

Beloved: A Study of 1, 2, & 3 John
Lesson Three – Be Aware
1 John 2:18-29

Review – 1 John 2:15-17

The World-

The Cosmos

Mankind

The Evil World System

The reason why we are enjoined not to love the world is because “love for the Father” (RSV) and love for the world are mutually exclusive. If we are engrossed in the outlook and pursuits of the world which rejects Christ, it is evident that we have no love for the Father. “Friendship with the world is hatred towards God” (James 4:4). “No-one can serve two masters” (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13), and if we cannot serve God and mammon, neither can we love the Father and the world (John Stott, *The Letters of John*, Logos).

When we use others to meet our needs, we can't love them. Codependent people don't truly love each other. They're using each other. Each needs the other to feel okay. When we need the world, need something from the world, need something from the fearfully and wonderfully made people who populate the world to make us feel whole ourselves, we can't love (Tyler Staten, *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools: An Invitation to the Wonder and Mystery of Prayer*, p. 48).

I. Categories of Temptation

- A. The lust of the flesh - the cravings of sinful man
- B. The lust of the eyes - covetousness
- C. The boastful pride of life - boasting of what one has and does - to be “better than”

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life are three categories of sin. In the garden, the serpent, tempted Eve in all three areas:

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food [lust of the flesh], and that it was a delight to the eyes [lust of the eyes], and that the tree was desirable to make one wise [boastful pride of life], she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her and he ate (Genesis 3:6).

We also see these temptations being used against Christ in the wilderness when He was tempted by Satan:

Turn the stones into bread – (lust of the flesh)
Bow down and receive the kingdoms of the world – (lust of the eyes)
Throw Yourself from the pinnacle of the temple – (boastful pride of life)
(Luke 4:1-13)

All sin falls into one of these three categories. Social media assaults you with all three at once!

Learn to use the internet and your phone as a tool and don't let it master you. The moment it has a grip on you, you need to set boundaries. Set a limit on your phone and allow someone you trust to set the passcode. John Mark Comer writes, "The average iPhone user touches his or her phone 2,617 times a day. (By way of contrast, the psalmist said, 'I have set the LORD always before me' [Psalm 16:8, ESV]. What would my life be like if God touched my mind as frequently as I touch my phone?)" (John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, p. XIV).

Comer continues:

The thought process that went into building these applications, Facebook being the first of them,...was all about: "How do we consume as much of your time and conscious attention as possible?" And that means that we need to sort of give you a little dopamine hit every once in a while, because someone liked or commented on a photo or a post or whatever. And that's going to get you to contribute more content, and that's going to get you...more likes and comments...Your phone doesn't actually work for you. You pay for it, yes. But it works for a multibillion-dollar corporation in California, not for you. You're not the customer; you're the product. It's your attention that's for sale, along with your peace of mind (John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, p. 38-39).

Some Practical Suggestions:

- Put your phone to bed at night.
- Don't look at your phone in the morning before you meet with the Lord.
- Utilize basic etiquette - don't phone snub people.
- At meals or with people, leave your phone in your bag or purse.
- Take breaks from it - a Sabbath.
- Take a longer break - a month off each year.

Danny Akin writes, "Because the Father's Kingdom is at war with the kingdom of this world, the two will never coexist peacefully. To pledge allegiance to one side is to declare opposition to the other" (Danny Akin, *1, 2, 3 John*, Logos).

II. False Christs (1 John 2:18-21)

“For false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance” (Mark 13:22-23).

“Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

Also mentioned in the Old Testament in Daniel 7, 11 and 12.
Revelation 13 amplifies Daniel’s prophecy.

Akin explains, “This antichrist activity is indicative of the reality that the real Christ has come and believers are living in a period of time when the Kingdom of God has been inaugurated and awaits its final consummation” (Danny Akin, *1,2,3 John*, Logos).

III. The Spirit of the Antichrist (1 John 2:22-23)

These false teachers deny that Jesus is the Christ.
To deny the Son is to deny the Father.

IV. Protection Against Heresy (1 John 2:24-27)

- A. The Message - the gospel of Jesus Christ
- B. The Anointing- the Holy Spirit

Spirit and Truth - John 4:23

V. The Solution – Abide (1 John 2:28-29)

Abide – to remain, stay, reside

James Montgomery Boice writes, “It has been observed by some that in the New Testament one verse in twenty-five deals with the Lord’s return. It is mentioned 318 times in the 260 chapters of the New Testament” (James Montgomery Boice, *The Epistles of John*, p. 78).

How are we to prepare for His return? ABIDE!

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full (John 15:4-11).

How is the Father glorified in verse 8? By the answered prayer of verse 7!