

So That You May Know

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

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

74. Part 9

WAOY Thursday 08/23/07; WOSM Thursday 01/12/23

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?**

And 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 continue to explore that second question.

Now the Puritans were a group of men whom God visited during a great time in Church History. These men lived from the late 16th Century all the way into the 19th Century. Sadly, most of the people who sit on the pews of our Churches today have never heard of these

men and that is indeed tragic and is our loss- for these men were giants of the Faith. I have been a student of the Puritans now for over 30 years and have benefited greatly from their wisdom and insight.

The Puritans were great about meditating about things like worldliness. For example- while I preach this one sermon on worldliness, Jeremiah Burroughs wrote a deep and wonderful book about this very issue called *A Treatise on Earthly Mindedness*- and I encourage you to get this book. Written in the seventeenth century, it spans 260 pages about the great danger of being earthly minded and how that a man's life is the *real* measurement of what he believes- not his possessions or accomplishments.

In the forward to this book, RC Sproul says this,

“Twentieth century Christians have been seduced by a world view that makes the thrust of this book seem archaic. It simply doesn't fit our times. It is not so much that the contemporary Christian has consciously embraced worldliness- it's more that we have been influenced by a manner of viewing the world that anything beyond this present life seems obscured by eclipse.

Gone is the vital sense of Providence. The world is seen as operating according to its internal mechanistic laws. The Hand of Providence is not so much regarded as being invisible- it has been erased altogether.

Gone is the blessed hope of Heaven. Though interest abounds in the return of Jesus- the contemplation of Heaven itself has been banished from our thinking. Our thinking today is earth bound, trapped within the confines of the terrestrial horizon.

Gone is the Biblical Doctrine of the soul. There is much concern about self-image; self-esteem; and self-gratification. Yet, in all this- the self itself has become a philosophical conundrum.

Yet it is the human soul that stands to be nourished and fed by this book. Our gaze is lifted beyond the earth in these pages; our hearts set aflame by the fire of heaven; and our minds are awakened to a “spiritual perspective.”

And then Dr, Sproul goes on to say,

“My guess is that few people will ever pick up this book and read it. Its themes and content are too alien to modern Christianity to evoke much interest. But this volume may be the most comprehensive treatment of the nature and enticements of worldliness that this earth has ever known. It is a

prose version of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, reflecting the keen insight of Puritan Christianity. It is far too valuable to be ignored."

So, I highly recommend that you invest the few dollars that it would take and get this 400 year old Book by Jeremiah Burroughs called, "*A Treatise on Earthly Mindedness*" so that the issue of worldliness that the Apostle John so faithfully warns us about may become real to your heart.

So just how do we combat these other "loves" that do not come from God, but which originate from the lost and sinful world and are attached to us through our unconverted flesh? Burroughs says in his book that we as Christians have to become aware of our own thoughts.

Burroughs wrote that we should pursue humility over our own sins; befriend godly people; help yourself to understand God's Will by becoming familiar with God's Word; Constantly remind yourself that you are going to have to stand before God and give an account; pray without ceasing; be quick to repent; and ask God for the gift to be able to see your own heart;

Burroughs suggested that every morning, we read **Hebrews 12:2&3** that says:

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Ian Murray, the great English preacher and theologian, wrote about worldliness and said this,

"Worldliness is departing from God. It is a "man centered" way of thinking; It proposes objectives which demand no radical breach from man's fallen nature. It judges the importance of things by the present and material results. It weighs success by numbers. It covets human esteem. It wants no unpopularity. It knows no Truth for which it is worth suffering. It declines to be a fool for Christ sake. Worldliness is the mind set of the unregenerate. It adopts idols. It is at war with God."

My friends, we are not called to have the love of the word, but we are called to know and possess the Love of God. This same John who warns us here about worldliness also writes a little later in **1John 4:7**:

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

So, the kind of Love that we are supposed to have comes only from God. And this kind of love does not and cannot come from any human or from the world itself. You can't work this kind of love up. You can't manufacture it. You can't take the two sticks of your own self-righteousness and your own will power and rub them together and produce this Love for the Father. No, this kind of Love *for* God is a gift *from* God.

So, as we continue to examine worldliness, please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying, and John is not saying that *all* cravings and *all* desires are bad. Jesus Himself said in **Luke 22** that He "desired" to eat the Lord's Supper with His disciples. And Dr. Luke used the very same word here that John used- that English translations translate this same word as "desires" or "cravings" or "lusts". Paul used the same word in **1Thessalonians 2** to describe his "longing" to see the Thessalonian believers.

So, these desires and longings are not wrong- these are *good* desires and *good* longings. So, we can easily see that not *all* desires that enter into our hearts are sinful. In fact, John used the very same word to describe our desire or longing or craving to Love the Father.

So please understand that God is not trying to make us all to be stoics who have no desires or longings whatsoever- but only that we are not to love that which opposes God; we are to have an enflamed desire or passion or love or craving for God- the very desire or Love that we were all made in His Image to have.

Now back in John's day in Ephesus, most of the people of that region were taught that life is all about what we as humans do for the gods. But that is not at all the way it is with the one true God. We rejoice not that we love God- but that He loved us. Christians, you see, are so filled with Joy because we know that all of this is about what God has done for *us*- not what *we* have done for God.

Beloved, we cannot give people a love for God- you can't lay hands

on someone else and *impart* this love for God- only God can do that. We cannot bring Christ down from Heaven and we cannot put Christ in a human heart. We can share the Gospel and we can labor- and we should- but ultimately this Love *for* God is a gift *of* God.

But when Christ *does* come into a human heart; and when Christ *does* give to you a Love for God- it is truly a thing of beauty. Because I suggest to you that *this* Love- when God *does* graciously give it to us- and when we operate in it- will cause us to hate sin; *this* love will guide us away from temptation. *This* love will cause us to get off the broad road which leads to destruction and place our feet on the straight and narrow path which leads to life eternal. *This* love will grasp the reins of our hearts and turn us away from the world and all of its pleasures that are so attractive to our flesh and turn us toward God. Look what Paul said about this love in **2Corinthians 5:14**:

For the love of Christ controls us...

The Bible says that this kind of love that is *for* God and that comes *from* God will actually control us- it will keep us; it will forbid us from engaging in certain thoughts and activities which glorifies flesh and the world and that does not bring glory to Jesus Christ- and the result of this love is that we will be set free from loving the world and the things that are in the world and we will love God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength.

And those with this kind of love will walk like Jesus walked and they will talk like Jesus talked and they will think like Jesus thought and they will discover the beauty of a life of self- denial, and they will surrender totally to a life that really matter- all to the glory of God alone.

But we must be aware, beloved, that love for the world- this love that is not of the Father and can never be of the Father- will do just the opposite. The love that is not of the Father- but is of the world will make sin look attractive to you. It will cause you to compromise with evil. It will cause you to make no difference between that which is holy and that which is profane; it will cause you to support and be a part of those things that oppose God. It will cause you to celebrate sin.

And those with this kind of love will walk like the world and they will talk like the world, and they will think like the world, and they will

be loved by the world. And they will discover a very ugly and hideous life of self- gratification and they will surrender themselves to a wasted life- all to their own glory.

So, we can see that the war that we wage over worldliness is an *internal* war and a *spiritual* war that is won or lost based upon where our love comes from. If your love comes from the world or any of the things that are in the world- then you are guaranteed to lose this war with worldliness. But if your love comes from God- and is not of the world- then you are guaranteed to win.

So, our victory over worldliness is predicated on our love. This means that if we would hope to defeat worldliness; if we ever hope to escape the pull of gravity that this world has upon us- we should pray to be delivered from loving the world and the things that are in the world and we should pray that God would grace us with more love for Himself.

Because we must realize friends, that our victory over loving the world and the things that are in the world; our escape from the trap of worldliness is a work of God's Spirit. If you already love God- pray for more love. And pray for others to come to love God also.

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.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from The New American Standard Bible © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse Journey through the Epistle of 1John. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.