

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT | “Do Not Love the World”

1 John 2:12–17

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Big Idea: We wage war against worldliness by knowing the risks of loving the world and by practicing spiritual disciplines to resist loving the world.

- **To wage war on worldliness we must have a wartime mind-set.**

“I am wired by nature to love the same toys that the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to love what others love. I start to call earth “home.” Before you know it, I am calling luxuries “needs” and using my money just the way unbelievers do. I begin to forget the war. I don’t think much about people perishing. Missions and unreached people drop out of my mind. I stop dreaming about the triumphs of grace. I sink into a secular mind-set that looks first to what man can do, not what God can do. It is a terrible sickness. And I thank God for those who have forced me again and again toward a wartime mind-set.” –**John Piper - *Don’t Waste Your Life***

- **How does John use the word “world” in this passage?**

(1) Physical world (3:17; 4:17; John 1:10)

(2) Humanity (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2)

(3) Creation that is at enmity with God.

The “world” stands for the unbelieving godless society, the evil organized earthly system controlled by Satan.

1 Jn. 5:19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

[The world is] the system of values, in any given age, which has at its center our fallen human perspective, which displaces God and his truth from the world, and which makes sin look normal and righteousness seem strange. It thus gives great plausibility to what is morally wrong and, for that reason, makes what is wrong seem normal. **David Wells - *Losing Our Virtue***

- **What does it mean to love the world?** Living horizontally and not vertically.

To “love” the world is to court its favor, follow its customs, adopt its ideals, covet its prizes, and seek its fellowship.

The world is the organized system of human civilization that is actively hostile to God and alienated from God. Worldliness is a love for this fallen world. It is to gratify and exalt oneself to the exclusion of God. The goal of worldly people is to move forward rather than upward, to live horizontally rather than vertically. They seek after outward prosperity rather than holiness. They burst with selfish desires rather than heartfelt supplication. If they do not deny God, they ignore and forget Him, or else they use Him only for their selfish ends. Worldliness . . . is human nature without God. –**Joel Beeke**

- **Are you humbly aware that you are capable of loving this present world?**

2 Tim. 4:10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.

We wage war against worldliness . . .

I. By knowing the risks of loving the world (2:15-17).

A. Love for the world excludes love for God (vv. 15b-16; James 4:4; Matt. 6:24).

- **To love the world is to be at enmity with God.**

James 4:4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

- **The world worships its own trinity (v. 16).**

(1) The desires of the flesh (Gen. 3:6a; Matt 4:3-4)

- It is the desires and appetites exercised without regard for the will of God.

(2) The desires of the eyes (Gen. 3:6b; Matt. 4:8-10)

- It is the unlawful craving for that which entices our eyes.

(3) The pride of life (Gen. 3:6c; Matt. 4:5-7)

- It is arrogance, boastfulness, and the conviction of self-sufficiency.

This pride that results from and in worldly possession is an affront to God, for it leads to a glorification of the self and a failure to realize the dependence of humanity upon God, the Creator, for existence. – Daniel Akin

B. The world is passing away along with its desires (v. 17).

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

2:15 Love of the world



2:16 is from the world



2:17 the world passes away

Love of the Father



is from the Father



the one who obeys remains forever

II. By practicing spiritual disciplines to resist loving the world (2:12-14; Titus 2:11-12; 1 Tim. 4:7-8)

- **The goal of spiritual disciplines is to know God and love Him with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind (Lk. 10:27). We resist loving the world by loving God!**

- **What God commands us to do He will enable us to do it by His grace.**

Titus 2:11–12 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

1 Timothy 4:7–8 Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; 8 for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

“How then can we deal with our tendency toward worldliness? It is “not” by determining that we will not be worldly, but by committing ourselves to becoming more godly.” — **Jerry Bridges**

A. Preach the gospel to yourself (2:12-14).

(1) We have been forgiven (v. 12).

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

(2) We know God personally (vv. 13a, 14ab).

13a I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

14a I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

14b I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

1 John 3:1

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

(3) We have overcome the evil one (vv. 13b, 14b).

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

14b 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.

B. Set your mind on Christ (Col. 3:1-4; Rom. 12:2; Ephesians 4:22-24).

Col. 3:1-4 1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

What should consume our thoughts and affections is not resisting worldliness but the glory and grace of God revealed at the cross. Worldliness is so serious because Christ is so glorious. **C. J. Mahaney – *Worldliness*, p. 35**

C. Crucify the flesh (Col. 3:5-10; Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; Rom. 8:13-14).

Col. 3:5 -10 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

D. Live like exiles (1 Pet. 2:10-12).

1 Pet. 2:10-12 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 12 Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

We are to live as sojourners and exiles, blessing the world around us by refusing to conform to its patterns of thought and behavior. As Augustine said, sometimes we must stand against the world for the good of the world.

E. Proclaim the Gospel (1 Jn. 1:1-4; 2:2; 4:9-10; 4:15).

1 Jn. 1-4 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the

eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

Benediction

1 John 5:4-5 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. **5** Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?