

1Jn 06 – Disciples Pick One To Love - 1Jn 2:12-17

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The BAD news today

is that our culture is in very difficult times

& all honest indicators are

we are headed for far more difficult times

The GOOD news is

IF you are a Disciple of Jesus Christ

Then the state of our Nation's Economy

& the state of your MATERIAL Prosperity

Has NO BEARING on whether you are

Personally BLESSED by God or not !

We're back in our Verse-by-Verse study of 1John

& today - we're talking about - The World

& I'm going to be challenging each of us to decide

Whether we consider the things of this WORLD our Blessings

Or whether we consider the things of GOD our Blessings

& in short - we Must - Pick One To Love

Either we love the things of THIS WORLD

or we LOVE GOD

& WHICH ONE we LOVE - Will DETERMINE

HOW we make it thru difficult times - - - Let's Pray

I believe our text today is
one of the most **Urgently NEEDED** teachings
for the **Church in America** Today

& John **leads INTO** this critical text
with some **Strong** & All-Encompassing - **ENCOURAGEMENT**

& **IT'S** Encouragement we **NEED** to hear

in order to **PICK** the **RIGHT ONE** to **LOVE**,
between **Things** of this **World**, & **Things** of **God**

He starts with **2 sets of affirmations**, the 2nd **echoing** the first
Set out - as **lines of poetry**

1Jn 2:12-13(A) - ESV

12 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.

13 I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. . . .

John **starts** by saying - ***I am writing to you, little children***

This first phrase "***Little Children***"

is one **John** commonly **uses** to address **ALL** believers

it means **LIT** - **Born Ones** (as in "Born again")

& so he says - I am **writing** to you
who are "**Born Again Believers**"

because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.

& **Praise God** - John starts with
our **FOUNDATIONAL** Blessing from Loving God

next John addresses - the **MATURE** Believers

he says in **V.13** - *I am writing to you, **fathers**,
because **you know him** who is from the beginning.*

the word used here for "**KNOW**" is **GINOSKO**

which means - *an increasing intimate knowledge
based on personal experience*

The **same** word Paul uses in **Phil 3:10** - that I may **KNOW** Him

The phrase - "**him** who is from the beginning"
probably **refers** to Jesus Christ here,
but **would** obviously **apply** to God the Father also

& we **come to know** God the Father - **THRU** our
increasing personal knowledge of Jesus Christ

& **BTW** - This is "**the reward**" of growing old in the Lord
to KNOW Him

The **longer** you **walk** with Him - the more you **KNOW** Him
& the more you just **WANT** to **KNOW** Him

& the *more you understand* - that **TO Know Him** - is really, everything

Next - also in **V.13** John says → →

V.13 - I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one.

Are you getting the sense John is trying to address EVERYONE he doesn't want to leave any of the believers out

& so he says you "***young men***" in the Lord
You have OVERCOME the evil one

& he's **not just** talking to the **male gender**
the **male gender** is used generically here

& so he says - **you** who are at the **TOP** of your game
you are young & **strong** in the Lord
you have **overcome** the evil one

These "***young***" believers are **doing good**
they're **walking** in **victory** & John commends them

& so John says - I'm writing to:

ALL believers - because your ***SINS are forgiven***

Fathers - because you ***KNOW HIM*** Who was from the beginning

Young Believers - because you are ***VICTORIOUS*** in your faith

& now - John is going to **REPEAT** this **TRIO** of encouragement

In this set - John starts with a **different word** for **Children**

& he starts in 1Jn 2:13(END) - ESV

13 . . . I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

here he **uses a word** for **children** that means - "***Immature Ones***"
Probably speaking of - New Believers

& he says - *I write to you, children, because you know the Father.*

Knowing God is **not** just reserved
for those **who've been around** awhile

You can be *Born Again* **TODAY**
& you can *Know God* **TODAY**

You will (prayerfully) **GROW**
in your *intimacy & closeness* with the Father

but you can **KNOW** Him (initially) - the moment you're saved

Then Next - in **V.14** John **RE-ITERATES** his **encouragement** to
the **Old** Believers & the **Young** Believers

1Jn 2:14 - ESV

14 I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

He actually **adds some encouragement** here
to the "**YOUNG**" Believers

He says - You are **STRONG** -
AND The **Word of God** **ABIDES** in you

& **BECAUSE** of this - you have **OVERCOME** the evil one

This is really an **interesting section** of scripture → →

it's written in **poetic form**
& can be a **little difficult** to follow

But **all in all** - John is encouraging **ALL** believers
with the **TRUE BLESSINGS** we have from God

- 1) Our **SINS** are forgiven
- 2) We can **KNOW** God in an intimate & personal way
- 3) We **CAN** Overcome the evil one
- 4) As we **grow & mature** - we realize - there is nothing better
than to **KNOW HIM**

Everything else begins to "***fade away,***"
when we understand what our **TRUE BLESSINGS** are from God

NOW - we have got to **remember** these truths
AND apply them - as we **go** into the **next section** - **OK?**

Guys - There **IS** a **battle** going on -
most Christians *are aware of that*

but what we **don't really WANT** to accept

is that the **MOST IMPORTANT** battle
is actually the battle **WITHIN** ourselves

The **Greatest & Most-Fought** battle for **EVERY** Christian
is **the one** we fight in the **deepest place** of our own **hearts**

It's the **Battle** with our own **FLESH**
It's the **Battle** with our own **DESIRES**
It's the **Battle** with our own **SELF WILL**

It's the Battle over what we LOVE
what we are DRAWN TO
what we DESIRE

It is the Battle Between
the LOVE of GOD - & the LOVE of THIS WORLD

& I believe THAT is WHY
John has Encouraged EVERY Believer so strongly here

Because THIS is a WAR - that rages in EVERY HEART
NO ONE is IMMUNE to THIS BATTLE

& so John has started with
the TRUE BLESSINGS of KNOWING GOD

as an introduction to this critical battle

The Battle is described - in 1Jn 2:15-17

1Jn 2;15-17 - ESV

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world.

17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

What a set of verses !

Around here - we have always been concerned
about HOW MUCH the church has MIXED IN the World

In fact - it is easy to find many churches that openly proclaim

that the Blessings of God - Are One in the SAME
as the Blessings of the World

In fact - The church has become SO CONFUSED about this
that we MEASURE God's Blessings - by WORLDLY standards

The things that the WORLD LOVES
those are the very things we consider BLESSINGS from God

So - IF we DEFINE our "Blessings"
the SAME WAY the World Defines THEIR Blessings

Then - are we not simply saying
that we really LOVE the Same Things - that The WORLD Loves

If we MEASURE the Blessings of God
BY the things of this WORLD

If we DESCRIBE the Blessings of God
BY Describing the things of this WORLD

Then are we not really just DESIRING
that God would Give US - the things of this WORLD

And are we not - actually - LOVING the things of this WORLD?
Instead of LOVING the things of GOD ?

Let's just go thru the verses
& see if it begins to make a little more sense

1Jn 2:15(A) - ESV

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world . . .

First - let's Define - "The World"

THE WORLD here - does not mean God's Creation - it's not talking about the majesty of God's created earth

THE WORLD here does NOT mean - The people IN the world as in the sense of Jn 3:16 "***For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son***"

So - what does John mean by "THE WORLD" ?

He means the SYSTEM of the World -
He means, WORLDLINESS - or WORLDLY things

He means ***Do not love the THINGS of this world's system or - Do not Love the same things that this world loves***

**If the Christian - & the NON-Christian
both LOVE the same things in this world**

**Then . . . there may not be that much difference
between that Christian, & that NON-Christian**

& in fact - I've heard many a NON-Christian say just that . . .
"There's NO difference between me & you Christians"

***"We all want the same things,
We're all after the same things, &
We're all willing to do whatever it takes, to get the same things "***

& that - **sadly** - is all too often, true

But here in **V.15** God says

Do not love the world or the things in the world.

Now - **let's address** the word **LOVE**

The word **LOVE** here is used in the sense of
"HAVING A STRONG DESIRE FOR"

At least **FOUR times** in the **NT** the word **LOVE** is used to describe
a **strong desire** for something **UNGODLY**

in 2Tim 4:10 - Paul says - ESV

***10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me
and gone to Thessalonica . . .***

In love with this present world **means**

He had a STRONG DESIRE - For this World

& that **LOVE** for this **world**

Drew him **AWAY** from the **True Blessings** of God

& **THAT** is why - in **1Jn 2:15**

God makes a very clear **COMMAND**

Do not love (strong desire) ***the world or the things in the world.***

WHY ?? - - WHY is this such a **BIG DEAL** ??

Well - the **2nd Half** of **V.15** tells us Exactly **WHY**

1Jn 2:15(B) - ESV

. . . If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

If anyone loves the WORLD

the love of the FATHER is NOT in him

That is a **VERY STRONG**, & a **VERY DIRECT** statement
with **NO GRAY AREA**

It doesn't say - *"It's OK if you love the world 49%,
as long as you love God 51%"*

The Apostle John is **drawing** a **line in the sand** - & saying

You are either Loving the **Things of this WORLD**
or - you are **Loving GOD**

PICK ONE TO LOVE

& the **ONE** you **LOVE** will **DETERMINE**
HOW you handle **Tuff Times**

NLT - Jas 4:4

4 You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? . . .

WHY??

WHY must we **PICK ONLY ONE** to **LOVE** ?

Because of the **NEXT VERSE**

1Jn 2:16 - ESV → →

1Jn 2:16 - ESV

16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world.

ALL that is in the World

The Things your **FLESH** desires

The Things your **EYES** desire

The **PRIDE** in your possessions

ALL these things - are **NOT from GOD**

ALL these things

come from the **ANTI-GOD WORLD SYSTEM**

IN FACT (in general) these same three areas;

The Lust of the **FLESH**

The Lust of the **EYES**

The **PRIDE** of Life

Are ***basically*** the same three areas **SATAN** used
on **EVE & ADAM** - at the **fall of man**, in the Garden

AND - they are **SIMILAR** to the **same three areas**

SATAN ***tried to use*** - in the **Temptation of Christ** in the wilderness

So - if **SATAN** has been using these **SAME three** areas
to **turn** people **away** from God - **SINCE** the **Garden of Eden**

What makes **US THINK** - that we **can call** these **SAME** three areas -
BLESSINGS from **GOD** ??

How **DECEIVED** has the **CHURCH** gotten - when we call;

The **Desires of our FLESH**

The **Desires of EYES**

The **PRIDE in our Possessions** . . . *BLESSINGS from God*

IF SATAN used these three things
to bring about the **FALL** of Man

IF SATAN used these three things
to **TRY** to bring about the **FALL** of the *Son of God*

Does it **SEEM RIGHT** - that we would call these **SAME three things** -
Blessings from God?

These are **NOT Blessings** from God

they are *6,000 year old* schemes of **SATAN**
to get us to **FALL AWAY** from God

Jon Courson says this:

From the beginning of time, Satan has had only three plays . . . To this day, every temptation, every attack from the Enemy, and every worldly seduction, falls into one of these three categories because Satan has no other plays.

Let's take a minute to **illustrate** each of these **3 "Plays"** of the enemy

#1) The Desire of the Flesh

These are *the desires* of our own ***SIN NATURE***

Jas 1:14 describes how the World System "*plays*" on our ***FLESH***

Jas 1:14 - ESV

14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

**2Cor 4:4 calls *SATAN - The god of this World*
meaning this "World System"**

1Jn 5:19 says - *the whole world lies in the power of the evil one*

**& *Satan* (the god of this World system) has *designed* his *system*
to *LURE & ENTICE us* by the Desires of our Own Flesh**

& one of the PRIMARY WAYS he does that is . . .

#2) The Desire of the Eyes

The desire of the Eyes is also a PLAY to our Sin Nature

Let me use MEN for this Example

Men - If Satan wanted to destroy your life thru Sexual Sin

& he knew that your EYE GATE
was the way to LURE you into sexual sin

Would he design his World System
that would ENTICE you thru your Eyes - to SEXUAL SIN ??

ahhh, DUHHH !!

& do you think that this same **"god of this world"** might establish a **"world system"**

that **made women believe** that they had to dress **provocatively** in order to be accepted

when really, his **play** is to use them to **entice** men into **sin** - thru the **LUST** of the **Eyes**?

Makes **some sense** - ***Doesn't it ?***

#3) Pride in Possessions

Really guys - ***let's be honest***

This **"World System"** has taught us that **Material Blessings** - & - **God's Blessings**

Are **ONE** in the **SAME** !

When the **Bible** clearly **teaches**

that our **Material Blessings** are **only GOOD** if we are **using them** for God's Eternal **Kingdom**

AND - Once we **Fall in LOVE** with our **possessions** then we have **"Fallen Victim"** to the **3rd PLAY** of the enemy

The **NKJV** calls this - ***the pride of life***

The **NLT** says - ***pride in our achievements and possessions***

One Commentator described this **GK PHRASE** as ***The externals of life, including attitudes and activities (lifestyles) as well as material possessions***

This is Simply - a **LOVE** for the THINGS of this World
& a **LOVE** for the Lifestyle promoted by this World

And **here's the problem** with
being "**sucked in**" by these "**Sucker Plays**" of Satan

Let me **read just** the **BEGINNING & END** of **V.16**

Again - 1Jn 2:16(B) - ESV

16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world.

Do you see that there is **NO Gray area** ?

ALL - that is **IN** this World System
Is **NOT** from the Father

MAYBE we should **be careful**
calling the things of this world - **Blessings from God**

& **MAYBE** we should call **those things** we talked about **first** today -
TRUE blessings from God

- 1) Your **SINS** are forgiven
- 2) You can **KNOW** God - intimately, & personally
- 3) You **CAN** Overcome the evil one

THOSE - are the **TRUE Blessings** from God

& actually - This **WORLD SYSTEM** - & all that goes with it
God's Word describes as . . . **our Enemy**

1Jn 5:4 - ESV

***4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world.
And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.***

This "***World System***" is **NOT** something to **EMBRACE**
It's something to be **OVERCOME**

WHY ?? - - **WHY** do we need to **OVERCOME** this world
instead of **EMBRACE** it?

Because of 1Jn 2:17 - ESV

***17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but
whoever does the will of God abides forever.***

This "***World System***" - along with its desires - is ***PASSING AWAY***
But whoever ***DOES*** the ***WILL OF GOD*** abides forever

& **notice** please - This is a **Faith of ACTION**

This is **more** than just **Intellectual Acknowledgment**

& So - it **comes down** to this → →

Do you want to **PASS AWAY** with this **World** & it's **Desires**
Or do you want to **ABIDE FOREVER** in the **Glory of God**

We Must - ***PICK ONE TO LOVE***

A **Christian** **cannot live** with a **Divided heart**

We cannot Love **BOTH**
The **Things of this World** - & God

Let me try to break it way down for you;

- 1) If you **have it** - **DON'T Love** it
- 2) If you **DON'T have it** - **DON'T Lust** for it
- 3) If you **LOOSE it** - **DON'T Consider** it more important
than your **True Blessings** from God

If you **LOVE GOD**
MORE than the ***Things of this World***

When **HARD TIMES** come in this World

Your **STRENGTH** - & Your **PEACE**
will come from your **TRUE BLESSINGS** from **God**

Let's Pray