

## Lesson 15- Not of this World

We are continuing our study of **1 John 2:15-17**

As John opens up this section, he does so with his first imperative command, “do not love the world”. This imperative indicates the beginning of his exhortations to his little children, the children of God. And as His children, we walk in love. We love God, we love His Righteousness, we love His Truth, we love the brethren (our brothers and sisters in Christ). And in this love, we also love the people of the world, those who are still caught in the trap of the darkness. And we walk as children of Light proclaiming His Truth in the chance that they might come to their senses and know the Truth and be delivered out from the snare of the devil, 2 Tim 2:24-26. As we walk in this love, we must understand that this love is not a tolerance of evil. When we love with the God given agape love that has been shed abroad in our hearts, Romans 5:5, we also hate the system of evil that opposes God’s Righteousness. 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.* We hate the things of this world and the system of this world because it is dragging people to hell. And in these three verses, John gives us four reasons why we do not love the world.

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 what it does
  - a. Its persuasion to the darkness and things contrary to God
  - b. 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 will be thrown into the lake of fire, 1 John 2:8, 17

John begins verse 15 with the command, “*do not love the world*”. And then he proceeds with the test of love, “*if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him*”. This is the first time we see an imperative precede a test. John is making sure the little children know how devastatingly bad it is to love the world. And he commands us not to love the world, or in the opposite sense, to hate that which is evil.

Last week we looked at reason number 1) We don’t love the world *because of what it is*... Today we will look at the second reason... 2) we do not love the world *because of who we are*... As Christians, who are we? And why is this a reason not to love the world? Because we are NOT of this world. We are children of God, and we are born of God. We are in the world, but not of the world. We are ek tou patros, *ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς*, of the Father, and NOT ek tou kosμου, *ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου*, of this world. Lets read verses 15-16 again with this in mind.

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> μὴ ἀγαπᾶτε τὸν κόσμον μηδὲ τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. ἐάν τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν κόσμον, οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐν αὐτῷ.

<sup>16</sup> ὅτι πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς, καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, καὶ ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἐστὶ.

When John says, “*if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father does not exist in him*”, we also can imply the opposite, that if anyone loves the Father and does NOT love the world, then the love of the Father DOES exist in him. This is what John was saying in **1 John 2:5**. When we apprehend God’s love by receiving the command of Everlasting Life in His Son through His Word, then the love of the Father is perfected. It has reached its final goal in the believer. We are rescued out from the kingdom of darkness, and brought into the Kingdom of Light, Colossians 1:13–14-<sup>13</sup> *He has*

*delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,<sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

How is it that we are conveyed, *μεθίστημι*, a transformation of stance, out from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of His Son? It is because of the cross. It always goes back to the cross, the propitiation. We are transformed because Jesus died and was raised again. Now Jesus can administer His New Covenant onto us. And we too must die spiritually with Christ and be resurrected with Him, **Gal 2:20; Gal 6:14-15**. When we are crucified with Christ, we die to the world, and the world dies to us. Spiritual death is the only way out of the bondage of this world. But the dying is just the first part, we then our resurrected unto new Life, **Rom 6:3-11**. This new life is what is called being born again, Remember Jesus' discussion with Nicodemus in John 3:3-5? He says, "unless one is born again, *γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν*, born from above. He cannot see the kingdom of God", John 3:3-5. **1 Peter 1:3, 23**, tells us we are born out from the Father through the incorruptible Word of Life.

When we are born again, we are no longer of the kingdom of darkness because we have been "born from above". We are no longer "of this world" because we are dead to this world. We are a new creation and have a new citizenship in Christ. Philippians 3:20 tells us we are citizens of heaven. **2 Cor 5:17-6:1** says we are a new creation and ambassadors of the kingdom of Light. When you know what Jesus did for us; that He rescued us out from the grip of death and brought us to life in Him. And when you know the joy of serving Him and being a fellow-worker with Him, proclaiming the message of Life on behalf of Christ, how can you even think of loving the world? How can you love anything that opposes Jesus Christ?

It seems unthinkable that a Christian would begin to love the world and reject Jesus, but the simple fact that John is warning his little children not to love the world tells me that it is possible that a Christian can start to love the world. We also see examples of this in the New Testament and in our personal lives. But how does something like this happen and how can we guard ourselves from this? The simple answer is we abide in His Word, and we do not love the world. If you abide in the Word of God, you will not be deceived and enticed into loving the world.

Christians should be "in the world" only in the sense of sojourning in this world, **1 Peter 2:11; Heb 11:8-10, 13, 16**. This world is not our home. We are not abiding in this world. Our citizenship is in heaven. We were born again, born from above, born again unto a living hope of everlasting life, 1 Peter 1:3, 23; John 17:13-19. Having been called out of darkness into His marvelous Light, 1 Peter 2:9. Therefore, John is warning us, do not love the world or become embedded in this world system of evil. Do not be an earth-dweller as the book of Revelation says. Those who are earth-dwellers are those who love this world more than Jesus and have rooted themselves in this world, John 15:18-21; 16:1-2; Luke 9:23-26; 21:10-18, 34-36; Heb 10:32-39.

When we have this mindset and walk this life, we are swimming against the current of the world. This is swimming upstream. It takes perseverance and endurance and strength. In the natural world, the fish that are swimming upstream, fighting the current, are also the strongest fish. But the fish who are flowing downstream with the current are weak or even dead. And this is what John is warning us about. Don't be a spiritually weak or dead Christian.

Weak Christians are easily deceived because they don't know the Truth. And weak Christians flow with the world. How does a Christian become weak or dead spiritually? They stop feeding themselves with the Word. This is the bread of Life, John 6:35, this is our spiritual sustenance, Lk 4:4, and if you stop feeding yourself, you will become weak. And then you are at risk of becoming prey to the wickedness of the world, 1 Peter 5:8. If you don't have the Word abiding in you, you don't know the Truth, and those who don't know the Truth begin to compromise the Truth and are susceptible to deception, 2 Tim 2:14-19, 25-26; 3:7-9, 13; 4:3-4. Deception is the enemy's biggest weapon. Jesus says the devil is a liar and he is the father of lies, **John 8:44**. Spiritual warfare is not always fighting demon possessed people. In fact, most of our spiritual warfare is guarding from deception and Truth is the only remedy for deception.

A Christian won't start loving the world overnight. It's a progression that begins with flirting with the world, choosing the things of the world over God and His Word. Worldly things that may not even be sinful start distracting you from reading the Bible. It's never putting God first or having enough time for God. And when you're not abiding in His

Word, your path begins to darken, and you start making wrong decisions in life. And this starts you down a path that is very hard to recover from.

When a Christian starts flirting with the world, he becomes a friend to the world, this begins an enmity with God and this person will start compromising His Word, James 4:4. And if he starts to compromise, he will flow downstream with the current of the world. This is the road to destruction and there is no life in this, and before you know it, this person is rejecting Jesus Christ. And if he rejects Jesus, he is no longer overcoming evil, he is in love with the world and he has rejected Everlasting Life. This has been Satan's tactic since the beginning, and it always starts with deception, because if you remove the Truth, then truth can be whatever you make it to be.

A major part of John's letter is to expose these deceptions of the enemy, **1 John 2:26**. Peter warns of these false teachers bringing destructive heresies, **2 Peter 2:1-3, 12-21**. This is the danger of flirting with the world because it can lead you to become embedded in the world and to eventually love the world. Becoming too comfortable in this world can and will lead to apostasy.

Look at Demas. He was a fellow-worker with the Great Apostle Paul, named in the ending salutation of the book of **Colossians 4:7-15** among some amazing people; but then disaster took place as persecution arose for the Word's sake.

Around 64AD, at a time when Rome was under the authority of Nero, and Christians were being blamed for the burning of Rome, there was an all-out assault on Christianity. Paul had been arrested for the second time, and this time, under very harsh persecution, he was sentenced to death. Paul, now at the end of his life, while in his dungeon, awaiting death and facing martyrdom, he writes a personal letter to his son in the faith Timothy. And in this letter, he mentions Demas again, but this time, in a heart-broken plea to Timothy he writes, "*be diligent to come to me quickly (Timothy); for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica*", **2 Timothy 4:9-10**. We do not know the exact circumstances to make Demas apostasize, but we know it was his love for this present, evil world that made him abandoned Paul and reject the gospel.

This is tragic thing when something like this occurs in the body of Christ. But this happens when the Word of Truth is not abiding in a Christian, and they get enticed into loving the world. Paul warned Timothy about this in **2 Timothy 4:3-4**. So how do we avoid this? Hold fast to Jesus Christ, Hebrews 12:1-2; 6:18-19. Hold fast to His Word as precious, 1 John 2:5, 14; 1 Cor 15:1-2. Fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on Eternal Life, 1 Tim 6:12.

Look at **2 Timothy 4:5; 4:2; 1:8-14**. We stand on the Truth and do not compromise the Word, 2 Tim 2:15. We must live every day committed to doing the will of the Father, proclaiming the message of Everlasting Life in Jesus Christ, 1 John 2:17. We must Love God and do not love this world, 1 John 2:15. Continue to abide in His Word every day because this is what guards us from the evil one, **John 17:14-21**.