

## *Do Not Love the Evil World System*

### *1 John 2:15-29*

*“The world and its things, which John warned his readers not to love, is the invisible, spiritual system of evil. It is the kosmos (‘world order,’ ‘realm of existence,’ ‘way of life’) governed by Satan; as Paul reminded the Ephesians, ‘you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience’ (Eph. 2:2). Later in this letter John wrote: ‘the whole world lies in the power of the evil one’ (5:19; cf. 4:1-5; John 12:31). The ‘world’ here refers to the same evil system that Jesus referred to when He said, ‘if the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you’ (John 15:18; cf. 17:14). So, it was not humanity in general or the created order that hated Christ, but rather the wicked, corrupt (2 Peter 2:19), demonic ideologies and enterprises that stimulate fallen humanity... In keeping with this understanding, the apostle Paul correctly viewed the world as engaged in a massive spiritual war against the kingdom of God.” MacArthur*

**2 Cor. 10:3-5** *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage battle according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying arguments and all arrogance raised against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,*

**2:15a** *“Do not love the world” is a command. **Agape love** is the type of love that serves. It also means to “to have high esteem for or satisfaction with” or “to take pleasure in” something. John uses the term **kosmos** (world) six times in verses 15-17 to stress the seriousness of making sure believers do not in any way serve the evil fallen world system over Christ.*

- It is either a heart-devotion to Christ or a heart-devotion to the world and its ways.

*“Law recognizes this in his excellent rephrasing of the apostle’s appeal. He writes, ‘Do not court the intimacy and the favour of the unchristian world around you; do not take its customs for your laws, nor adopt its ideals, nor covet its prizes, nor seek fellowship with its life.’ The NEB says, ‘Do not set your hearts on the godless world or anything in it.’” Boice*

**2:15b-17** John gives two reasons why we are not to love the evil world system over God.

- The first reason is that loving the evil world system and loving God are mutually exclusive. There’s no compatibility whatsoever between the two. *“It is impossible to both love and serve God and at the same time love that which he hates and which opposes him.” Boice*

**Luke 16:13** *No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”*

*“Even a brief consideration provides a lengthy list of cultural agendas that are aggressively hostile to biblical Christianity: an attack on the traditional family by feminism; an active promotion of sexual promiscuity and homosexuality; an increasing acceptance of violence; an emphasis on materialism and hedonism by the secular media; a steady decline in the standards of personal integrity and business ethics; an undermining of right and wrong by postmodern relativism; and so on.” MacArthur*

**Vs. 16** John breaks the evil world system down into three powerful allurements that can suck believers into lusting after its deceptive ways. Love or affection for the world can be subtle or

seemingly benign. We are to enjoy life, and the many blessings God gives us; it's looking beyond those blessings for greater satisfaction that can have devastating effects on a believer's spiritual wellbeing.

- In essence, it is a violation of the 1<sup>st</sup> commandment, *you shall have no other gods before me*.

**Matt. 6:19-21** 19 *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

1. **Lust of the flesh** (*cravings of sinful man*) is that which appeals to the carnal nature of me, myself, and I.

**ἐπιθυμία** *epithymía*, a longing (especially for what is forbidden):—*concupiscence (sexual desire), desire, lust (after)*.

*“sarx (flesh) is that part of our fallen state that opposes God and is in conflict with the Spirit's work of instilling attitudes and promoting actions that counter the world and its values.” Swindoll*

2. **Lust of the eyes** (*covetousness/envy*) is a violation of the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment; *You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

- This can involve more than material things. It can involve symbols of success, position, degrees, status, anything that dominates to the point of neglecting family, a relationship with Christ, church, etc.

3. **the boasting of what he has and does** (*pride*) God hates when a man promotes himself as superior to others intellectually, materially, professionally, or spiritually by looking down on others.

**Proverbs 8:13** *To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. (cf. Proverbs 6:16-19)*

**2:17** *The second reason we are not to love the world is because it is passing away.*

*It is not a prayer, not a wish, and not a spiritual sounding desire. It is a fact. The world is passing away, and we must live our lives and think our thoughts aware of this fact. Guzik*

- Believers know that they have eternal life, it's a gift given to us by grace (Eph. 2:8-9). Our battle is to make sure we live God's will and not the evil world system's will, which is best won by staying before him day by day.

**Romans 12:1-2** *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

**2:18-19** *Since the fall, Satan has made every effort to put himself in the place of God's Son Jesus Christ as the one to be adored and worshipped. He vies for the affection of mankind through the evil world system he created and through men and women who seduce mankind away from the truth through their powerful satanic influence. Their influence appeals to the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride.*

- **The last hour, a kind of time**, has been in place since the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Satan knows his time is short. He doesn't know when the church will be raptured, thus he's been feverishly working to draw as many as he can into hell through his deceptive ways.

**1 Peter 1:20** He [Jesus] was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

**Matthew 25:13** Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

*"First John 2:18-27 introduces a new set of sinister figures in the world of spiritual darkness. False teachers called "antichrists," who foreshadow an ultimate end-times 'Antichrist,' were already on the prowl in John's day. This was a sure sign that God's final countdown toward judgment had begun. Now, more than ever, believers must live with their eyes wide open to the wiles of the devil and their feet firmly fixed on the solid rock of God's truth. Only then will they be equipped for dealing with deceivers." Swindoll [N.A.R., Health, Wealth, Prosperity gospel, Sensational Movement]*

**antichristos** can mean either "against Christ" or "instead of Christ," or perhaps, combining the two, "one who, assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Christ" (Westcott). The word is found only in John's epistles, (Vine's Dictionary)

**anti** "in place of" or "against" **christos**, "Messiah" or "Christ"

*"They pawn off counterfeit 'truth,' knockoffs that appear so much like the original that even longtime believers can be fooled. Everyday peddlers of religious falsehood receive nodding approval on television and radio, in bookstores and media outlets, and even behind pulpits and in classrooms of well-respected churches and Christian institutions. Counterfeit truth is big business, and it's owned and operated by the same insidious proprietor who started it millennia ago in a garden (Gen. 3)." Swindoll*

- The antichrist's John refers to are the **gnostics** in his day who had successfully confused true believers about who Christ is and what it meant to walk in the light and in the truth. They felt themselves superior in knowledge and mysticism by denying the deity of Christ incarnate and thus minimizing the importance of living a holy life.
- What is important to note is that these antichrists came from within the church, which means that believers, if they did not know the truth as they should, could be easily led astray by them.

**2 Cor. 11:13-15** For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

- He also notes that the ultimate Antichrist is coming, the one who will have worldwide rule and domination during the great tribulation.

**2 Thess. 2:9-12** The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, 10 and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will

*believe the lie 12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.*

**2:20-21** God takes all believers through a wonderful process of changing them in body, soul, and spirit. Changes must take place in us, to prepare us for the reality of dwelling in His kingdom forever and ever without a sin nature and with glorified bodies. Satan has no control over the transformation that takes place in a believer's life unless we let him gain a foothold by loving the world more than God.

- Upon salvation we are declared righteous and made of right standing before God through faith in Christ's sacrifice for our sins. We are also sanctified, i.e., made holy, redeemed, and sealed with the Holy Spirit.

**1 Cor. 6:11** ... *But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

**1 Peter 1:18-19** *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

**Eph. 1:13-14** *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

- Here in 1 John, we are also told that we have an anointing from the Holy One.

*"When the New Testament speaks of anointing, it speaks of it as the common property of all believers. This is true even though all believers may not be walking in the anointing God has given them. The New Testament does not speak of a "special" anointing given to particular individuals."*  
Guzik

**χρῖσμα chrísma**, anything smeared on, unguent, ointment, usually prepared by the Hebrews from oil and aromatic herbs. Anointing was the inaugural ceremony for priests. Strong's

**2 Cor. 1:21-22** *Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*

- This anointing gives all believers the ability to discern between truth and falsehood.

**1 Cor. 2:12-14** *Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. 13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. 14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

*"The contrast that John makes is far sharper in the Greek language than in any English version, for the effect of his wording is to say that the Christians to whom he is writing are true "Christs" as opposed to 'false Christs' who have left their number. The word 'Christ' or 'Messiah' means 'anointed one.' Similarly, the word that lies behind the word 'anointing' is the phrase 'you have an anointing from the Holy one' is chrísma, which is related to the word 'Christ.' So to say that the believers had all received an anointing (literally, 'You have an anointing') is in some sense equivalent to say that they are now Christs in the world. This may be applied personally to all believers, for all who have truly been anointed by God are as Christ and must act as Christ in their own situation."* Boice