

That our joy may be complete – 1 John

1 John 2:12-17

“The Love of the Father” – March 8, 2020



Introduction

Do not love the world or the things in the world. To some this may sound strange/foreign; to others they fear what it may lead to; to some, it sounds needed. Why does God give us this command? Because in each of us, there is an abiding inclination to love the world! We need God's help to identify and pull up by the roots (however painful) the weeds that represent a love for that which is opposed to and in rebellion against God. How then can we resist the enticing call of this fallen world? May God use His word to that end in our lives.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. Remember who you are in Christ (2:12-14)
- II. Do not love the world (2:15-17)

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [1 John 2:12-14](#)

After some pretty hard-hitting words in chapters 1 & 2, John's readers may be left asking: *Am I in the light or the darkness (2:9-10)? Am I self-deceived about my Christianity or is it genuine (1:8)? Does God's word abide in me, do I know Him or am I faking it (2:4)?* It's right for us to have such self-examination (see [2 Cor. 13:5](#)), but we also need the encouragement of who we are in Christ. Here John offers such encouragement to Christians: *you are forgiven, you call on Him as Father, and you are strong in the Lord!*

Why is remembering who we are in Christ *helpful* when it comes time for us to obey the command in 2:15 – *Do not love the world or the things in the world?* In other words, how does hearing the 'sweeter song' of Jesus and the gospel help to pull us away from sin's enticement?

Love will at times call us to say the hard truth ([Prov. 27:5-6](#)) but one of the things John models for us is to make sure we hug big when we need to say those hard things. How should this look like in your relationships?

Additional Reading: Matthew 12:20, 1 Peter 2:9-10

2) Read [1 John 2:15-17](#)

The world John calls us not to love is the world order that has abandoned God and His rule – a world of people united in rebellion against God. *This* is the world we are not to love, want to participate in or seek the approval of. And yet, if we're honest, we often *do* find the world alluring and *want* to join in. That, John explains, is because the problem of worldliness lies *inside* us and what our hearts do with the environment around us. In v16, we see three aspects of the 'things of the world' that we're not to love. The 'desires of the flesh' point to the indwelling sin in our hearts that produce sinful desires (see [James 1:13-15](#)) opposed to God – desires that seek to put our self at the center (instead of God) at the expense of others. The 'desires of the eyes' are the things we let into our hearts through the gateway of our senses. What we read, watch, listen to, etc. have the potential to stir up our hearts to lust for or love the things of the world. The 'pride of life' deals with how we want to define ourselves – our boasting, not in God, but what we've accomplished or own.

What are ways you've fallen prey to the enticing call of the world? How can we help each other as a church family to remember the sweeter song of the gospel and who we are in Christ? What are practical steps you can take to wean yourself off of the love of the world?

Additional Reading: James 4:4, Galatians 5:17

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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***Next week's sermon text:** we turn to **1 John 2:18-27 "The hour of the antichrist"**