

That You May Know – 1 John 2:15-17

*“We pursue being a disciple making family: **surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and saturated in His word.**”*

John continues his attempt to help the believers to see what a Christ follower looks like and how to navigate successfully in a world that hates them. He points out the way the evil one will attack and tempt them to love the created more than the creator. It is important in these verses to apply them first to our own lives before pointing this struggle out in others. We all wrestle with valuing the things of the world over the things of God. We can easily lose sight of eternal things for the excitement, thrill, anxiety, and self-absorption of temporal things.

Discussion Questions* -- *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. John warns us not to “love the world.” This idea of “world” is referring to the evil value system that is controlled by the power of the evil one and has aligned itself against God and His kingdom. It is the self-centered, glory stealing, heart desire that comes from being in rebellion against God. We can expect this among people before they come to Christ but what about us as believers? We are all tempted to “love” the world and make ourselves the main player and then it becomes about us meeting our wants. How have you experienced this through the different seasons of your life (i.e teenager, young adult, single adult, married couple, parent, widow/widower)? How have you handled this?
2. John clearly points out that the love of the world and the love of God (the Father) are incompatible. To really meditate on this is astounding. It is really life changing. We don’t tend to see our sin stemming from the love of the world or the things of the world. That love does not come from the Father. In our process of sanctification (being transformed to look more like Christ) it is important to recognize that we can wrongly justify our sin by calling it something else. As “church going” followers of Jesus, what are some examples of how we “lessen” the blow of “loving the world” by changing the name (e.g. “Just want what is best for....”, “It’s just a season”, etc.)?
3. We see that some scholars call this the devil’s trinity. It’s the deceptive trap that the evil one has used since the beginning in the garden with Eve and even with Jesus during his temptation in the wilderness. It is the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life. Take some time and work through how you see the evil one use these same temptations today. How do you see these temptations played out among Christians? Which ones do you think you wrestle with the most? How quickly do you recognize the scheme of the devil or do you? How do we combat these schemes (e.g. Jesus overcame the temptation using Scripture and desiring to do the will of Father)

4. John points out the world is passing away but the one who does the will of God abides forever. We all realize that our lives here on earth and even earth itself is temporal. Why is it so hard to live out the reality of this in our day to day lives? What would it look like to truly live considering eternity (i.e. time, resources, work, vacation, etc.)? At the core of all sin is believing something other than what God says is true and right. How would you help someone understand what the will of God is?
5. Who is someone you know that needs to surrender to the rescue of Jesus? Pray for them. Who is someone you know that needs to be in faith community? Pray for them. In the last 25 years there has been a religious shift where about 40 million church going people have left the church. This is more than all the people who became Christ followers in the First and Second Great Awakening and Billy Graham Crusades. (The Great Dechurching, Jim Davis and Michael Graham). There are several reasons and they may not be why you might think. 19% said they quit attending because they moved and didn't find a new faith community (The Great Dechurching, Jim Davis and Michael Graham). Pray for people who have moved into the area but have not found a faith community.