So That You May Know

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

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

73. Part 8

WAOY Wednesday 08/22/07; WOSM Wednesday 01/11/23

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.

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 first question- What do you love? And today, I want to begin to examine the answer to the second question, "Where Does Your Love Come From?" So, let's read **1John 2:16** again together:

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.

Now from this verse we can see that not all “love” comes from God. There are *some* loves that exist in this life that come from the very world itself and by reading this verse properly, we can see that the love that comes from the world- is *not* a love that comes from God.

Now normally, we would automatically assume that *anything* that we love would be love-ly wouldn't we? I mean if we love something- doesn't that automatically mean that there is something present in that thing that makes it worthy of our love? If something was wrong or bad- as a believer- wouldn't that mean that I would just automatically not love it? And yet here in verse 16, the Apostle John tells us that if we assume that – we would be wrong. John says here that there are *some* loves that are wrong- indeed- that are sinful- indeed that are not of God or from God at all- and can never be sanctified to be of God and in fact are actually operating in hostile opposition to all that God is and all that God desires for us.

Wow! That is quite odd, isn't it? Do you mean to say, Brother Blair that there are some loves that people- both in the Church and outside the Church- engage themselves in all the time which are in fact evil; and which are in fact in hostile opposition to God? Yes, that is exactly what I am saying and that is exactly what John says here in verse 16.

But if love for these things that John lists for us here in verse 16 doesn't come from God, then where does this love come from? We can see here that our fleshly cravings; the carnal desires that fill our eyes to covet; and the desire to brag about what we possess- that all of these things are of the world that opposes, and which fights against God- and the Bible says that none of these things is of the Father.

And we have to take this one more step because not only are these things *not* of the Father- but no matter how we may want to rationalize them or justify them; and no matter how we may want to try to make them acceptable- these things that John talks about here in verse 16 can never at any time or in any way ever become acceptable to God. They cannot ever become okay; they cannot become acceptable through us dressing them up or because they become popular. Everything that is of the world- John says- is not of God and can never be of God.

Now I don't think that verse 16 is heard to grasp- do you? I don't believe that we need to even go to the root of all these words here in verse 16- do you? It seems that John was pretty clear about this issue-

Wasn't he?

The Apostle John was moved along by the Holy Spirit to pen down these Words that came right out of God's Mouth. And these words are not just a guide for us today- they are not nice suggestions for us to emulate so we can live a happier life- no, these words are inspired- they are God breathed- they were exhaled by Almighty God- and they are inerrant- in that they do not contain any error; they are infallible- in that they can not contain any error- they are authoritative in that they are the final rule of faith and practice in the earth- and they are relevant- meaning that although they are ancient- they still apply to us today in the 21st century. In short- what John says here is a Command from God and God expects every single born again believer to obey it.

You see, for us to obey the Words of Scripture is for us to be in right standing with God and to be blessed by God. There is no such thing as anyone being in right standing with God and being blessed by God and at the same time walking in open unrepentant rebellion to that which God has said. The two go hand in hand. You cannot separate your love for Jesus and your obedience to that which Jesus has said. No such thing as loving Jesus and not also loving what Jesus said. Jesus said- if you love Me- you will obey what I say.

So for us to disobey Scripture or to rebel against the Scriptures- or to wave our hand and say, "*This doesn't apply to me*" simply because it doesn't sit well with you is to say that *our* words and *our* ways and *our* ideas and *our* wisdom is better and greater and more important than God's and that- beloved – is the height of arrogance; and that is the very definition of wickedness; and that is nothing short of high treason against the God who sits in Heaven.

And that is true for the easy and the nice and the smooth verses of Scripture which comfort our hearts, and which gives us courage, but it is also true about the difficult and the hard and the profoundly disturbing parts of Scripture- which are hard to read; and hard to grasp; and hard to obey.

So, when dealing with issues like this, dear friends, we *must* understand that the Holy Bible is not like the Piccadilly Cafeteria where we can pick and choose which foods we want to eat. We are commanded to read and to study and to love and to obey and to proclaim *all* that God has said- not just the parts that make us feel better or that give us goose bumps.

And John says here that we are not to love the world- at all; no way; no how- ever. And then John goes on to say that all that is in the world- and he then lists what he is talking about- is not of the Father; and they will never be of the Father; and they cannot ever become of the Father and so for us to be good children of God- we must hear what John has said here and then we must bow our knees to the authority of Scripture and then we must pray that God will be gracious to us to grant us the will and the power to do what He has said to do here.

Now that all seems to be just our reasonable duty here- but inexplicably, in direct violation of this verse, we live in a time when instead of covetousness being called the wicked sin that it is- it is actually being promoted by many famous ministries as being spiritual; as being desired; as being *of* the Father and something that we as Christian should aspire to.

I recently saw where a world -wide ministry has begun a series of televised interviews with Donald Trump because according to this ministry- Donald Trump- the sinfully bombastic Donald Trump- is now being held up as the example that we Christians are to follow simply because he is rich. But the goal of Christianity is not to make you rich- it is to make you holy and acceptable to God through trusting in the horrific sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Now the Christians of the first century faced many of the same temptations that we do in the 21st century. Their society was not impoverished. Rome was flush with prosperity- more so than any other empire on earth. And many people back then-thought that because they were Christians- that they could live any way that they wanted to. But that wasn't true back then and it isn't true today.

When you ponder the things that you love- you may notice as I have that love is never neutral. Even the most harmless petty love- if left unhindered and left un- submitted to God- will ruin you. So be careful. Exercise your Christian liberty- Yes! But be aware that not all love comes from God.

Leo Tolstoy wrote about this very issue when he wrote about a peasant in Russia named, Boheem, who was asked, "*How much land does a man need?*"

So, in Tolstoy's novel, this peasant buys more and more land until he became a great land barren had earned the fear and respect of all those around him and right at the apex of all his great accomplishments

Bohem suddenly died and was buried in a plot three foot wide by six foot long by six foot deep, and Tolstoy said,

“that was all the land that he really needed”.

Beloved, we must know that the Bible is clear about this issue- it is a *false* religion that idolizes the world and the things that are in the world. The religion that promotes covetousness and material gain as a sign of God’s Pleasure is not the Christian Faith- beloved- it is Secular Humanism. And we must also know that this false religion is in direct competition with God for our love and our affections and our devotion and our service.

So where do all of these misguided loves come from? They originate from an unbiblical and strange and yes, a sinful urge to glorify “self” in direct competition with glorifying God. They are simply the desires of our flesh; our sinful natures- which constantly rebels against God’s Authority, and which leads us all to condemnation. This innate desire for lost man to glorify himself is what Theologians call “Total Depravity” or “Radical Ruination”- which doesn’t mean that we all are as bad as we *could* be- but that *every* area of our lives has been *radically* and *negatively* affected by the Fall- including our ability to love.

And we all have been touched by this wrong dissatisfaction with God and we have rebelled against Him, and we continue to rebel against Him. So, these examples that John brings out here are what the Christian Church *used* to call “worldliness”. But over the last 150 years or so, . t word; that term; that concept has ceased to be spoken much in Church. Whatever happened to it? Whatever happened to worldliness?

Sadly, in many modern Churches, the people of God have never heard the term, “worldliness” mentioned a single time and therefore have no idea what it even means. And if you don’t think this is true, go find a young Christian convert who is 25 years old or younger and ask him what “worldliness” means and see if they tell you positive things or negative things.

Worldliness is taking an inferior object and treating it as your final ultimate end. Whether those are the pleasures of your flesh or riches or pride and arrogance or the glory of human achievement- worldliness is the attraction that we have to these things and to have

your heart bound up with them.

Worldliness are the things that our unconverted flesh loves; those things that build up our sinful carnal natures and which cause us think wrongly and act wrongly and believe wrongly. And so, God is good and faithful to warn us about them.

So, as we approach this Passage, we must honestly ask ourselves the obvious question:

“Am I worldly?”

And be real about answering these questions:

What do you do with your best time?

What do you do with your best thinking?

What brings you the most satisfaction?

Or you can turn the questions around and get the same answers:

What troubles you the most?

What causes you the most worry and anxiety?

What is your greatest fear?

Is your greatest fear; is what brings you the most anxiety that the Name of Christ be lifted up in every circumstance? Does *that* keep you up at night? Does *that* cause you to pace the floor and wring your hands? Are you truthfully more concerned about Christ being glorified in whatever situation the Sovereign God has allowed to come into your life or is it that you advance your own safety and comfort?

Worldliness may not be that long list of evil sins that you are no longer troubled by- but worldliness may be much more subtle- it may look much prettier.

We give ourselves with abandon over our worldly pleasures as though we would die tomorrow; while we build houses and accumulate things as though we will live forever. How inconsistent we are.

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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