

Today's Sermon: IN not OF the world.

Last week, P. Chris highlighted 3 stages of growth and maturity for the Christian. 1) Children, 2) Young men (adult), 3) Fathers (parents).

- KEY to remember: You don't move on from each step, you build on top of it. Just like building a house.

1 John 2:15–27 (ESV) ¹⁵ *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* ¹⁶ *For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.* ¹⁷ *And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*

A. Love of the World OR Love of God

1 John 2:15–27 (ESV) ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

- This Passage has caused some confusion for many believers – E.g. feel shame if they enjoy anything.
- **Example:** we were in Vancouver this summer with two of our teens. Walked 20k a day or more. We love Stanley park! Love climbing mountains! Love seeing the Ocean and whales! Was AMAZING!
 - Does this mean the Love of the Father is not in me? E.G. movies, sports, hobbies, etc.
- “World” does not just refer to anything that you ENJOY.
- **Religious Example:** rock music, radio, machinery, movies, alcohol, fancy clothing, sports, etc. THESE and things like these have been. THIS has even gone towards REJECTING science, MEDICAL science & DOCTORS – Strict dependence on GOD in a spiritual Sense.
- **FORM of Dualism:** Because of Plato and Augustine dualism – we are still fighting the idea that everything SPIRITUAL = GOOD and PHYSICAL = BAD.
- When we interpret Scripture with these lenses, we conclude, **“any LOVE for the physical world = hatred towards God”**
- **IF TRUE, We should reject any and all forms of pleasure and enjoyment!**

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

- God LOVED the world – aren't we called to do the same?

2 Peter 2:20 (ESV) For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.

- **Greek word: “kosmos” Definition: world, order, ornament.**
- **Primary usage:** world (creation), world (people), world (systems)
- **John 3:16** refers to creation & people – God so LOVED His creation – PEOPLE – that He died for them! To save them!
- **When John writes,** “Do not love the world or the things of the world” he is referring primarily to “WORLDS SYSTEMS” – the people constituting the world whose values, beliefs, and morals are in distinction and rebellion to God's. (Logos Software)

- **IF we love the “worldly systems” we do not have the “Fathers love.”**
- This is the same dichotomy that John has presented earlier: Love God = Obey the Commands vs Disobey the Command = No Love for God; Love for God = Love for people vs Hate for people = Hate for God.
- **Scottish** theologian Willena Barclay puts it this way, “rivals for the human heart.”
- The “world” is anything that competes for the allegiance of the human beings.
- **James 4:1–4 (ESV)** What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel... 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.
 - **He considers loving the worlds systems over Him – spiritual adultery!**
 - **Strong words – but reveals God’s HEART & PASSION for His people!**
- **Matthew 6:24 (NIV)**²⁴ “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.
- **Joshua 24:15 (ESV)**¹⁵ And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”
 - **We see this contrast AGAIN – CHOOSE THIS DAY!**
- **BACK to God’s LOVE of the world** – (IVP New Testament Commentary) **John 3:16** God loved the world? ...God saves people who are bound by the world and its values by freeing them from their captivity. Quite simply, loving the world does not mean accepting it as it is, but remaking it into what it was created by God to be: people living in the realm of life and light.
- **DUALISM is a leading cause of Christians living IN the world AND OF the World!**
 - We split our lives into SACRED & SECULAR → Spiritual & “real” or physical
- **When we try and love the world & love God the results are disastrous!**
 - God is perfect 66%, accepts worship from all religions 65%, unchanging 68%, the Holy Spirit is a force 57%, Jesus was a teacher not God 49%, marriage is between one man and one woman 65%, sex outside marriage is sin 52%, abortion is sin 49%, homosexuality is not sin 41%, people can choose their gender 38%, religious views should NOT influence political decisions 54%, The Bible is authoritative 50%, accurate 49%, contains myths 48%, science has disproven 36%, Church can be done alone or just with family 63%, Christians have an obligation to join a local church 33%.

Christians are called to be SALT & LIGHT IN the world – they are called to SEPARATE themselves from the world – not be OF the world.

B. OF the World... (someone who LOVES the World is OF the World...)

.¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

OF the world – means – we are like the world. We trust in the worldly systems. To outsiders, our lives are hardly distinguishable from the rest of the world.

1 Peter 3:15 (ESV) ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

- Ever thought about that? **ASKS YOU!** (Caveat: we are told to persuade, proclaim, share the Gospel, Jesus and TRUTH) BUT... here it says ASKS YOU!
 - Why would they ASK YOU? Because you are DIFFERENT. **QUESTION REFLECT:** Has anyone asked you why you are different? Do you stand out?
1. **Desires/lusts of the flesh (sarx)** – the “flesh” isn’t just desires that are sinful. It includes ALL our desires that do not come from the Spirit.
 - Materialism, success in THIS life prioritized over Jesus, relaxed sexual ethic, etc. (how you spend time & money)
 - **Romans 14:23 (ESV)** ... For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.
 2. **Desires of the eyes** – passions and desires based upon what we can see in this world, rather than what is UNSEEN.
 - **2 Corinthians 4:18 (ESV)** as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.
 3. **Pride of life** – this is self-reliance, self-sufficiency – trusting in our own strength.
 - **2 Corinthians 3:5 (ESV)** Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,
 - **Proverbs 3:5–6 (ESV)** Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.
 - **E.g. do you accept your limitations? Perfectionist? What do you turn to when you are stressed, sick, in pain?**

What drives Christians into living OF (like) the World over living for Jesus? PLEASURE – our desire to feel GOOD. & **PAIN** – PROBLEMS – desire for a solution – for SALVATION!

Ecclesiastes 3:11 (ESV) *He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart,...*

Psalms 16:11 (ESV) *You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

- E.g. turn to buying stuff, body image, addictions, media, etc. even holidays!
- **Driven by Pleasure: Wealth = pleasure > generosity → Time = what I want > what God wants → Career = follow MY dreams > follow Jesus**

2 Corinthians 7:9–10 (ESV) ⁹ As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. ¹⁰ For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

- **Driven by Pain: addictions > time with Jesus in the Word & prayer → Perfectionism > accepting limits & leaning on Jesus → Trusting in government > trusting in the Lord.**

For example: what is wrong with the world? LGBTQ ideology? Wokism? Marxism – oppressed vs oppressors, increasing debt, wars, etc. **THE WHOLE WORLD IS LOOKING FOR A SAVIOR!**

- MANY people – Christians included put ALL their eggs in ONE BASKET – GOVERNMENT –
- **Romans 13:1 (ESV)** Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.
- **Christians SHOULD vote and work towards the LESSENING OF EVIL in society** – We should operate IN the world’s systems to lessen EVIL and ADVANCE CHRIST’S KINGDOM!

- **E.g. at the memorial, Erika FORGAVE her killer** – the whole world saw a beautiful act of how Christianity is different than all other religions or systems in this world. Rather than outrage, the world saw forgiveness. WOW. (1 Pet 3:15 – HOW DID YOU DO THAT???)
- **E.g. THEN moments later, when President Trump got up**, he proudly declared, “Charlie loved his enemies, but I HATE mine. I can’t stand them.” **NOT MESSIAH – NO POLITICIAN IS!**
 - **Jesus loved his enemies (US) and died for them! He commands us to do the same!**
 - Does this mean Trump is for sure not a Christian? I would never be able to gauge that. BUT... **the FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT is what we are to look for and this is not it.**
- **Do not confuse your FAITH with your POLITICS. Republican or Conservative doesn’t mean Christian, anymore than Democrat or Liberal means non-Christian.**
- **DANGER:** if we elevate politics higher than faith – we ALIENATE half of the people we are trying to reach for the WRONG REASON.
- **Joshua 5:13–14 (ESV)**...Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?” And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.”

C. IN the World (OF Heaven)

¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

Driven by FAITH: Faith & Scripture influences POLITICS à FINANCIAL DECISIONS à PRIORITIES à TIME à RELATIONSHIPS à EVERY & ALL THINGS PERTAINING TO LIFE. ☺

Philippians 3:18–20 (ESV) For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

James 1:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

Romans 1:25 (ESV) ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

FAITH IN JESUS matters MOST – allegiance to JESUS above all! Scripture as our absolute authority on morality and truth. From here... we live IN the world to advance Jesus’ Kingdom – we enjoy His many GOOD GIFTS! We work within the culture and systems around us to glorify God, lessen evil, win as many people to Jesus as possible.

“Whoever DOES THE WILL OF GOD abides forever”:

1. **Faith in Jesus – TRUST Him for Salvation**
2. **Love God, Love People, Be Discipled, Make Disciples**
3. **Glorify God with your: life, job, hobbies, time, finances, relationship, ALL.**

REFLECT – Does my life reflect that I am living OF the world – for self? Or, living IN the World – for Jesus?