

"Love Not the World!"

I John 2:12-17
10-21-2026



Introduction:

"The World" - The values of a Godless system

**** This world system and the things in it are not worthy of our love!***

Why should believers not love the world?

I. Worldliness is <u>INCONSISTENT</u> for anyone who is saved (v.12-14)
(Love for the world's system & things is <u>unfitting for someone who knows God and His Word</u>)

II. Worldliness is <u>DANGEROUS</u> to your closeness to God (v.15)
(Love for the world's system & things <u>forfeits your capacity to love God as you should</u>)

III. Worldliness is a <u>VANITY</u> that does not have it's origin in God (v.16)
(Love for the world's system & things stems from a worldly (satanic) deception)

A. The lust of the <u>flesh</u> - The world's vain <u>pleasure</u>

B. The lust of the <u>eyes</u> - The world's vain <u>possessions</u>

C. The pride of <u>life</u> - The world's vain <u>prestige</u>

IV. **Worldliness is <u>FOOLISH</u> because of the transient (temporary) nature of the world (v.17)**
(Love for the world's system & things is <u>unwise because the world and it's things are here today and gone tomorrow</u>)



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(Love for the world's system & things forfeits your _____ as you should)

III. Worldliness is a _____ that does not have it's origin in God (v.16)
(Love for the world's system & things stems from a worldly (satanic) deception)

A. The lust of the flesh - The world's vain _____

B. The lust of the eyes - The world's vain _____

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Introduction:

Verse 15

"Love not" - (*me agapate)* - Make a decision to stop your allegiance to and dedication to this old *cosmos*.

The New Testament uses two primary words translated "world."

1. *Aion* - this world's present *time*. The present age (with its degenerate moral characteristics) as opposed to God's future kingdom.

2. *Kosmos* - This world's present program. The Satanic inspired, humanistic system that is alienated from and in opposition to God.

Kosmos - used 79 times in John and 23 times in I John.

What *"Love not the world"* does not mean:

1. John is not saying that we should despise the planet (globe) upon which we live (that which God created was called good; we should not worship the creation, however.).

2. John is not saying that we shouldn't love people (mankind) (God loves the world in this sense and so should we - John 3:16).

"World" - *Cosmos* (cp. Cosmetics) - speaks of an adornment or an arrangement of things.

The "world" of which he speaks is not of the world order as God originally established, but of the world order which has been twisted and perverted by sin and Satan.

The word "world" refers tot he world's organized system (in its lust for material possessions and personal status) as headed by Satan ("the god of this world". . . "the prince of the power of the air"); a system which ignores God, glorifies the temporal, and opposes God's righteous ways.

The "world" is simply that system of man which has God left out (the worst thing about TV and movies is that they depict life without God as normal).

When John speaks of not loving the world, he is referring to a world order and mindset that is at enmity with god, lost in sin, wholly at odds with anything divine.

--This world has a wisdom that is not God's wisdom (I Cor. 3:19)

--This world has a ruler called "the prince of this world" (Jn. 12:31, 16:11)

--This world has a defilement to be avoided (Ja. 1:27; II Pet. 2:20)

--This world hates God and God's people (I John 3:13)

--This world is lulled to sleep in the arms of Satan (I John 5:19)

--This world has a way of thinking and doing things that is antithetical to God (Eph. 2:2)

Worldliness is a "radical individualism" that displays a kindly attitude toward Satan's evil world system and manifests itself in self-centeredness, self-advancement, and autonomy (Jon Trainer citing Chuck Colson).

"Neither the things that are in the world" - speaks of a materialistic mindset.

All believers must use the things in this world, but when we love them in place of God (when they become the center of our attention), we abuse their use (I Cor. 7:31 - "And they that use this world, as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away").

God promises to meet our needs for certain "things" when we seek first the kingdom of God (Mt. 6:33).

We ought to seek the "things" which are above (Col. 3:1-2 - "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth").

America has approximately 40,000 missionaries on the foreign field (over half are over 60 years old!).

America has approximately 40,000 students in "Bible colleges" and less than 400 will go to the foreign mission field. The greatest major in Bible colleges and universities today (sad to say) is Business not Bible! (Rom Brooks, Baptist World Mission).

What is the reason for such worldly priorities? They learned it at home.

Many times we are worldly and don't even realize it.

--We adopt worldly standards

--We adopt worldly views of husband and wife roles
--we adopt worldly views on child discipline
--We adopt worldly views on dating and marriage
--We adopt worldly views on church growth
--We adopt worldly views on handling problems
--We adopt worldly views on planning our future

"The World" - The values of a Godless system

**** This world system and the things in it are not worthy of our love!***

Why should believers not love the world?

I. Worldliness is INCONSISTENT for anyone who is saved (v.12-14)
(Love for the world's system & things is unfitting for someone who knows God and His Word)

John sets the stage for his abrupt and stern command (to not love the world) by showing believers how inconsistent it would be for us to love the world after all God did for us and in us and through us (vv. 12-14).

v. 12

"I write unto you" - John, as he customarily does in this epistle, states his reasons for writing.

This epistle is written to believers and is written for believers (to encourage their faith - cp. I Jn. 5:13).

The Bible has as a major purpose its ability to "make one wise unto salvation" (II Tim. 3), but its purpose is also (perhaps primarily) to bolster the faith of those who are saved.

"Little children" - (*teknia)* a term of endearment (always used figuratively in the New Testament of a special relationship between someone who has a special concern for other Christian disciples (Jn. 13:33; Gal. 4:19; I Jn. 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21).

"Your sins are forgiven you" -

"Sins" - every time you missed God's mark or standard of righteousness.

"Forgiven" - (perfect, passive, indicative) -

The meaning of our forgiveness = to release one from a debt or penalty; to no longer hold sin against us; the guilt and penalty is removed.

The timing of our forgiveness = the past right up to the present (all our sins are already forgiven).

The source of our forgiveness = God (passive).

The reason for our forgiveness = **"on account (*dia*) of His name"** - It is both through Jesus that we are forgiven and it is for Jesus that we are forgiven (i.e. that we might glorify His name for eternity).

v. 13

Three classes (categories) of believers are addressed in vv. 13-14. Not describing their age (per se) but their spiritual maturity (their differing levels of spiritual growth.

Note the three categories of believers, moving from the most mature to the least:

1. **"Fathers" -** The spiritually mature (those who have been saved for quite some time)

2. **"Young men"** - The spiritually young (those who have been saved for a fair amount of time)

3. **"Little children" -** the spiritual newborns (new converts - those who have been recently saved)

"Fathers" - "You have known Him" - The perfect tense signifies a past knowledge with continuing results. You have know Him as your personal Lord and Savior in the past and you still do up to the present.

It's one thing to know about God; it's an entirely different thing to know God.

"Young men" - "You have overcome the wicked one" - You have victoriously conquered Satan! (a past and present reality).

How is this possible? Via salvation, Satan no longer can wield over us his intimidating dagger of death. Through Christ, we conquer Satan (Heb. 2:14).

Satan fights about people coming to Christ more than anything else (Acts 13:8ff).

Note: the word “little children” (*paidia)* in v. 13 is different than “little children” (*teknia)* in v. 12. *“Paidia”* (v. 13) refers to an infant or a newborn.

“Little children” - “Ye have known the Father” - Just as the more mature “fathers” in the faith knew God personally, so a newborn, newly-saved convert knows Him just as personally. Whether saved for one hour or one decade or one century, all who know Him share the same personal relationship with Him.

v. 14

The change in tense from the present **“I write”** (v. 13) to the past **“I have written”** (v. 14) re-emphasizes John’s purpose for writing. He wanted to reassure them in the strongest way possible that their faith is real and firmly anchored in God and His Word.

The past tense “written” may refer to a previous letter which they who had been saved for some time received; yet the new believers had not received that letter (hence John does not again make reference to them in v. 14).

Why did John say the same thing about the “fathers” as he did in v. 13? Perhaps because he is making reference to a previous letter he wrote to them (in that letter he said the same thing, that now he is reaffirming in this epistle).

“Young men” - “Ye are strong” - As youth is usually accompanied with strength, so these youthful believers had the strength of Christ surging through their spiritual muscles.

It is only in the Lord that we are strong! (Phil. 4:13 - “I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me”; Eph. 6:10 - “Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might”; II Tim. 2:1 - “Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”)

“The Word of God abideth in you” - God’s written Word (which they heard, believed, applied, meditated on and memorized) has remained in them!

How much of God’s Word is remaining in you? (Is your retention like a leaky sieve or a sealed container??).

Your victory over the world can only come to the degree that you have faith in God’s Word (I Jn. 5:4)

II. Worldliness is <u>DANGEROUS</u> to your closeness to God (v.15)
(Love for the world's system & things <u>forfeits your capacity to love God as you should</u>)

"If <u>any man</u> love the world" - No one is excluded; worldliness affects everyone's fellowship with God.

"The love of the Father is not in him" - <u>Not</u> speaking of God's love for the person, but the person's love <u>for</u> God.

You cannot love the world and God at the same time.

You can't give your heart to materialism and vanity and give it to God at the same time. You can't love two masters. God calls love for this world spiritual "<u>adultery</u>." (James 4:4 - "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.")

v. 15b

What you spend your thoughts, time, and money on reveals what you love.

III. Worldliness is a <u>VANITY</u> that does not have it's origin in God (v.16)
(Love for the world's system & things stems from a worldly (satanic) deception)

The world is <u>attractive</u>.

In three short phrases, John summarizes the world's allurements:
"flesh" - the <u>sensual</u>
"eyes" - the <u>sensational</u>
"pride" - the <u>self-sufficiency</u>

A. The lust of the <u>flesh</u> - The world's vain <u>pleasure</u>

"Lust" - (*epithumia*) - appetite or desire (used here in a negative sense)

Physical appetites are not wrong (in themselves); they become wrong when satisfied in a wrong way (either through perversion or obsession).

You love the world when you live for <u>pleasure</u> ("lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" - II Tim. 3:4)

A carnal (fleshly) worldly person is one who:

--places comfort over duty and discipline
--esteems food over fellowship
--prioritizes play over prayer
--desires sensual fulfillment over moral restraint
--seeks immediate gratification over patience and God's will & timing
--gives in to rest and recreation over the spiritual disciplines of Bible reading and church attendance

B. The lust of the eyes - The world's vain possessions

Seeing is not always a virtue ("If thy right eye offends thee, pluck it out...").

So much of the world is designed to attract the eye (and thereby attract the heart).

"The lust of the eyes" is an appeal to:

--Beauty over virtue
--Temporal over the eternal
("seen = temporal. . . unseen = eternal")
--Externals over internals

Beware of a covetous spirit over clothing, cars, houses, your own appearance, etc.

C. The pride of life - The world's vain prestige

Vain glory in one's livelihood or means of life.

--what do you brag about?
--what things in their life do you confidently boast in?

"Not of the Father" - such lusts do not come from God; He is not the source.

This world, instigated and deluded by the devil, is the originator of such.

These three avenues of lust were the three areas of attack by Satan on two occasions in Scripture:

--In the Garden with Eve (Gen. 3:6) -

1. "Flesh" - "good for food"
2. "Eyes" - "pleasant to the eyes"
3. "Pride" - "a tree to be desired to make one wise"

--In the wilderness with Jesus (Lk. 4:4ff) -

1. "Flesh" - "bread" (4:4)
2. "Eyes" - "shewed Him all the kingdoms" (4:5)
3. "Pride" - "cast Thyself down" (4:9)

IV. **Worldliness is FOOLISH because of the transient (temporary) nature of the world (v.17)**
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"The world passeth away" - present tense - "is passing away."

--the count down has begun
--the days of this cosmos are numbered

This world is transitory, already in the process of dissolution.

The material earth itself "waxeth old like a garment."

The "Prince and power of the air" won't rule forever! (Rev. 20).

Righteousness and holiness will replace sin and rebellion. Jesus is coming; His world order will replace this anti-Christ world order (cp. I Jn. 2:18).

"And the lust thereof" - What the world loves won't be around forever. The chapter on worldly desires will one day be finished (no more battle with such lusts).

"He that doeth the will of God" - What is God's will?

--That you believe the Gospel and allow god to change you from the inside out.

It is possible to do the will of God in the midst of an ungodly world system.

"Christians should view their relationship with the world as a trip to camp. They are only going to be there a short while. They need only pack a few belongings." (Jon Trainer).

"You can't take it with you!" (I Tim. 6:7, 17).

Don't fill your pockets - they will be empty when you leave!

Conclusion:

A.W. Tozer said that this world for too many fundamental Christians had become "a playground instead of a battle ground."

"In this world ye shall have tribulation" -

Are you going with the flow or against the tide of this world?

Expect friction and opposition!

ILLUS: BROAD Way
Narrow way

Make an impact! Leave your mark behind! Don't be afraid to be different! (unique) Be transformed, not conformed (Rom. 12:1-2)

Make a <u>difference</u> in this world for God's glory! (Mt. 5:13-16)

--Be <u>salt</u> (5:13)

--Be <u>light</u> (5:14-16)

We are in the world but not of it. It is not the ship in the water, but the water in the ship that sinks it. it is not the Christian in the world, but the world in the Christian that ruins him.

When the church was least like the world, it made its greatest impact on the world (J.W. Chapman).

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mk. 8:37).