



The Love God Hates

1 John 2:15-17

This morning in our continuing study of 1 John we shall cover 3 small verses, but they are HUGE in content.

In fact, last week we had verses that presented an “interpretation” issue - why did John include them? Not this week. It’s clear. John warns the readers to beware of one of the deadly issues of all Christian’s lives - *worldliness*. Let’s read them: vv. 15-17.

Here’s the thing. I have an impossible task today. I realized that outside of a miraculous work of God, I will not be able to look back on this day and say I succeeded in this message. Because to be successful I would need to have communicated to you, and you would need to be convinced and convicted that the love of the world is to be avoided in your life like you would avoid food poisoning.

(take a minute and turn to your neighbor on either side and say “Pastor Dave has a tough job today!”)

You realize, don’t you, that John has a lot to say about love in this letter, but there is *one kind of love that God hates*, and that is the “love of the world.” And that where we begin this morning.

V. 15¹⁵ *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

There are two things I think we need to understand from v. 15.

What in the World?

First when John, (and Jesus and Paul) say “*do not love the world*” what do they mean by that? Doesn’t the Bible tell us that “*God so loves the world*” (Jn. 3:16)? “S’up?”

What is this “world” we should not love? With the exception of 2:2, this is the first time in the letter that John has used the word “world” but now it occurs 6 times in just these three verses, and it will occur many more times later on. It is one of the most important terms in the John’s vocabulary.

In the New Testament, just as now, “world” is used in various ways (context, context, context).

1. It sometimes means **the physical world**, the earth, or universe (*kosmos*): **Acts 17:24** “*The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands.*”

If this sense of the word is used, Christians are to receive and be thankful for the world, for it is God’s gift. We sing **Hymn 43** “*This is my Father’s world...I rest me in the thought, Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the wonders wrought.*”

2. Then it can also refer the “**the world of people**” “human world,” “mankind.” This use is also present in John. **1 John 2:2**. In **John 3:16** we learn that God loved it and gave his only begotten Son for it, that it is the object of his saving purposes. Also see: John 4:42; 1 John 4:14.

Sometimes these two ideas appear together: **John 1:10** *He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.*

If this second sense is used, Christians are to love the world and seek to evangelize it, for God also loves this world.

Hymn #4 “*To God be the glory, great things He hath done; so loved He the world that he gave us*”

his son. ...Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice. “

3. But our passage today uses “world” in another way. The third major use of the word is not only the most common, it is also the most significant in John’s writings. The idea here is of **the fallen world system that is in rebellion against God**. This is what we might call “*the world system*” and it is **all that is in opposition to God**.

We also use the word “world” in the sense of *system* in our daily conversation.

- The TV announcer says, “And now from the world of sports.” “The world of sports” is not a separate planet or continent. It is an organized system, made up of a set of ideas, people, activities, purposes, etc.
- There is “the world of finance” and “the world of politics” as well.

John says of this world that that it *does not know him* (**1 John 3:1**).

Then in **1 John 5:19** he says, *the world lies in the grip of the evil one*. It is in this sense that John speaks of the world in the passage before us.

Unsaved people, whether they realize it or not, belong to “this world.” Jesus calls them “**the children of this world**” (Luke 16:8).

In the third usage, which we have here, **Christians are to reject the world and conduct their lives according to an entirely different set of values**, seeking to pull unbelievers out of it as well.

SONG: All I once held dear, built my life upon, all this world reveres and wars to own, all I once thought gain I have counted loss, spent and worthless now compared to this. Knowing You, Jesus, knowing You. There is no greater thing.

As a Christian, you live in the physical world, you are a member of the human world, and **but you do NOT belong to the spiritual world, that is Satan’s system for opposing God**.

John 15:19 “If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”

“The world,” then, is not a natural habitat for a believer. The believer’s citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20),

WORLD’S LOVE OR GOD’S LOVE?

The second thing I believe we need to see from v. 15 is the first of two reasons John gives for us to learn to stop loving the world. *...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*”

You can’t love the world and love God. One crowds out the other. The more you flirt with the world the more you diminish your allegiance to God. (am I making this up? Isn’t that what God’s truth is saying?)

You see, the “world system” is the result of the Fall, and it is the Devil’s way to take that which was created as a gift, and turn it into a “tool” to pry us away from God.

Ephesians 2:2 *in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*

Romans 1:25 *They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.*

The TRUTH? IT NEVER DELIVERS THE GOODS! It promises fulfillment, happiness, contentment.... But it is short lived.

A wealthy employer once overheard one of his workers exclaim, “*Oh if I only had \$10,000, I would be perfectly content.*”

Knowing that his own money had not given him inner peace, he told him, “Since I would like to see someone who is perfectly contented, I’m going to grant your desire.” He gave him the money and left, but before he was out of earshot, he heard him remark, almost bitterly, “Why on earth didn’t I say 20,000?” The boss smiled, for his point had been made.

Let me give you a practical definition of worldliness: *anything in this world that causes a Christian to lose his enjoyment of the Father’s love or his desire to do the Father’s will*

FISHING HOOKS

There is a second reason to stop loving the world, but before he gives it in vs. 16, he will tell us a little more about HOW the world system lures us

into it's grip (as if we didn't already know this....) He mentions three things: **1 John 2:16** *For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.*

- *the cravings of sinful man*, the lust of the flesh
- *the lust of his eyes* the lust of the eyes
- *the boasting of what he has and does* boastful pride of life

1 John 2:16 (NLT) *For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.*

I think it's Denny's Restaurant that offers a Grand Slam Meal, but this is a real Triple Whammy!

The LUST OF THE FLESH refers to anything that appeals to man's fallen nature. Flesh is the nature we receive in our physical birth; spirit is the nature we receive in the second birth (John 3:5–6). When we trust Christ, we become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). A Christian has both the old nature (flesh) and the new nature (Spirit) in his life. And what a battle these two natures can wage! (Gal. 5:17–23)

God has given man certain desires, and these desires are good. Hunger, thirst, sleep, and sex are not at all evil in themselves. When the flesh nature controls them, they become sinful “lusts.”

- Hunger is not evil, but gluttony is sinful.
- Thirst is not evil, but drunkenness is a sin.
- Sleep is a gift of God, but laziness is shameful.
- Sex is God's precious gift when used rightly; but when used wrongly, it becomes immorality.

Now you can see how the “world” operates. It appeals to the normal appetites and tempts us to satisfy them in forbidden ways. In today's world we are surrounded by all kinds of allurements that appeal to our lower nature.

The LUST OF THE EYES I think can best be summed up by the 10th commandment - *You shall not covet*. It is wanting things because our neighbor has them.

We sometimes forget that the eyes can have an appetite! (Have you ever said, “Feast your eyes on this”?)

Achan (Josh. 7), a soldier, brought defeat to Joshua's army because of the lust of his eyes. God had warned Israel not to take any spoils from the condemned city of Jericho, but Achan did not obey. He explained: *“When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and 200 shekels of silver, then I coveted them, and took them”* (Josh. 7:21). The lust of the eyes led him into sin, and his sin led the army into defeat.

The PRIDE OF LIFE refers to being proud about one's position in this world.

Either people trust in themselves, or they derive their values, assurance and life from God. It is exactly this attitude of self-sufficiency, seeing things in our own light and not by the light of God, that is “worldliness.”

We “try” to derive value from what we possess in this world, rather than from God.

Yet, the more of it we own, the more it actually owns us. (house, car, second homes, video games, TV,)

I need to continually work on “keeping a loose grip” on the stuff I have obtained.

1 Corinthians 7:31 *those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.*

GOOD BY WORLD (1 John 2:17)

Now John gives us the second reason to stop loving the world.

1 John 2:17 *The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.*

We know this, but we forget it. [the Matrix]

The only sure thing about this world system is that it is not going to be here forever. One day the system will be gone, and the pleasant attractions within it will be gone: all are passing away. What is going to last?

but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

Only what is part of the will of God!

John is contrasting two ways of life: a life lived for eternity and a life lived for time.

- A worldly person lives for the pleasures of the flesh, but a dedicated Christian lives for the joys of the Spirit.
- A worldly believer lives for what he can see, the lust of the eyes; but a spiritual believer lives for the unseen realities of God (2 Cor. 4:8–18).
- A worldly minded person lives for *what he has and does*; but a Christian who does the will of God lives for God’s approval. And he “lives forever.”

A Christian must decide, “Will I live for the present only, or will I live for the will of God and abide forever?”

Jesus illustrated this choice by telling about two men. One built on the sand and the other on the rock (Matt. 7:24–27).

If worlinessness is pulling you away from the Love of God and the Will of God, what can you do?

Monkey trappers in North Africa have a clever method of catching their prey. A number of gourds are filled with nuts and firmly fastened to a branch of a tree. Each has a hole just large enough for the unwary monkey to stick his forepaw into it. When the hungry animal discovers this, he quickly grasps a handful of nuts, but the hole is too small for him to withdraw his clenched fist. And he doesn’t have enough sense to open up his hand and let go in order to escape, so he is easily taken captive.

This is a picture of many Christians. The devil has ensnare them by appealing to the appetites of the flesh which can lead to their spiritual downfall. And UNTIL WE ARE WILLING TO LET GO, WE REMAIN TRAPPED!

As long as you hold on to the worldly bait, you cannot escape from Satan's trap.