



ABIDE - A SERIES THRU I JOHN

LESSON 4: DON'T LOVE THE WORLD

Background

Although the epistle we call 1 John does not identify its author, the early church ascribed it to the apostle John and its language is very similar to John's Gospel. Most conservative scholars believe the book was written in the late first century (after AD 70). John wrote to Christians but the book does not identify any specific church or region. Many have argued that John wrote to Christians in Asia Minor, perhaps even in Ephesus.

Confirmation

This epistle gets misunderstood when it is not allowed to speak for itself. The apostle John's primary concern was that his readers, which he viewed as his spiritual children, would get derailed in their walk with the Lord by some false teachers (deceivers, antichrists) that we know little about. John was not questioning whether his readers were "true" Christians, and in today's lesson we will read his words confirming John's confidence in them. But then warning them of the danger of secularism.

1. **Confirmation to little children, children, young men, fathers (2:12-14):** In light of what John said up to this point, it is possible his readers might think John is somehow dissatisfied with them. Before getting to his warnings and worldliness and the doctrines of the world, John confirms his readers. He refers to them as "little children," "children," "young men," and "fathers" but then seems to almost use the terms interchangeably. Probably John is best understood to use these terms to indicate his belief that his readers had grown in the Lord, not that he is addressing different groups.

— **Little children:** John uses the Greek *teknia* (little children) and confirms their sins have been forgiven.

— **Children:** John uses the Greek *paidia* (child) and confirms they "have come to know" (Greek perfect tense denoting past action with continuing consequences) the Father

— **Young men:** John confirms the "young men" (Greek *neaniskoi*) "have conquered the evil one" and "are strong, God's word remains in you, and you have conquered the evil one"

— **Fathers:** John confirms the "fathers" (Greek *patēr*) because they "have come to know" (Greek perfect tense again) "the one who is from the beginning," Note John says this twice.

2. **Loving the world (2:15):** John warns against loving the world (Greek *kosmos*) because doing so means "the love of the Father is not in him." James said something similar in James 4:4. As expositor Zane Hodges wrote, the "word thus conceived is a system of values and goals from which God is excluded." But more than that, it is a perspective on reality and way of thinking that is antithetical to God's biased view of reality. (See Romans 1:21-32)

3. **Why loving the world is inconsistent with a love for God (2:16-17):** The world offers broadly speaking 3 categories to seduce us: (1) the lust of the flesh (or sin nature), (2) the lust of the eyes, and (3) the arrogance / pride of life (of what we have accomplished, attained and obtained). But all of this is passing away while the Christian who does the will of God will not be affected and instead remains forever.

— What are some examples from each of the 3 categories?

— In what way does the Christian that does the will of God abide or remain forever?