

1st John Lesson 4 – Love Not The World

1Jn 2:15-17 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (17) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

REVIEW:

1 John 2:14 I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

Joh 16:33 **These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.**

Overcome: G3528 nikao *nik-ah'-o* to *subdue* (literally or figuratively): - conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory.

Jesus subdued, conquered, and overcame the devil in the wilderness. Jesus overcame the world with all of its temptations and trials. John says to the young men, "You are strong. The Word of God abides in you. And you have overcome "the wicked one."

Preview of chapter five:

The same Greek word translated "**wicked one**" in 1 John 2:14 is translated differently in the King James in this verse:

1Jn 5:18-19 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. (19) *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

wickedness G4190 poneros (masculine voice) ... the devil, the wicked one.

The same word is translated the "wicked one" in verse 18, and earlier in 1st John 2:14. Meaning, "**The whole world lies in the power of the wicked one. But you are strong. The Word of God abides in you and you have overcome the wicked one.**"

END OF REVIEW

During the temptation in the wilderness, the "**wicked one**" offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world.

Luk 4:5-7 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. (6) And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. (7) If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

Jesus did not dispute the fact that all the kingdoms of the world had been delivered unto Satan. Adam delivered them to him when he sinned. Remember what John said, "The whole world lies in the power of the wicked one." The apostle Paul gives his witness to this fact also:

2Co 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Notice it god with a "little g." The earth is the Lord's, but the world systems lie under the power of the "wicked one." John is remembering when Jesus told them,

Joh 15:18-20 *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. (19) If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. (20) Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

It was the proud, the wealthy, the learned, the men of authority and power, that opposed Jesus. But Jesus is our example and no amount of persecution could stop Him. Jesus overcame everything the world threw at Him, and so do we. You must see it clearly, there is a warfare between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. They are just as opposed to one another as the reborn human spirit is contrary to the lusts of the flesh. They are opposites and they will NEVER agree with each other. The apostle James went so far as to say,

Jas 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James was not saying that every single person who read his letter was committing sexual adultery and fornication (although many might have been). No, believers are the bride of

Christ. We are espoused to one husband. We belong to Christ and Him alone. We have no business being in bed with the world. We are "in" the world, but we are not "of" the world. Look clearly at what Jesus said:

1. You are not of the world.
2. He has chosen you out of the world.
3. Therefore, the world hates you.
4. Do not be surprised when the world persecutes you.

Today, if you call sin ... sin ... the world hates you and labels you a bigot and a hater. If you call rampant abortion murder, the world hates you and calls you a hater of women and a depriver of women's rights. If you call the alternative lifestyle sin, the world hates you and calls you a hater. They call you intolerant, but they are the most intolerant people I have ever seen.

I cannot help but think of the two angels who came to reside for a time at Lot's house in Sodom. At that time, they were "in" the world but they sure were not "of" the world. But the world was not content with them being neutral and living holy. The men of Sodom nearly tore the door off the hinges crying "*let us have our way with them. How dare they be here and not be like us.*" Remember, in all of history, God only ever destroyed one city Himself directly from heaven ... and it was Sodom and Gomorrah. Peter said it was a warning for all those who choose to live ungodly:

2Pe 2:6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

Satan is very crafty. He knows he can't get most Christians to sell out to blatant sin, so he uses another tactic that Jesus warned His disciples about:

Mar 4:18-19 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, (19) And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

John remembers well the teachings of Jesus and that is why he writes,

1Jn 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Jesus taught,

Mat 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

As the Holy Spirit is to the kingdom of God, so is mammon to the kingdoms of the world. With the Holy Spirit comes the anointing of God's power. With mammon comes power in the world's systems. Pastor Dave used to say, *"If you have enough money, you can buy your own island, hire your own army, proclaim yourself king, make your own laws, you can become your own little god of your own world. But you will find out one day that money is a poor god when you need healing. Money is a poor god when it comes to keeping you from eternal damnation in hell."*

Paul made an amazing observation in his writing to the Corinthians,

2Co 6:10 ... as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

For many years I did not understand those statements. I do now. Mammon never says ENOUGH. I have met multi-millionaires and they are still focused on gathering "more" to themselves.

Pro 30:15-16 The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough: (16) The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough.

Let's just talk about fire, as mentioned in that verse. You can start with a very small fire. Add more sticks, and it will burn them all. It will never stop and say enough. As long as there is more fuel to burn, the fire wants MORE. There are fires burning today in California that are consuming whole neighborhoods, hundreds and hundreds of homes and still the fire will never say enough and stop. That's the way it is when you serve mammon and the kingdoms of this world. There will never be enough. You will never feel "safe" because there is constant fear that you might lose your money, and if you lose your money, then you lose your power.

Paul says it appears to the world, I am poor. The world does not know I am rich. The world looks at me and thinks I have nothing. But I have EVERYTHING at my disposal as I serve God and God alone. Paul never lives in fear of losing God, and as long as he

has God, he has access to everything he will ever need. What Paul is writing about, however, is something LEARNED, not automatic. Notice Paul said,

Php 4:11-13 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. (12) I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. (13) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

I don't dare compare myself with Paul, but even in my life (on a much smaller scale), I have also learned the secret of contentment. It is LEARNED through walking in obedience to His commandments, and His alone, and NEVER compromising with mammon. It looks like failure, it looks like failure, it looks like failure ... but after He comes through for you time and again, time and again, time and again ... there is a FEARLESSNESS that rises up in you and you come to the place of knowing ... I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME. I'm going to say it another way ... I CAN AFFORD TO DO ANYTHING HE TELLS ME TO DO AND MY BANK ACCOUNT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

Some might run off into error after trying to walk in that statement without developing their relationship with the Lord in the financial arena first, but that does not alter the truth. God doesn't have you write "faith checks" on money you do not have in the bank. That is simply foolishness and immaturity. The truth is ... love Him alone. Serve Him alone. Obey Him alone. He is able to afford whatever He tells you to do. Obey Him one step at a time and there is NOTHING He will ask you to do that He will not enable you to do.

In verse 15 John said ... neither the things that are in the world. He gives us a breakdown of what he means by that statement in the next verse,

1Jn 2:16 For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Notice the underlined ... lust, lust, and pride. Every time I read this verse I am reminded of how Satan deceived Eve. He kept getting her to look at the forbidden fruit, and he kept telling her how wonderful it would be for her to partake of it until finally Eve came to some conclusions. She decided to choose what God had forbidden because,

Gen 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit

thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

That sounds very similar to, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." This forbidden fruit had become a newly discovered treasure after Satan's deceit had done its work in her. And Satan still uses that tactic today. It is called "the deceitfulness of riches." Jesus taught emphatically against spending your life serving mammon to gain the world,

Mat 16:24-27 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (25) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (26) For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (27) For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Luk 12:15-21 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. (16) And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: (17) And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? (18) And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. (19) And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. (20) But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? (21) So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

God designed the earth to bring forth plentifully. [Gary tells about the millionaire farmer he met in Washington state.] God is not against abundance. It was God who made Abraham rich. It was God who made Solomon rich. But God is against serving mammon instead of HIM! The man in this parable is exactly like the proverb of the horseleach and the fire that never says ENOUGH! God is not against abundance as long as we are RICH TOWARD HIM!

John knows the tactics of the deceiver well. He has served the Lord faithfully more than fifty years at the time of this writing. You always have to watch the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Pastor Dave warned us often, "Remember, you can fall from any level at any time." Pastor Bronc recently warned his people to be so on guard against the lust of the flesh that ... even after they have died and are in heaven ...

still don't trust the flesh for thirty minutes after you get there." Ha! We know that's not really the case, but it helps make the point.

Lust, lust, and pride. It is not wrong to enjoy God's creation, even in its present fallen state. It is wonderful to worship and praise God for the flowers, the oceans, the mountains, the animals, and the people He has created. The earth itself is the Lord's. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills ... and guess what ... He owns the hills as well. It is not the earth we are told not to love, it is the world, more specifically, the kingdoms of the world, the systems of the world that "lies in the power of the wicked one."

1Jn 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

"Living after the flesh" and "loving the world" are identical statements. Remember, you cannot serve God and mammon. Jesus taught about "this" world and "that" world which is to come:

Luk 20:34-35 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: (35) But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

Peter also remembered this teaching by Jesus when he wrote:

2Pe 3:10-13 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (11) Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (13) Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Jesus called the rich man who always built bigger barns a "fool." He labored his whole life for nothing at the end. So it is with all who love the world and spend their lives laying up treasure for themselves ... and are not rich toward God.

We don't have too much trouble identifying the "lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes," but exactly what is this "pride of life?" The Greek word translated "life" in that verse is "bios."

LIFE G979 bios; a prim. word; life, i.e. (lit.) the present state of existence; by impl. the means of livelihood:--good, life, living.

It is from the word "bios" that we get our modern word "biological." This is not referring to the "life of God" within us. The word "bios" refers to our physical, biological life, including the means of livelihood by which that life is sustained on earth. It is the same Greek word translated "living" when Jesus spoke of the Widow's Mite:

Mark 12:44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living [bios].

She had cast in the last of the resources to sustain her physical, biological life on earth. With that connotation of the word bios, then John's statement could be translated "the pride of how well you make a living" is not of the Father. Or, "the pride of your standard of living" is not of the Father. It is the cares of our "bios," the sustaining of our physical life on this earth and the pursuit of the "pleasures of this life" that choke the word and make us unfruitful for the Kingdom of God:

Luke 8:14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life [bios], and bring no fruit to perfection.

Concerning the pride of our physical life, the Greek word translated "pride" in 1 John 2:16 is "alazoneia." From Strong's Dictionary:

PRIDE - 212. alazoneia - from G213; braggadocio, i.e. (by impl.) self-confidence:--boasting, pride.

From the New American Standard Dictionary: Braggadocios definition is,

1. A braggart.
2. Empty or pretentious bragging.
3. Swaggering manner; cockiness.
4. The personification of vainglory.

Sad to say, this phrase “the pride of life” seems to be the “norm” for the majority of Christian Americans who devote most of their life to “keeping up with the Joneses.” This same attitude runs rampant among many Christian ministries. It is at the heart of competition and “one-upmanship.” It comes from the deep-rooted desire to be thought “better” than others. This motivational, driving force is “not of the Father.” Paul said,

2 Cor 10:12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

Needless to say, it is now more clear why John said that this sort of “pride of life” is not of the Father. This is the motivational, driving force of the world system, not the Kingdom of God. The safeguard against spending our lives floundering in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is to LOVE NOT THE WORLD, NEITHER THE THINGS THAT ARE IN THE WORLD! Rather than setting our love on the world and the things that are in the world, we are admonished to set our affection on the things which are above:

Col 3:2-3 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

The following verses also apply to this same principle. As stewards of the Kingdom of God, we must never bow the knee to the world, nor the things in the world. Our allegiance is to “Him who bought us” ... our Lord Jesus Christ alone! We are not hirelings. We are not employees. We are “owned.” We are bondslaves who are single minded. We know WHO WE ARE, WHERE WE ARE FROM, AND WHY WE ARE HERE!

1 Tim 6:5-11 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. BUT GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN [Emphasis Added]. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. AND HAVING FOOD AND RAIMENT LET US BE THEREWITH CONTENT [Emphasis Added]. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Becoming One Of The Lord's Stewards:

One more teaching of Jesus on this subject, and that is regarding stewardship during this temporary portion of our eternal life with God.

Luk 16:1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

One time when I was reading this passage the Holy Spirit interrupted and asked, "*Does your rich man Jesus have any stewards on earth today?*" I knew He was asking me if I would be willing to become a steward of finances for the Lord Jesus Christ that day. What are the requirements?

Luk 16:9-13 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. (10) He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. (11) If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? (12) And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? (13) No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

1. See money as a tool to make friends by sending the gospel of their debt of sin having been paid by Jesus. They will meet you in heaven with everlasting gratitude.
2. Be found faithful in little first. Continue to be faithful as He trusts you with more. If you remain faithful in more, He will trust you to be faithful with much.
 - a. I believe God will raise up millionaires in this last day to be financial stewards for the kingdom of God. (Like the millionaire farmer I mentioned earlier).
3. If He finds you faithful in the stewardship of money, He will trust you with the true riches (people).
4. You must understand you are the steward of another man's wealth. As a steward, the money is not yours and the people are not yours. David was a man after God's own heart because he never lost track of the knowledge that the sheep belonged to another. The sheep belonged to his father Jesse. The people of Israel belonged to God. He was shepherd to another man's flock.
 - a. Most people become embezzlers instead of stewards.
 - b. What would happen to the paymaster of any large corporation if all of a sudden he saw the corporate money as belonging to him instead of the company? At the least he would be fired (put out of his stewardship) and at worst he would go to prison for embezzlement.

5. You are a steward, or you are an owner. You cannot be both. You serve God in finances or you serve yourself ... which is the same things as serving mammon.

If you are a true financial steward of this temporary world, you will use finances to reap eternal souls for the next eternal world. Those are the true riches that are being laid up in heaven now, and in the new world then.

Conclusion:

1Jn 2:15-17 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (17) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

The Kingdom of God is in opposition to the systems of this world. The spirit is in opposition to the flesh. You cannot serve God and mammon. You cannot serve the kingdom of God and the world at the same time. Love not the world, neither the things in the world because it will ALL PASS AWAY. But God and His kingdom will never pass away. If you do the will of God, you will live forever with Him.