

## Loving the Wrong World

*1 John 2:15-17*

### Introduction

When we as believers love this world more than our eternal home with Christ, we risk not experiencing the fullness of God on earth. To love the world is to value the organized system that is led by Satan. (*John 12:31*) If and when we find ourselves putting more emphasis on an evil kingdom, wherein God is excluded, we should expect that God will be more absent, than present in our day to day lives.

Loving the world has a cost. When a person chooses to prioritize the world over God, he or she will miss out on intimate fellowship with God. Their love for the world effectively creates a conflict because they are seeking to replace God the Creator, with His creation.

The love of the world involves three things - 1) lust of the flesh, 2) lust of the eyes, 3) the pride of life. The lust of the flesh involves the prioritization of physical appetite over God – we want what we crave with our flesh even if that means independence from God. The lust of the eyes occurs when we seek to value what we can see or understand even if that places us in opposition to God. The pride of life happens when we seek status independently of God. When we focus on what we crave, what we see, or significance independent of God, we miss out on the full and vibrant experience of His love.

Loving the world means that one's actions and decisions demonstrate a higher value on time than on eternity. People who love the world treat what is transient and temporary like it is permanent; they make the will of the world more important than the will of God. If we want an impactful relationship and experience with God in this life, it requires that we make the world secondary to our relationship with God. He must be first. Live in this world but love the world to come.

### Getting Started

1. In what ways do people illustrate that they love the world?
2. What do *you* love in this world? Do you love that thing, person, experience, more than you love God? How do you know?

### Let's Get Personal

1. What are the influences that pull you towards loving things of this world?
2. What changes can you make to minimize those influences?
3. ? What often blocks our success when we attempt to redirect ourselves to value God more than the world? What things can you do to overcome these road blocks?

### Take the Next Step

1. How does this understanding of an eternal perspective change your current perspective, priorities and actions?
2. What represents the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, or the pride of life for you right now? What specific action can you take this week to say no to those interruptions in your experience of God?
3. Want to dig deeper? Select some of the following verses to review individually or during the time of reflection with your group: Romans 12:2, John 15:18-19, James 4:4, 1 John 5:19, and Galatians 1:4; 6:11-16. What do each one of these verses teach you about loving the world verses loving God?

### Renew Your Mind

***"Do not love the world nor the things in the world."***

***1 John 2:15***

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