

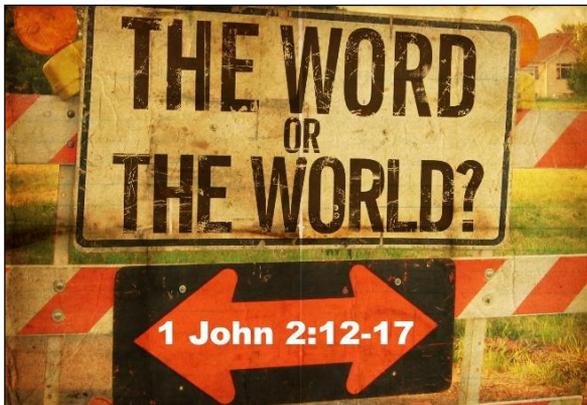
## Loving the Word or the World

**Why must we love Jesus and not the world?  
¿Por qué debemos amar a Jesús y no al mundo?**

1. Only Jesus gives us fellowship with \_\_\_\_\_.  
Solo Jesús nos da comunión con \_\_\_\_\_.  
1 John 2:15 (1 Juan 2:15)  
1 John 1:3 (1 Juan 1:3)  
John 14:6 (Juan 14:6)

2. Only Jesus gives us victory over \_\_\_\_\_.  
Solo Jesús nos da la victoria sobre el \_\_\_\_\_.  
1 John 2:16 (1 Juan 2:16)  
1 John 2:14 (1 Juan 2:14)  
1 John 5:4-5 (1 Juan 5:4-5)

3. Only Jesus gives us \_\_\_\_\_.  
Solo Jesús nos da la \_\_\_\_\_.  
1 John 2:17 (1 Juan 2:17)  
John 3:16-17 (Juan 3:16-17)  
1 John 5:20 (1 Juan 5:20)



# Life Group Discussion Questions

**Week 4: March 1-8**

**Scripture: 1 John 2:12-17**

In the second chapter of John's first epistle, he begins by declaring his purpose of writing, "I write this to you so that you will not sin." He recognized that we face an ongoing spiritual battle every day. Satan and his demonic forces are constantly trying to pull us away from God and into the ways of the world. Satan uses sinful temptations to get us to draw our attention away from Jesus and onto our sinful desires. We will not achieve absolute sinless perfection in this world (1 John 1:8-10), but we must continue in our struggle against sin. In 2 John 2:12-17, John tells us how we can overcome Satan and the sinful temptations of the world.

## **Read 1 John 2:12-17**

1. Why did John write to the "dear children" in verse 12?

As John writes to these different groups of Christians, he is thinking about the people he led to Christ, the times he prayed with them, the times he encouraged them and helped them through difficult struggles in life. These different groups may represent different stages of spiritual growth rather than physical age. However, when John says, "dear children," he may be referring to all Christians. He uses this address seven more times in the letter when he addresses all his readers (2:1, 18, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21). In contrast, he never uses "young men" or "fathers" to address all his readers.

2. Why did John write to the "fathers" in verse 13?

3. Why did John write to the "young men" in verse 13?

4. Why did John write to the "dear children" in verse 13?

5. Why did John write to the "fathers" in verse 14?

6. Why did John write to the "young men" in verse 14?

Sometimes John uses the word "word" to refer to Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13). Sometimes John uses this term to refer to the written or spoken word of God (John 17:14; 1 John 2:5). The "word of God" in 1 John 2:14 is probably the written word. However, John may be deliberately ambiguous because he wants to include both ideas.

David Allen notes,

These verses remind us of who we are as Christians. Short of carnality, regardless of our level of spiritual maturity, certain things are true about us. Our sins have been forgiven. We have come to know God through a saving relationship with Christ. But certain things ought to be consistently true about us as well. We should be strong spiritually. We should remain daily in the Word so we can be strong. We should overcome Satan's influence in our lives by means of our knowledge and practice of the Word. May God help us all to live up to who we are in the family! (Allen, 92)

7. What are we told not to love? Why? (2:15)

Howard Marshall observes,

The word "world" has already appeared in verse 2 where it must signify the world of mankind which through its sin stands in need of reconciliation to God. It is a word which can be used in various senses. It can refer in quite a neutral way to the created universe which God made to be "very good" (Gen. 1:31). But in the writings of John "world" signifies more usually mankind organized in rebellion against God, so that the word carries a negative sense. It is under the control of the evil one (1 Jn. 5:19; Jn. 12:31; 14:30). (Marshall, 142)

8. How did John categorize the things in the world? (2:16)

Morris Womack explains how these three categories of temptation can be seen in the first time Satan tempted mankind to sin. He writes,

God had told them not to touch the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But, when Satan tempted Eve, and ultimately Adam, Scripture says "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food [lust of the flesh] and pleasing to the eye [lust of the eye], and also desirable for gaining wisdom [pride of life], she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it" (Gen 3:6). We are not saying that because something is good to eat or beautiful to look at or will cause us pleasure, that it is always wrong, but in this case, it is true because God had specifically commanded that they not eat of it. (Womack, 66)

9. What does John say about the source of everything in the world? What does that tell us about the way John is using the word "world"? (2:16)

10. What is passing away? (2:17)
11. Who lives forever? (2:17)
12. Why did John write about the things his readers already knew?
13. What do you know for certain about your relationship with God?
14. How can we help Christians who are struggling with doubts about their relationship with God?
15. In what sense is it wrong to love the world and the things in it?
16. What do you think of when you hear the phrase “the lust of the flesh”?
17. What do you think of when you hear the phrase “the lust of the eyes”?
18. What do you think of when you hear the phrase “the pride of life”?

Colin Kruse comments,

The word *bios* has a range of meanings, including “life,” “livelihood,” “living,” “property,” and “possessions.” It is used in 3:17 clearly with the sense of property or possessions, and this is the predominant use of the word in the NT. To construe it here, then, as “possessions,” as the NIV does, not only makes good sense but is also in line with the only other use of the word in 1 John and the predominant use in the NT. (Kruse, 95-96)

19. How can we guard against adopting the values of the world?
20. What will you do to focus on the will of God this week rather than the things of the world?

### **Sources cited:**

Allen, David. *1-3 John: Fellowship in God's Family*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013.

Kruse, Colin. *The Letters of John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.

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