

## ~ 1 John ~

## Lesson 14- Do Not Love the World

Let's read our text today- 1 John 2:15-17

This next section begins the heart of the letter. Up until this point John has been laying the foundation of what it means to be in Fellowship with God, and in 2:12-14 he gives his little children the confidence that they have overcome the wicked one which now leads into our verses today.

John wrote 2:12-14 to give us, the children of God, the confidence of being in Him and to have the means to persevere through the darkness of this world. The children of God need to hear this and be reminded of the victory we have in Christ. As we live in this world, we are surrounded by the darkness, and we are in constant battle with the evil of this world.

We as Christians are in the world, but not of the world. We live in an age with two overlapping kingdoms. We are of the kingdom of Light, but at the same time, living among the kingdom of darkness. As we begin this next section from 2:15-17, we will be learning about this system of darkness, and how to walk as children of the Light in the midst of this fallen world.

Beginning in 2:15, John tells his little children, those who have overcome that which is evil, to not love the world. Why does John give us this warning to not love the world? This is a letter of sanctification, training and instructing his children as a father would his little child. He is writing this because he doesn't want us being deceived and swayed from the Truth. John has written this epistle for two primary reasons: 1) to assure us of our everlasting life in Christ and 2) to expose those who are trying to deceive us. And both of these reasons are for our benefit. This is the training and instruction, the paideia, παιδεία, of God as he said in 2:13, paidion, παιδίον, my little children. We need to be aware of the dangers and deceptions of the enemy so that we can know those who are trying to deceive us. John does this by giving us another test of love. Do you love the world, or do you love God? Are you committed to your own lustful will or the will of the Father? This test of Truth in 2:15-17 assures the faithful believer of eternal life, and it also exposes the darkness in the one trying to deceive.

When John tells us to not love the world, this seems like a contradiction because as Christians aren't we supposed to love? God created the world, and He sent His Son because He loved the world, John 3:16. So why are we commanded now to not love the world?

To answer this, we need to know what John means by "the world".

- "world" is kosmos, κόσμος, in its most general sense it means order, ornament, decoration. The verb form of this word is κοσμέω to arrange in order, decorate, to adorn. We get the word cosmetics from this word.
  - kosmos, κόσμος, is the opposite of chaos, χάος.
  - kosmos, κόσμος, brings order out of chaos, χάος.

There are three ways the NT uses this word kosmos, κόσμος:

1. The created order of the physical world, Acts 17:24
  - a. God gave us this beautiful creation that even in its fallen state, we can marvel and know how awesome our God is. We are to love this creation because it is the display of His glory, Ps 19:1; 33:4-9. But as beautiful as it is, we don't worship this creation, we worship the Creator, Romans 1:19-25.
2. The created order of the human race, John 3:16; 1:10, 29; 6:33; 1 John 2:2
  - a. These are the people of the world
3. The spiritual order or the system of evil, Gal 4:3; Eph 2:2; 12:31; 1 John 5:4-5
  - a. This is the kingdom of darkness governed and ruled by Satan. He is described as: The ruler of this world, John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; the prince of the power of the air, Eph 2:2

The Bible uses this word in all three of these areas and you have to use context as your guide to understand which use the Holy Spirit is referring to. And in many cases “the world” will refer to both the evil system of Satan and also those who have been ensnared in the darkness of the evil system, **John 15:18-19**.

In the case of our text today in 1 John 2:15 “*do not love the world or the things in the world*.” John is speaking of the system of the world, the kingdom of darkness, not the people ensnared in the darkness. Because even though these people are in the darkness, we are to love our enemies, **Matt 5:44**; Romans 12:20, and we proclaim the Truth so that, as 2 Tim 2:26 says, “*they might come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil...*”

There are four reasons why we do not love the world, this system of evil

1. Because of what it is
  - a. It is the kingdom of darkness and it is not of the Father, 1 John 2:16
2. Because of who we are in Christ
  - a. We are born again children of God and we are of the Father not of the world, 1 John 2:16; 4:4
3. Because of its persuasion to darkness and things contrary to God
  - a. The system of the world entices sin through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, 1 John 2:16
4. Because of where it is going
  - a. The system of darkness is passing away and has an end and one day be thrown into the lake of fire, 1 John 2:8, 17

As we study these three verses, I want to keep in mind these four reasons we are commanded not to love the world. Today we will be looking at verse 15 and the first two reasons to not love the world.

Reason number 1) We don't love the world because of what it is... Let's read verse 15...

<b>15 Do not love the world or the things in the world.</b>	<b>15 μὴ ἀγαπᾶτε τὸν κόσμον μηδὲ τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.</b>
If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.	ἐάν τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν κόσμον, οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐν αὐτῷ.

To love the world is very different than being in the world. We are all “in the world” in the sense that we live physically in this physical creation. We see the world and we feel the world, we breathe the air of this creation, we enjoy the beauty of God's creation. And even in the spiritual sense, we live among the spiritual wickedness of world. We are surrounded by the darkness, but being surrounded by the world does not mean we love the spiritual system of the world. This is why we say, “we are in the world, but not of the world”. When one loves the evil system of the world, they are rooted in darkness, *they walk in darkness and they do not know where they are going because the darkness has blinded their eyes*, 1 John 2:11. The Bible uses a different term for these who abide in darkness. The Bible says they are “of the world”. In the book of Revelation, John calls them earth-dwellers. Those who love this world and all the evil within it. Ecumenism is a modern example of this deception.

John is warning and commanding us as little children of God, not to love the system of the world. This word love is agapao, ἀγαπάω, the verb form of agape, ἀγάπη. God's divine love. ἀγαπᾶτε, is in the imperative mood and is present tense, relating to a course of action. John is saying, “Do not habitually and continually love the evil system of the world.” This is similar to what James says in James 4:4- *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God*. John intensifies this by saying “do not agapao, ἀγαπάω, the world...” To agapao, ἀγαπάω, is to commit yourself, to be in allegiance. This is more than just a friendship; it is an intense love for the world. This is a rejection of God and an alliance with evil.

John says, “do not love the world...” and continues verse 15 by saying, “or the things in the world.” What does John mean by “the things in the world”? *μηδὲ τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ*. This is all that is evil in the world. Those things that entice man to sin. This isn't the people in the world, but the things that persuade the people to sin. John gives us the list of

these “things” in the next verse 2:16, *“For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.”*

What about the physical or material things in the world? Are those the evil things John is speaking of? 1 Timothy 6:17 says, *“God gives us richly all things to enjoy”*. Physicality and material things in itself are not evil. But it is a matter of the heart. These things are not necessarily evil, but if these material things consume your life, then they are evil to you. This is why the system of the world is so evil. Because the world will taunt you with these things using: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life to entice you to sin.

This world system of evil, the kingdom of darkness, is anti-Christ, anti-God. It completely opposes that which is holy and righteous. It is a system that is contrary and hostile to God, Rom 8:7- the carnal mind is enmity against God and is hostile toward the things of God. The world system and the people of the world lie under the sway of the wicked one, 1 John 5:19. The world system is full of false prophets and anti-christs that have gone out into the world, 1 John 2:18-19; 4:1.

These people of the world, these anti-christs and false prophets and haters of God are so deceived. They don’t realize how wretched they really are. And even more so, they don’t truly know how much God loves them. And it is astounding that God loves these people. And in this love, do you know what He did? He sent His Son as propitiation for their sins. Jesus took the punishment for the sin of the whole world, Romans 5:8, 1 John 2:2; 4:9-10. Does this mean that God tolerates evil? Absolutely not. Love is not tolerance.

This is a major misconception that many people have. Love is not tolerance. God hates evil because it is in direct opposition to His love. And in His Love, there is a hate for everything that opposes His Righteousness. God loves the people, but hates the sin.

God is Love and He is Righteous, and He cannot tolerate sin, and in His hatred for sin and love for people, He sent His Son into the world and punished His Son on behalf of the sin of the entire world.

God loves perfectly and hates perfectly, and this must be our approach to evil as well. We won’t be perfect at this. We can’t love perfectly or hate perfectly, but its not perfection that God wants, but rather our heart. If we love God, we will hate all that opposes God.

Psalm 97:10- *You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.*

Psalm 119:104- *Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore, I hate every false way.*

Psalm 119:128- *Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way.*

Proverbs 8:13- *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.*

Hebrews 1:9- *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness...*

I want to show you a real life example of Jesus hating evil and loving people. Read **1 John 3:8** and **Revelation 1:18**. Now look at the account of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, **John 11:25-44**. Jesus hates sin, He hates evil and the corruption of the darkness. So how did Jesus respond to this evil? In His hate for evil, He loved Lazarus and proclaimed resurrection and life and raised Lazarus from the dead as a type of the Resurrection and the Life that God has given to all those who believe in Jesus.

We do not love the world or the things in the world because of what it is. It is a system that is anti-Christ and opposes God’s Righteousness. This is why John warns and in fact commands us not to love the world. 1 Jn 2:13-14 tells us that the reason we overcome that which is evil is because we have received Jesus Christ, we know God, the Word of God abides in us and we are strong, empowered with the dunamis of God.

Therefore, we must be as lights shining in the darkness, proclaiming the message of Eternal Life. We must hate evil, and love the people, that if perhaps they might hear and know the Truth and escape out from the snare of the devil.