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**Capitol Commission Bible Study**  
**How God's Love Is Expressed**  
**1 John 2:9-27**

**The Relationship of Light and Darkness to Obedience - 2:9-11**

In verse 9, John introduces the imagery of light and darkness. Light represents truth and goodness while darkness equals falsehood and evil. He begins by speaking of *one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother*. These people may say the “right things,” but it means nothing if it is not backed up with right living. Love and light go together. So, if someone claims to be living in light yet hates his fellow believers, the profession of being in the light is false. Rather, *the one who loves his brother abides in the Light*. On the other hand, the one who *hates his brother* does not even *know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes*.



**Do Not Love the World - 2:15-17**

After a short break to encourage his readers, John picks up in verse 15 and begins talking about *the world*. The word “world” is a reference to that which is opposed to God. By telling his readers not to *love the world*, John is urging them to not put a high value on human desires (power, material success, personal ambition, satisfaction of bodily appetites, and the like), but on godly desires. From here, John goes on to give two reasons one should not *love the world*.

The first reason is because doing so is an indication that *the love of the Father is not in him*. Having a “worldly” motivation demonstrates that the things of this life are more important to an individual than the purposes of God. We are to use material things based on God’s intentions, not for self-seeking purposes. John then, in verse 16, gives three examples of “worldliness” to demonstrate his point: 1) *the lust of the flesh* (improper desire for food, sex, etc.), 2) *the lust of the eyes* (improper desire for material goods), 3) *the boastful pride of life* (an improper desire to impress other people by one’s outward circumstances).

John then, in verse 17, gives the second reason not to *love the world*. He says that *the world is passing away*. Thus, people should build their lives on an eternal foundation (God’s precepts) rather than on a temporal one (the world’s values).

**This Is the Last Hour - 2:18-23**

Beginning in verse 18, John speaks of *the last hour*. This encompasses the entire period between the first and second coming of Christ. During this time, believers need to be on the lookout for antichrists (those who oppose God and his purposes). Some of them had attached themselves to the church family in order to spread their erroneous teachings.

In verse 20, John goes on to share three traits which characterize true believers. They are: 1) anointing by the Spirit (the indwelling Holy Spirit), 2) access to necessary knowledge, and 3) a knowledge of the truth. John tells his readers that they don’t need the special knowledge of the Gnostics because they already have the revealed knowledge of the true faith.

John returns to the idea of antichrist, in verse 22, and talks about certain lies the Gnostics were promoting. The first lie is that Jesus is not the Christ – that he was simply a man. The second lie was to *deny the Son* – that Jesus was a great teacher, but not deity. Both of these lies put the Gnostics in opposition to God and his revelation.

**John’s Summary- 2:24-27**

Verses 24-27 summarize John’s previous teaching concerning: 1) the validity of the Christian doctrine, and 2) the truth of God’s revelation of himself. Once again, he warns his readers to avoid false teachers and *abide in Him* (Christ).

**Why This Passage is Important Today**

Contrary to popular conception, morality is not merely a social construct. It is God’s revelation to us about how we should live based on his holiness. And the morality one express in his or her life exposes the true condition of an individual’s heart. We should seek to follow God’s revealed morality because it expresses whether or not we truly live in relationship with him.

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