

Copyright © Two Journeys Ministry

Andrew M. Davis

Class Notes

www.twojourneys.org

Please use in accordance with the copyright policy found at twojourneys.org

Do Not Love the World

1 John 2:15-17

I. Main Questions:

1. What is the “world” in this passage? How is it a threat to our souls?
2. How do our three ancient enemies, “the world, the flesh, and the devil” work together to assault our souls?
3. How should a Christian prepare to fight these enemies?
4. How can we help each other to fight these enemies?

Note: In John Bunyan’s allegory of the Christian life, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, he discusses a place called “Vanity Fair”.

Almost five thousand years ago, there were pilgrims walking to the Celestial City, as these two honest persons are: and Beelzebub, Apollyon, and Legion, with their companions, perceiving by the path that the pilgrims made, that their way to the city lay through this town of Vanity, they contrived here to set up a fair; a fair wherein, should be sold all sorts of vanity, and that it should last all the year long; therefore at this fair are all such merchandise sold, as houses, lands, trades, places, honours, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures, and delights of all sorts, as whores, bawds, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not.

And, moreover, at this fair there is at all times to be seen juggling cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind. Here are to be seen, too, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, false swearers, and that of a blood-red colour.

And as in other fairs of less moment, there are the several rows and streets, under their proper names, where such and such wares are vended; so here likewise you have the proper places, rows, streets, (viz. countries and kingdoms), where the wares of this fair are soonest to be found. Here is the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, where several sorts of vanities are to be sold.

Question: How does Bunyan’s description of Vanity Fair connect with 1 John 2:15-17?

II. Verse by Verse Questions:

1. John uses the word “world” differently at different times. How would you compare the word “world” that we should not love with John’s use of the word “world” in John 3:16?

John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”*

2. What does it mean to love the world according to 1 John 2:15? Why is that so harmful to the health of our souls?
3. How can we determine if we are sinfully loving the world?
4. How would a sinful love of the world be compared to idolatry?
5. What is the remedy to loving the world sinfully?
6. What does John mean when he says, “If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him?” That sounds very stark... like either you are a Christian or you love the world... there is no middle ground.
7. What reason does John give for not loving the world in verse 16? How does verse 16 help explain what the “world” is?

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

8. What is the “lust of the flesh”? How is this a threat to us? How does it relate to Romans 7?

Romans 7:14-23 *For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.*

9. What is the “lust of the eyes”? How does Satan use the world’s glittery attractions to lure people into sin?
10. How does his temptation of Christ display this threat?

Matthew 4:8-9 *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”*

11. What is the boastful pride of life? How does Satan display pride? How does he lure people into pride?
12. How does the rich fool show the pride of life?

Luke 12:19-20 *And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” ²⁰ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’*

13. What does John say happens to the world and its desires? Why is it good for us to meditate on the brevity of life and all this world’s allurements?
14. What does he say happens to the one who does the will of God?

III. Summary:

John warns Christians of the great dangers of this present world system, and commands us to root the love of this sinful world out of our hearts.