

1 John 2:15-17

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. 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. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. *NKJV*

God loves the world, why can't we? In John 3:16 Jesus explains the extravagant love (*agape*) that God the Father has for the world. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." But here John, the same writer that recorded Jesus' words in his own gospel, writes to warn Christians not to love the world. How can he justify what he is saying? John even uses the same word for world, "*kosmos*." John doesn't just use the word once in this small section of Scripture, but six times!

It's the same "world." But there's something different that John is warning Christians about. **Love for the world must not preclude love for the Father.** And love for the *things* of this world, (John is careful to describe that he is not speaking of the earth, natural phenomenon, etc...) is not to be a part of the Christian's life at all.

What has come into this world is not of the Father. This world is in the grip of the Devil. In the same narrative found in John 3, John records the words of Christ,

*And this is the condemnation,
that the light has come into the world,
and men loved darkness rather than light,
because their deeds were evil.
(John 3.19)*

(see also 1 John 5:19, John 12:31, 14:30)

Jesus said that men love darkness rather than the light that came into the world. The darkness of this world has become very alluring to mankind. John describes more distinctly what it is about the world that is to be forsaken in our love for the Father in

three categories of the world system: 1. The desire for man-centered hedonism ("the lust of the flesh"), 2. The desire for the eyes to be satisfied with that which is forbidden ("the lust of the eyes"), and 3. The desire for self-promotion ("the pride of life").

These three areas that are typical of how the world without Christ thinks and can be explained more fully this way:

1. **The desire for man-centered hedonism:** self-sufficiency, materialism, ego-centricism, exploitation, selfishness, greed.
2. **The desire for the eyes to be satisfied with that which is forbidden:** especially inordinate sexual desires, being captive by the outward appearances of something not wholly fulfilling
3. **The desire for self-promotion:** the pretensions nature of seeking glory by the things or talents one possesses, seeking after status symbols, striving for acceptance or glory, identifying one's self with the things they possess.

All of these things that man craves are passing away; they are temporary in their nature. In fact, they are decaying. What of this world's pleasure, what possession(s), what status can be enjoyed forever? John says they are all fading away, and that even the "lust" is fading away. One cannot even experience the same euphoria continuously from the things of this world.

Therefore, John reminds Christians, the truest form of satisfaction, the most grandiose indulgence, and the forever experience that man craves is to abide

in the pleasure of serving God according to God's will. John is saying there is no comparison to that.

As you remember, John is a master of contradictions (ie light v. darkness) and here he shows the contrast between the comprehensive life of the Christian in this world with the unsatisfying and temporary infatuation with decaying things.

All Christians, (fathers, young men, little children) are to beware of the alluring nature of the things of this world and its tendency to rob them of the place where the love for God is to abide. **No Christian can say that he loves God if he loves the world.**

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean that “love for the world must not preclude love for the Father”?
2. What has come into the world?
3. What are the three categories of the world that are alluring to every man?
4. How is even the “lust” for these things fading?
5. Bible Study. Look up the following passages and note the description of things that are temporary v. permanent.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 7.31
 - b. Hebrews 11.13
 - c. Hebrews 13.14
6. What is the warning about the world?
7. What is the promise to those who will forsake the world for the love of God?

CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY

Staff, Lobbyists & Capitol Community Welcome

Statehouse Room #44 ~ Wednesdays, 12:00