

Christians Are Not to Love the World  
I John 2:15-17

INTRO: I John 2:15 says: "Love not the world...." Christians are to love God! "Neither the things of the world.....," Christians are to love the things of God.

Christians are not to be worldly. They are not to be in love with the world and its wares. Billy Sunday said: "It makes no more sense to talk about a worldly Christian than to talk about a heavenly devil" (Vines 70). Could it be that many folks that we call worldly Christians are not Christians at all. Can we truly love the things of the world and still love God? Matthew 6:24 says: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

I. VS 15, WHAT WORLD ARE WE TALKING ABOUT

- A. When John says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...." What world is he talking about? In the scriptures, the word world has three different meanings.
  1. The world can mean the world of nature.
    - a) This is the world of roses, of mighty oak trees, of the beautiful aspen in Colorado, of the beautiful sunsets of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
    - b) The world of nature points to a wonderful divine Creator who created the world of nature for us to use and enjoy.
    - c) God did not tell us to hate the world of nature.
  2. World can also speak of the human race, a world fallen into sin and in need of redemption.
    - a) God cares for the souls of the lost and has sent His Son to die for sinners (I Jn 2:2; 4:9).
    - b) Jesus wept over Jerusalem because of His compassion for a wayward world of humanity.
    - c) God did not tell us to hate the human race for out of it a people will be saved.
  3. The Greek word for world in this verse is *kosmos* from which we get our words "cosmopolitan" and "cosmic."
    - a) As used here in I John it refers to unbelieving pagan society, a society filled with ungodly influences hostile to a holy God.
    - b) This world is the wicked world of Satan, the world of wickedness (I Jn 5:19).
    - c) Erdman defines it as "the society of the unspiritual and the godless."
    - d) The world surrounds the Christian with its subtlety, its attraction and appeal urging conformity in activity and dress.
    - e) The word of Satan is a world of darkness from which the child of God has been delivered (Col 1:13).

- f) The child of God is not of this world (Jn 17:14).
  - g) Christians are not of the world, but we are sent into the world to give the Gospel (Jn 17:18).
- B. We are not to love the world or the things that are in it.
1. To love the world and its things is “to court the worlds favor, follow its customs, adopt and seek its fellowship” (Vaughn 54).
  2. Do you love the world and its corruption?
    - a) Do you love the ungodly music of the world?
    - b) Do you love the ungodly dress of the world?
    - c) Do you love the talk of the world, talk filled with cursing, lies, and deceit?
    - d) Do you love the ungodly pleasures of the world?
- C. “If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.”
1. John here uses the present tense verb meaning that the love of God rules as a principle or the love of the world does. Where one is, the other cannot be.
  2. The man who loves the world does not want the things of God.

## II. VS 16, THE WAYS OF THE WORLD

- A. “All that is in the world” is as Vaughn says: “totally different from and directly antagonistic to all that is ‘of the father’” (54).
1. The ways of the world will affect us if we are not careful and don’t watch out.
  2. “Flirting with the world is unfaithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ” (Vines 74). Friendship with the world leads to courtship; courtship leads to engagement; and engagement leads to marriage.
  3. When you get friendly with the world, you get tarnished, stained (James 4:4).
    - a) The world will poison you and make you sick.
    - b) The world will damage you and your testimony.
  4. We are not to be conformed to the world. We are not to let the world squeeze us into its mold (Rom 12:1-2).
- B. This verse tells us about three ways the world puts the squeeze on us. In this verse, we have “the trinity of evil.”
1. “The lust of the flesh.” The “flesh” refers to human nature corrupted by sin. “Lust” refers to the desires, cravings, and longings of the body. Fallen man tries to fulfill natural desires in an improper way causing us to sin.
    - a) Hunger and desire for food are natural, but overeating is sin.
    - b) Sex is not wrong. God created sex and it is right and good in marriage (Heb 13:4).
      - (1) The Devil wants us to fulfill the normal desire for sex in an improper way. Pre- and extra- marital sex is wrong.
      - (2) Sex is beautiful when fulfilled in the right way. It is ugly, nasty, and shameful when fulfilled in the wrong way.
  2. “The lust of the eyes.” The children sing, “O, be careful little eyes

what you see,” and how true this is. Much of what we think about, reflect on, comes through the eye gate.

- a) Pornography is an example of “the lust of the eyes” and is to be avoided. Filthy books and magazines will pollute your mind.
  - b) Television is the cesspool of the century. The TV brings things into homes that should never be allowed in.
  - c) The Devil always paints a beautiful picture, but the problem is the picture isn’t real.
3. “The pride of life.” Pride speaks of “vainglory” and indicates “empty display.” Pride involves boasting about what we have to impress people, to show out.
- a) Pentecost says: “the pride of life is the desire for prominence and adulation” (56).
  - b) Vincent defines pride as: “an insolent and vain assurance in one’s own resources, or in the stability of earthly things, which issues in a contempt for divine laws” 376).

### III. VS 17, THE WORLD IS GOING TO CRUMBLE

- A. This world is passing away. It is transient (I Cor 7:31).
  1. This world is headed for destruction.
  2. One of these days, this earth is going to go up in smoke (II Pet 3:10).
    - a) Buildings are going to go up in smoke.
    - b) Las Vegas and Atlantic City are going to crumble.
  3. The things of this world will not satisfy because they are not lasting.
    - a) Alcohol will not satisfy.
    - b) Drugs will not satisfy.
    - c) The pleasures of the world are fading away. “Do not put your roots down in this world; do not put your hopes in this world; do not fall in love with this world. It is not worth it” (Vines 78).
- B. “Doing the will of God expresses the normal conditions and activity of the believer” (Vines 35).
  1. The child of God is forever related to God (Mt 12:50).
  2. The child of God does not love this world, is not excited about what this world has to offer, and has not put down roots here. The child of God is looking for his home in glory.

CONCLUSION: Are you in love with the world? Or are you in love with Jesus?