

Harris Creek Baptist Church
Jonathan Pokluda
Series: 7 Deadly Sins of Suburbia
February 27, 2022

Indulgence

1 John 2:15-17

15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

Good morning, Church. (audience replies, “good morning”) Let’s go Bears! (audience cheers) I hope none of you were yelling at the refs last night. (audience laughs) Yeah, I was watching for you. I’ve got a sermon for you last week.

Hey, I want to start with just a little bit of trivia, okay? So, what I’m going to do is I’m going to play a song and then I’m going to ask you a couple of questions about the song. Listen to this. Do you know this song?

(The song plays for the audience, “I want it all! I want it all! I want it all, and I want it now!”)

You guys know whose song that is? Anybody know? (audience member “Queen”) Queen is the correct answer, thank you. There’s one of you in all of you that knows that. So, do you know who recorded that song? Specifically, who sang that song and recorded it? (audience member “Freddy Mercury”) Freddy Mercury, okay, the head of Queen, we know. So, Freddy Mercury of Queen recorded a song, I Want it All, leading us to this question. Final Round. What commercial was that song featured in? (audience members throw out various answers) Chevy was a guess. Anybody? (audience member speaks inaudibly) What? (audience member speaks up “Dr. Pepper”) Dr. Pepper! Waco, Texas, let’s go man! You come to Waco, Texas, go to the Dr. Pepper museum and listen to Freddy Mercury of Queen sing “I Want it All” in their commercial. It was indeed in a Dr. Pepper commercial, but that’s not all... Watch this!

(A video plays on the screen featuring several commercials using Queen’s “I Want it All” song. Products featured are T-Mobile, Twix, Dr. Pepper, The Olympics, Q8, GrubHub, etc.)

That’s right. Not just Dr. Pepper. T-Mobile, Twix, Verizon, Circuit City, The Olympics, Q8 Oil, GrubHub, and on and on and on and on. That song has been featured in more commercials than any other song. Why? Why would a marketing company, why would some brand manager say,

‘Oh, as we make this commercial, I’ve got just the song, Let’s go with Queen’s “I Want it All”.’ Why would they do that over? It’s okay that Twix used it. It’s okay that Circuit City used it. Oh, I’m a phone company, Verizon, but it’s okay that T-Mobile used it. We will use it over and over. Why? Why do they love that song? Because it resonates with the deepest cry of our flesh. I want it all, and I want it now. I want it all and I want it now.

So, they’re smart. They have invested billions, with a b, of dollars trying to get you to purchase their product and the way that they do that is appeal to your innermost desire. I want it all, and I want it now! The problem with that, as I’ve told you from this stage before, is that is almost quite literally the mantra of satanism. The mantra of the satanic bible, there is a bible, a satanic bible, and the mantra of that satanic bible is do as thy will. If I remove the Elizabethan flare from that statement, it is do whatever you want. If Anton Lavey, the author of that bible, were to expand on that, it’s do what you want when you want.

This is what our religion offers you, under the prince of darkness, do what you want when you want. That is a very different message than what the scriptures teach, right? This is different. It’s counterintuitive to why we would come here today and open the Bible and have the Holy Spirit, the creator of the heavens and the earth, inform our hearts and speak to us. We want it all. We love that. That’s why we do so much of what we do. We want it all.

Two weeks ago, my wife and I had the privilege of teaching at a marriage conference, but not just any marriage conference. This marriage conference was on a boat. So, we were on a cruise ship getting to talk with couples about marriage. I’m not sure if you’ve ever been on a cruise or an all-inclusive vacation but one of the great offerings of cruises and all-inclusive vacations is food! Whatever you want, you know. They give you this menu and a lot of times you’re looking at the menu and you’re like, well I don’t know if I want that or that and they’re like ‘Well, we’ll bring you both.’ So, you’re like, well okay then, I’ll take both! My wife, she’s the master at this, okay. I watched this game go down. After they serve you dinner, they bring a dessert menu to you. It has five or six desserts for you to choose from. She’s there looking at the desserts and she’s like oh, I just don’t know. She’s the nicest person in the world, like, I just don’t know which one, they all look so good! So, the server goes, well I can bring you that one and that one. And she’s like, ‘I just don’t know because they ALL look so good.’ (audience laughs) So he’s like well if you want, you can have that one or that one, I could do those right there. She’s like, ‘Yeah, it’s just so hard because they ALL look good.’ (audience laughs more) If you want, I can just bring you all of them. ‘Oh, you don’t have to...Okay!’

I know it feels like I just threw her under the bus, because I did, but not without her permission. I asked. I said, ‘Is this okay if I tell this story?’ She said, ‘It’s fine, as long as people repent.’ (audience laughs) It’s funny. It is funny. We laugh. That’s the problem with the seven deadly sins of suburbia. These are just things that we’ve cohabitated with, that kind of mark us. That are so entrenched in our culture that when we highlight them kind of in a caricature, when we bring them out and exaggerate them, it’s funny, it’s cute. It’s all haha, that’s sweet, you know. And we

don't think about how it actually is something that the enemy uses to drag us out of a right relationship with Jesus. That's the issue. That's the problem.

We're moving through this series, the seven deadly sins of suburbia. We looked at week one, business. Mary, Martha, and Jesus - that business just marks our culture. It's just a part of who we are and it's something that the enemy can use in our lives. We looked at entitlement, that we feel entitled. We're Americans. We work hard for our stuff, and we should have it. We are entitled to it. We talked about apathy. Some of us, we've been in church so long that we've heard it all, we know the answers, and the Bible is not the most exciting thing, but we'll memorize a verse here and there. We talked about comparison, measuring ourselves, measuring success based on what others do and where they're at. They're our benchmark. We talked about gossip, speaking about someone who's not there. It's just normal. It is what is interesting. What else are we going to talk about if we're not talking about who's not there? Last week we talked about unforgiveness and the anger that comes from unforgiveness and how the enemy can use that in our lives to drag us away. And, as we wrap up this series today, the seventh deadly sin of suburbia is indulgence.

That's not a word you use a lot with a negative connotation. Indulgence, it's in chocolate commercials and dessert commercials. There's lots of people out there honestly encouraging you toward that. I'll define it like this: to take unrestrained pleasure in something. So, this is a catch all, right, of what we run to in coping. So, here's my question for you and it's not rhetorical. I want you to answer it in your mind. What is that thing that you run to when life is stressful? Where is your safe place or your safe activity?

Is it sugar? Is it desserts? Is it a nice restaurant, that you want to indulge in a meal, food? Maybe you just need to relax with a great bourbon or a glass of wine, or maybe you muse in your phone by scrolling through images that you know you're not supposed to look at, but it's been a hard week. It's been a tough week so here I am; I'm just going to do that. God forgives me. Grace abounds. Jesus on the cross. Maybe it's self-care. Mani and Pedi, a massage. I'm just going to get some pleasures. I need to feel okay. I just need to feel okay. I need to get well. A little self-care day.

What is the thing that you indulge in when life is stressful? So often it's what we use to cope, right. We don't realize that these things, that some of them in and of themselves in isolation, one time, no big deal, but we don't realize that we're using it to escape. To not live in the world, on mission, to be God's soldier, to share the gospel, to push back darkness, to build the kingdom. We use them to escape. Materialism, building our own kingdom, our own things.

So, I'm going to be in 1 John 2. If you want to find that you turn to the back of your Bible. It's towards the very end. This is different than John's gospel. This is First, Second and Third John - the 1st book. 1 John 2:15-17. Three verses we will look at today. As we move through this

scripture, we're going to look at the warning; the why for the warning; and then before you leave here the way out. How you can escape indulgence.

I'll tell you a little about this book. John wrote this to a group of people where their peers are leaving the faith. So, there's this deconstruction happening where the people around the church are saying wait, are we sure that Jesus is who He says he is? John, how do we know? Because, if someone can begin to doubt that Jesus rose from the dead and gives us eternal life, what it does is it allows us to dive fully into this world. To experience the things of this world. Nothing has changed, 2,000 years now later, in Waco, Texas, or surrounding area, we still want to justify our sin by saying, are we sure? I think it's fine that I have these things, that I do these things, that I experience these things. I can be in church on Sunday and still do this on Tuesday. Are we sure?

So, John says this: Verse 15, **“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.”** These are the three verses we will pull three points from to teach us about this topic of indulgence.

He starts with a warning, and it is a firm warning. I want you to look deeply into this warning in verse 15. **“Do not love the world or ANYTHING in the world. If ANYONE loves the world, love for the FATHER is not in them.”** As you read that verse, you're hit with an interpretive challenge, because what is the most well-known Bible verse in all of the land? (audience member “John 3:16”) **“For God so loved the world...”** If God loved the world, right, why did John write that. Why is John saying do not love the world or anything in the world? But God so loved the world, right.

So, we have to understand and ask questions about that. Why did God love the world? What does he mean by the word cosmos there? God loved the people in the world, that He gave His only begotten son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but live into another world, be called into another world, they will have eternal life. Now, if it were You 3:16 or Self 3:16 it might say something like this: for you so loved the world and the things of the world that you took all you could for yourself as though there was not another world. That's very different. For God so loved the world that He gave. For we so loved the world that we take. Those are very different messages.

So, this is the warning.

- 1. What you want shows who you love.*

What you want shows who you love. This is what he's presenting us with here. You love the world; you want the things of the world. If you love yourself, you feed your selfish desires. But, if you love God, you can avoid loving the things of this world. God loves the people in the

world, and He proved His love for us, not by taking but by giving. What we do, guys, is we love stuff, and we use people, and we use people to get stuff. This is not Christianity. It's not biblical. It is sinful. It's not God honoring. It honors the little "g" god of this world, Satan, the prince of this air. That is his mantra. Use people and love stuff and use people to get stuff.

A biblical worldview, a Christian worldview would be that you would use stuff to love people. That you would use stuff to love people. That the things that are entrusted to you temporarily in the world would be tools that you would use to bring people into a deeper relationship with God as though your primary mission on this earth were to bring people to know God. That you would know Him more and bring others to know Him more, and that's so different and the problem is we've been surrounded by something we've called Christianity for so long that we've just been able to walk away from that message. And be like, "Oh, that's not everyone, personalities, and I'm different and I can love stuff and use people." No, you can't. As a follower of Jesus, you can't. No.

So, John says, **if anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.** He presents a dichotomy; you love the world, or you love the Father. That's the dichotomy he presents. And it's almost like, 'Gosh John man, brother's coming strong. I don't know, that's a really harsh message John's giving us.' Jesus says it like this in Matthew 6. **"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."** You cannot be mastered by God and the world. So, Jesus presents us with the same dichotomy.

Jesus' brother James says it like this. **"You adulterous people,"** James coming strong, **"don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."** James calling us an enemy of God if we are friends of the world. This is consistent.

What about Paul? He wrote a lot of the New Testament. What did he say? Philippians chapter 3 verse 18, **"For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ."** So, they're enemies of the message of God. Describe them to me Paul, tell me what they're like. **"Their destiny is destruction.** They're going to hell. **Their god is their stomach.** What does that mean? They eat what they're hungry for. They do what they want when they want. **Their mind is set on earthly things.** They love the world. **But our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

You have John, you have Jesus, you have James, and you have Paul. The Holy Spirit taking your face, rubbing it in, telling you don't you see? Don't love the world. If you love the world, you don't love the Father. It's a dichotomy. Make your choice. The choice is yours. He's bringing you to a decision. What do you choose? Why? Why is the scripture so strong here? Why does it say this such poignant idea that you can either love God or the world?

This is not my first job in Waco, Texas. Not sure if you guys knew that. This is not my first occupation here. I've lived in Waco before. I've worked at another establishment, an amazing establishment. It's not there anymore. I heard someone drove a car through it unfortunately. A fantastic Italian restaurant called Johnny Carino's. While I was there, I served some of you your chicken scallopini, chicken piccata, chicken parmesan. The breadsticks with the olive oil, the balsamic swirled in there. Some of you remember Johnny Carino's. That was me there, bringing you your food, and after you were done with your food, I wouldn't bring you the check and I wouldn't bring you the dessert menu. It's an up sale, this is the waiting tables game. I would bring the dessert tray and I would set it in front of you. I understand you're in a hurry, but you need to see this presentation because I've practiced it, okay? I think we've got a picture. (a picture of a waiter holding a tray of desserts displays on the screen, obviously not him) There I am. (audience laughs). Johnny Carino's. Bringing you your dessert tray. This is what would happen. People would see me from far away. Oh no, no, no. I'd just set it down. 'Is that tiramisu?' Yes, it is, lady fingers dipped in espresso covered in Italian creme, sprinkled with cinnamon, and right beside it, its neighbor is Italian chocolate cake, some Heath bar toppings on there if you're into toffee. It's really good if you like chocolate cake, and over here....' and I'd walk you through each and every one and I'd describe them to you, and you were like no, no, no, no, no, okay, maybe that one... and that one... they'll look good, and there you are.

But sometimes I was ineffective. I'd set it down and someone would say, 'Oh no I can't, I can't even think about that, that thought of that disgusts me now. I'm so full, I ate too much. We cannot do dessert.' Here you see the idea that John is hinting toward. If you are full of the things of God, you're able to resist the temptations of the world. But, if you are full on the things of the world, you're able to resist the convictions and the calling and the promptings of God. The things of God. You will be full, you will be filled, with one or the other and they will impact your perspective of the other one.

Let me bring it down practically in my own life. I wake up. I have a quiet time. Time with me and Jesus in His word. I'm studying the word, but sometimes, things that compete with this three thousand, thirty-five-hundred-year-old book that I might be reading in the scriptures is Instagram. I'm faced with this choice. I can spend time in His word, or I can keep up with you and your vacation pics and incredibly crafted captions. Or I can keep up with what David's saying in the Psalms or I can keep up with what's going on in Ukraine and scrolling through news and reading. I can spend time with Jesus, or I can try to be the first one that solves the Wordle. As if it wasn't convicting enough, I got some of you with the Wordle. And there's the competition and the time expires. I have to run to my next meeting, and I look back and it wasn't all that I had hoped it would be because I'm caught up on Instagram. I've filled my heart and my mind with Instagram, or the news, or scores, or the Wordle and I cut Jesus short and now I'm out there in the world and I'm full of the wrong things.

He says verse 16... Here's the why, that was the warning. God of the world, the why. **For everything, the why, For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.** Where it says the lust of the flesh the lust, of the eyes, yours might say cravings of the flesh, lust of the eyes. It's the same word in the Greek. It's epithumia. Epithumia in the Greek. Same word. So, it's appropriate to say wanting, craving, lust. All the same word. **The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.** It feeds my desires. It looks good and it offers to help make me better. This is what the world does is it says, 'oh you're hungry? Here's something to eat. Look at it? Does it look good? Doesn't it look good? If you eat of it, you will be better.' That should sound familiar.

Genesis 3. **When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some** and broke the world and sin and disease and sadness and sorrow and cancer and miscarriages and divorce and broken hearts rushed in because something presented to meet a need. It looked appealing and it offered to make her better. The enemy's tactics have not changed. So, the why:

2. *Wickedness comes from wanting worldly things.*

The worldly things are what the enemy uses to drag you toward wickedness. This is his tool. The same tricks he's running today. He says, 'don't you want this? Look at it, yes! This is what you need, yes!'

Do you guys know what Tuesday is this week? (audience member responds inaudibly) What'd you say? (more audience members respond) Fat Tuesday, Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras is just French for Fat Tuesday. Tuesday is Fat Tuesday. Do you know why it's called Fat Tuesday? It's religious implication. It is because Wednesday is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of lent where we fast. Christians have traditionally fasted through lent beginning with Ash Wednesday and so what happens is, as this has progressed throughout history, on Tuesday, we would gorge ourselves on food.

We're like we aren't going to be able to eat much tomorrow so let's just eat all we can today, rich food. Not just food but drink, drink specials. Let's enjoy and not just that but the lust of the eyes fills my eyeballs. I've got beads around my neck; I'm walking down bourbon street. Who wants some? And what we've done is we've taken this fast, and we said, 'okay, let's fill this day with debauchery before we go there.' I think as Christians we think of heaven as the fast and so our little seventy-six years here or ninety years here, that's Fat Tuesday. Let's enjoy. We're saved by grace through faith, got the fire insurance, bring it to me. Bring it all to me. What can I enjoy?

I want to experience everything I can in this world. Go to all the places and see all the things. I don't want to miss out on anything. Nothing in this world do I want to miss. Do not deprive myself of anything. We live our lives like this. Satan came to the earth. He's called the little "g"

god of this world. The prince of this air. He's alive and active. He hates you and he is actively, his one mission is to try to drag you away out of right relationship with God. There are two things that work for him to do that. One is the desires of your flesh. Your desires. The cravings that you have, the lust inside of you, the wanting. That's one tool that he has working for him. The other is the things of this world. He combines these things to drag you away.

This is how James says it. James 1:14. **"...each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desires and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."** Let me break this verse down, not the James verse but the 1 John verse. He says the lust of the flesh, that's I want to do something. That's what the lust of the flesh is. The flesh has the desire you want to do something, experience something, feel something. You want to give yourself to pornography, follow a hash tag to an image that does not belong to you. It's not yours to look at.

Some of you are like, man, why do we talk about porn so much from this stage. It's uncomfortable, I don't understand. I'm going to talk about porn from this stage until most of you stop looking at it. Did you hear what I said? Most of you, here, in this room, currently, presently, looking at porn. Every statistic in church would say that's true. So, until it's not true, as the shepherd of this flock, I'm going to be up here boldly declaring, that's the enemy trying to drag you to death. That's what he's trying to do. You're like, but that's not comfortable. War is not comfortable! We're in a war! He's after you! He hates you! He wants to destroy your marriage and your children and your faith. He hates you.

Porn, that's not really my thing. Well, we're in Waco, you know, and everybody, after a hard day's work, needs a good happy hour. We have no shortage of establishments where we can go sit down and have one, three, or seven. You may be like, "I don't really know where that line is. I mean, Jesus' first miracle turned water into wine, so what really is the line of drunkenness? It just kind of helps me sleep at night." Let me just be abundantly clear so you're not confused for the rest of your life, any time you get drunk, it is a sin. You're looking at God and saying I don't care what your word says. I don't need to worship you right now. I want to do what I want to do. I want it all and I want it now. So, take that. Proceed with caution.

"Well, where's that line? I don't really know where that line is." You better figure it out real fast. That's not on me. I don't know how big you are. How much you weigh. I don't know your tolerance level. It's not for me to tell you where that line is. I'm telling you that if that's your thing, if that's your dish, wine night with the girls, happy hour with the guys. Nah, it's just every now and then a Big 'O, purple margaritas, you better figure it out real fast. The enemy will kill you. I spend every single week of my life sitting with someone that is saying to me I never thought I'd find myself here. How did I get here? One sin at a time, brother. One short cut in the morning at a time. That's how you got here. One compromise at a time.

The lust of the eyes, I want to have something. There's something I want. This is Amazon therapy. For the first time in history, if you want it, you can have it. It will show up on your doorstep in just short days. Delayed gratification will soon be a thing of the past. At least the necessity of it. I want it. I want to have something. Materialism. The air we breathe.

And then, the pride of life. The pride of life. This is big for us here. This is, I want to be something. Where am I going? What makes me, me? This is why you live where you live. Have the house that you have. Your kids go to the school that they go to. You have the bag that you have. You drive what you drive. This is why you have letters behind your name. Why you take pride in your accomplishments. You have trophies on your shelf, plaques, diplomas, because it's who you are, it's who you want to become. You're accessorizing your life.

Have you ever played that? There's lots of games, honestly, but the one that I played recently was a snowboarding game. Waco has a Tilt now, by the way. You're on the board, literally, there's bars right here (he's reaching out to his sides), and you can snowboard down a mountain. Anybody play this? Am I by myself in this? (audience has no response) Okay, I'm by myself, that's cool. So, there's this game that you can play and what you do is you start to choose your character. Are you male or female? Well, I'm a guy, I'll be a guy. What kind of hair do you want? Do you want blonde or brown? Short or long? What uniform, what snowboarding fit, do you want him to have? Do you want the white, or all the colors, the pants match the top? Okay, I'll choose that. What about the board? Do you want the Burden, the Never Summer? What snowboard do you want? You're choosing your board; you're being to accessorize your character.

Some of us approach life like this. We don't consciously do this, but we begin to think, what do I want him to drive? Well, this is Texas. He needs a truck and not just any truck, it needs to be lifted, tires, let's make it sound different. Dueled out. Swap out the stereo. What bag does she carry? Is it Tori Burch or Long Champ, or maybe it's Coach? Who is she? I want that soccer mom, chic vibe going on. The house. We want farmhouse modern. We want shiplap but not too much. We're accessorizing our lives. We're living in this world and we're accessorizing our life. It's ok if right now you're saying, 'well what's wrong with that?'

Here's what's wrong with that. Nothing I just said was, 'her heart is completely sold out for the Lord.' As you approach him, you're just going to see that he is a man surrendered to the Holy Spirit and love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control just pour out of his life. You're not going to talk to her for two minutes without hearing about Jesus. She just loves, more than Tori Burch, she loves Jesus. More than Kate Spade she LOVES Jesus. Okay? And so, you say where's the line?

A guy came up after the first service. He goes, 'Yeah man, I hear you, it's so convicting, but where's the line? Am I supposed to have nothing? Eat red beans and rice?' No, I'm building a house. I so enjoy designing it, picking out things. And have we wrestled? We've wrestled and

prayed and have been concerned about perception. All the things. It is a constant wrestle, but do you use stuff to love people and to push them closer to your God? Because, if you don't it is wasted on you. If you love stuff and you use people to get more stuff you are an agent of the enemy and I'm not mixing my words here. I'm just telling you as plainly as I can tell you. You're fine to argue with me in your head. Bring your head up here afterwards. We can do it in real time because I care about you, and I see these things and it's just the air we breathe. It's just what we do, you know?

Verse 17, **The world, and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.** The world and its desires are fleeting. You've got to understand this is like a dream you're going to wake up from. It's fleeting like a dessert you enjoyed once upon a time that you can't even remember. You couldn't resist it in the moment but now you don't even remember the restaurant it was in. **The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.** C. S. Lewis says it like this: If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world. So, there's this other world that we were made for and we're not there yet. And this world, it's a test. It is the call to live for that world in this world. That's the right way to live in this world.

So, my third and final point,

3. Walking in the will of God is living for another world.

That's the way. We talked about the warning and the why. Here's the way. Walking in the will of God is living for another world. It says the desires of this world will pass away. People ask often, what will we think about this life in heaven? What will we remember? Will we experience shame, regret, missing out? Will we relive memories? And this is my best effort to explain that to you, to answer that question.

I want to remind you that you've lived in another world before. For nine months of your life, you were in this world where it was self-contained, and you had everything that you needed in that world. For nine months of your life. You were birthed forth into another world where you will live for seventy-six to ninety years. Okay? Maybe. How often do you think about that world in this world? And I think it will be like that. So as often as you think about the womb...

Now listen, okay, because you're going to say but there's cognitive ability at play there and memory. Absolutely, that's true, so let me go harder on this. I think it will be less than that, because nine months compared to ninety years is a lot longer of a time than ninety years compared to eternity. So, I think you will actually think about this world less than you think about that world - when you're in the kingdom. I say that to bring about perspective. You want to make every decision based on that world. That our desires would be His desires. That we would walk in His will and as we walk in His will that our desires will be confirmed to his desires.

Psalms 37:4 says it like this: **Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.** We love the “he will give you the desires of your heart” part because we want it all and we want it now. But take delight in the Lord. As you spend time with the Lord your desires conform to His desires and you guys begin to want the same things. And listen, if you’re a parent you’ve experienced this because I believe two primary responsibilities that I have as a parent, as I spend time with my kid. One, teaching them what to do with their wants. “But daddy, we want ice cream for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. That’s what we want.” But here’s the deal guys you can’t have ice cream for breakfast, lunch, and dinner because you also want to feel well, right? Now which desire do you want more? Do you want to feel well and be healthy or do you want to eat mint chocolate chip all day? You cannot have both, you have to choose. So, it’s not just teaching them what to do with their wants as they grow up, move toward adolescence. They have all these desires. I want to be liked, I want to be seen, I want to be known. I want to date. I want to have someone to express love toward and them to express love. They have all these desires so it’s not just teaching them what to do with their wants, number two, it’s teaching them what to want.

You want to want the things of God. I’m taking them through that lesson and as they spend time with me, they learn what to do with their wants and they learn what to want, and as you spend time with the Father you learn what to do with your wants and you learn what to want. As you spend time with Him. **Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is - his good, pleasing, and perfect will.**

Let me tell you something interesting about Freddy Mercury, the singer of Queen, who recorded that song I want it all, I want it now. He never performed it live. When that song was released, when they had the concert that was going to unveil it to the world in a live performance, he died. Freddy Mercury was the rockstar of all rockstars. Hundreds of thousands of people gathered to hear him sing and he had everything available to him and that song was really born out of their desires and their lifestyles. I want it all and I want it now and he had all kinds of pleasure. Anything you could imagine and at the age of forty-five it killed him. I’m telling you - that indulgence, you living with that same mindset, trying to be a rockstar in your own microcosm world is what the enemy is using to kill your faith, to drag you away. Our desires not conformed to God’s desires are absolutely destructive.

So, in summary, what you want shows who you love. Wickedness comes from wanting worldly things and walking in the will of God is living for another world. What I want you to know about sin is you take it and then it takes you. Okay? You take at any level, you have the desire, there it is in the world. You take it, and then it takes you. It takes you away from the marriage you want, away from the family that you want, away from the relationship with God that you want, the pursuit of purity in singleness that you want, away from all the things that God wants for you. We have lots of pictures of how this happens. It’s been played out in movies. In Willy Wonka,

the girl that turns purple. In Narnia with Edmund and Turkish Delight. He eats and he can't get enough, and the queen uses that to cause him to betray his whole family. But a real-life example is drugs like crystal meth or heroin. Someone does it and they can't get enough of it, and they continue in it.

Look at these two right here. (two pictures pop up on the screen) It's a woman and a man. Two pictures. Mugshots is what they are. They were arrested and I want to show you a progression of sin in their lives because it's visible. There are some things that you do that it becomes visible. You can see it on the outside. Here's their progression. (Multiple photos of the woman and the man are displayed in a row to show how their faces change over time. The woman's cheeks sink in more and more until you can see her whole bone structure. The man acquires more and more tattoos that depict him as the devil such as eyebrow tattoos with horns.) As you digest that really difficult, heavy image, you look at the first two pictures, look at the last two pictures and you see the transformation that sin brings in someone's life.

Some of you are thinking about people that you know. This is hard to digest right now but what I want you to know is there are sins that you embrace that are doing that to your soul but on the outside the world is applauding you. 'Oh man, she's got so many bags to choose from. She's the woman everybody wants to be.' 'His job, he's so successful. Did you see his new truck? It's got all the things.' 'Their marriage, it's amazing,' but on the inside, it's being destroyed. And to the angelic crown, to those that see with kingdom eyes, we look like that. To the world, it's beautiful. Getting prettier and prettier every day. Botox and surgery and CrossFit and protein. Prettier and prettier every day, but I'm telling you in the spiritual realm, that's happening to your soul. All the while, the world is applauding. Look at you!

And that's the message here and that's what I don't want for you. So, what do we do? We're going to sing a song. You're going to be faced with a choice. The choice, the dichotomy that the scripture gives you. Are you going to continue in that or are you going to love the Father? Are you going to love the world or are you going to love the Father? You can make that choice right now. You can say I'm done. You can expose it. You can bring it to the light. You can tell somebody. That's terrifying, I can't do that. With the spirit of God, you can. He's big enough. You can text them right now. I have something to tell you. Please ask me. Pry. Bring any hidden sin to light. Anything that you know at some point in this message, something that the Holy Spirit says that's yours, don't let the enemy come and snatch it away and say nah, I'm just going to let you continue in that as you drift away from holiness.

Lord, would you help us in that? Help us not to drift, but to surrender it here and now. That it would end with us. Father, would you strip it away from our lives? The things that we use, the stuff that we love, the worldly things that we've worshiped. God, we surrender them to you now, would you help us? Would you move in our hearts in that way? Would you help us surrender them to you now? Please? We thank you for your son, Jesus whom you sent to die for our sins. That we don't work for your salvation, but from it. That you've given it to us freely. But Paul

says, should I go on sinning? By no means. You've called us out of the world to another world. So, help us to live for that world. In Jesus' name, amen.