

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to 1 John 2

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this short but powerful and practical letter that the Apostle John wrote to us.

And the purpose of the letter was to remind us of the reality of who God is, the reality of who Jesus is and the reality of what it means to be a born again Christian.

And the central theme in John's letter is one of genuine fellowship.

Genuine fellowship with God – that genuine fellowship with God begins with having a right relationship with Jesus – no other way.

and that genuine fellowship with God is manifested in genuine fellowship with one another.

And so John provides for us these litmus tests that we can examine ourselves in that they reveal to us whether or not we have genuine fellowship with God.

Do we walk in obedience

Do we love one another or do we have hatred toward others.

And last week we looked at a test to see if we actually have growth in our spiritual walk. Are we growing in Him – because the more we have fellowship with God, the more we know Him and it leads to spiritual growth and maturity.

We become more like Him as we abide in Him.

However, in our text this morning – John is going to continue on the topic of love.

And what he is going to point out is that in order to love God and love each other – there are things that we have to refrain from loving.

Including – loving this world.

Let's pray...

[1Jo 2:15-17 NKJV] 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 lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

For the past couple of weeks – John has exhorted us to love.

He has been telling us that we are to love one another

One of the tests that John has given us to determine if we are genuine believers is if we love.

We saw this back at the beginning of his letter -

[1Jo 2:5, 10 NKJV] 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ...

10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

Of course – we cannot love one another without God’s love – so, we have a relationship with the Lord and He gives us His love – so we can love one another.

But now, John is going to warn us about a love that God hates –

A love for the world.

And this is a warning that we find throughout the scriptures.

Mark these verse down.

[Psa 97:10 NKJV] 10 You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

Paul in his letter to Rome -

[Rom 12:9 NKJV] 9 [Let] love [be] without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

So – John is going to give us reasons why we need to not love the world

He is not simply exhorting us not to do it – he will tell us why we are not to love the world.

Church, 36 times in this short letter – John mentions the word, love.

We have talked about the types of love that are allowed.

But now, we are going to see what we are not allowed to love – forbidden love

[1Jo 2:15-17 NKJV] 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.

In order to truly grasp the warning that John is giving us – under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we need to understand what John means by “the world”

And the best resource we have to interpret the bible is the bible itself.

So when John says, “the world” – he is not referring to the physical world, he is not referring to creation.

He is not saying to hate the mountains and the deserts and the beaches

[Gen 1:31 NKJV] 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed [it was] very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

The physical creation reveals the glory of God and the majesty of God.

We find mention of this throughout the Psalms. (8,24)

So – the world cannot refer to creation.

The world in our text – cannot refer to people in general.

[Jhn 3:16-17 NKJV] 16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

In John 3:16 and 17 –

John is referring to people in general – to those that are lost.

Fallen human beings that are in need of a Savior.

The same Greek word is used in both instances – but the word has multiple meaning.

What John is referring to when he says, “the world”

He is referring to the world that stands in opposition to God and the things of God and the gospel of God.

He is referring to this world’s system that is deeply informed by the prince of the world – Satan himself.

This world hates God, this world hates God’s Son, this world hates God’s message of salvation

Everything about this system is Anti-God

So – as believers – we are not to allow ourselves to be influenced or attracted by this world system.

We cannot say that we love God and at the same time, live, love and act as if this world's system is our friend.

Because according to this world's system – God is not welcome.

The gospel is not welcome

Forgiveness and hope and mercy are not welcome.

You see – many times when we think of someone who is worldly – we immediately focus on what that individual does.

“That person is worldly because they listen to certain kind of music”

“That person is worldly because of the people they hang out with”

Or because they dyed their hair purple

But John is going to invite us to go deeper – in that worldliness is not something we do – but something that is residing in our heart.

It is an internal problem.

Worldliness begins with desires of worldly promises

Worldliness is the ability to embrace the notion – even for a believer – to live their life as if there is no God.

God doesn't care – so I am going to pursue worldly promises. I am going to do what is the best for me – that is what the world says.

Worldliness is excluding God from our lives and in doing so, consciously or unconsciously accepting the values of a man-centered society.

It is the believer saying – I know what God's Word says, but the world says this – so, I am choosing what the world has to say and what the world has to offer.

John tells that individual – you are not a believer, you're a make believer.

The love of the Father is not in you

You may say that you love God – but the love of God is not the primary motivation in your life.

A genuine Christian is marked by their love for the Lord

And a non-genuine Christian is marked by their love of this world.

Because the world system – so violently opposed to Christ – is able to attract the heart and entice us into the way of darkness.

You see church, these tests that John has given to us – these tests are not written for us to bum us out –

They were written for us to reassure us of where we stand in Christ.

Because as a believer – as someone who does not love the world, we want God in the midst of everything we do.

Fellowship

So the question this morning is – how do we live in this world and not be of this world.

What does John mean when he says the things in this world?

John actually tells us what he means in verse 16

16 For all that [is] in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.

These are the things we are not to love – the things of this world

The lust of the flesh

The lust of the eyes

The pride of life

The individuals who love this world, those that embrace this world – the reason why they do all those things is because this is the only world they have ever known.

Satan has blinded them -

[2Co 4:4 NKJV] 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

This is why we can share the gospel with some of our loved ones and tell them the good news of salvation –they will not respond or they will tell us that they don't want to listen to us.

They will not admit that this world is broken

They will not admit their need for a Savior

They will not embrace the free gift of salvation

-the bible says that the reason is because their eyes have been blinded.

So God allows Satan, in part, to rule this world through the minds of those who continue to be in rebellion against God.

And the way in which the world operates / the way that the world redirects our attention and affection away from God is through these three things that John tells us here in verse 16

The lust of the flesh

The lust of the eyes

The pride of life

And really what the world offers is a false peace

The world offers us an olive branch – let's be friends

Just like that 70's song.

Why can't we be friends???

[Jas 4:4 NKJV] 4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Why can't we be friends with the world system?

The word of God says -

We cannot be friends with a system that is committed to hating, antagonizing, alienating, aggravating, undermining –

The plan of God

The work of God

The word of God

The good news of God

Paul – in 1 Cor 2

[1Co 2:12 NKJV] 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

Paul and John are saying the same thing –

As believers, we have been born from above

We have been given a new life, a new spirit

We have been given a new hope

The world system is designed to keep us away from God and then rob us of the blessings of God that God has in Christ for us.

And this world system has been in operation since the Garden of Eden

Eve was exposed to the same three things that the world uses today.

The lust of the flesh

The lust of the eyes

The pride of life

Eve saw that the tree was good for food – lust of the flesh

Eve experienced that it was pleasant to the eyes – lust of the eyes

And she also saw that the tree desirable to make one wise – the pride of life

In Joshua 6 – after the walls of Jericho came tumbling down – all the spoils were supposed to go to the Lord,

What did Achan do?

He saw the accursed things, he coveted them and then he took them and hid them under his tent.

He didn't want to wait for the Lord to bless him – that was going to Ai, the next battle

The lust of the flesh

The lust of the eyes

The pride of life

David and Bathsheba –

The lust of the flesh

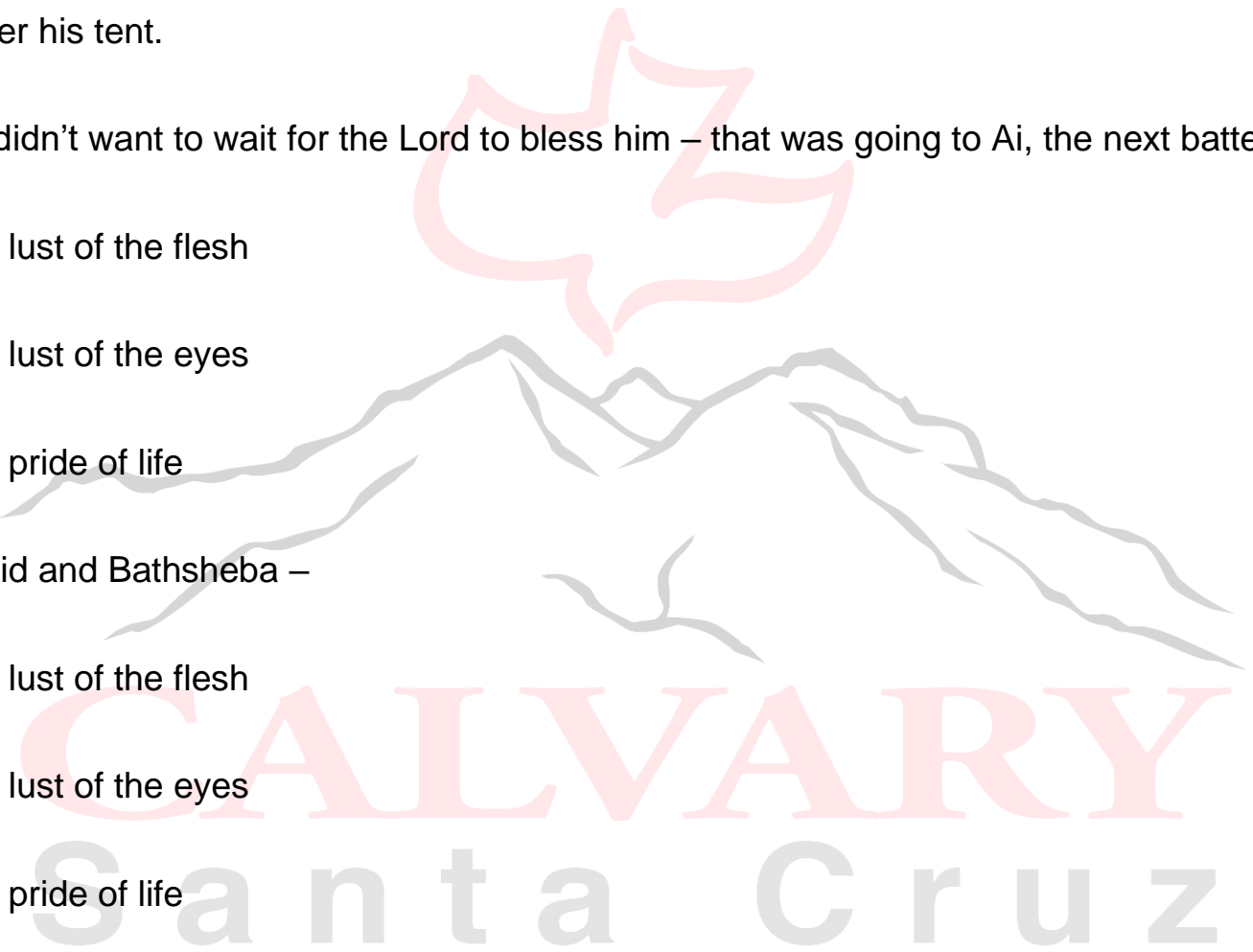
The lust of the eyes

The pride of life

Ananias and Saphira in the book of Acts – same thing

Jesus when He was being tempted by Satan in the Judean wilderness – same thing

I had you make a note of the word lust



Because the word lust means – a strong craving, an insatiable desire

It speaks of something that is deep inside of us that is motivating us to do something.

So the lust of the flesh is the desire to satisfy ourselves – at God's expense.

Think of Eve, Achan, David, Ananias and Saphira

Don't think of the flesh as just our physical bodies

Think of the flesh as everything that we are – **apart from Christ**

Remember, as a believer, we have two natures.

Divine nature and fallen

fallen – it is the physical nature that we received at our physical birth

Our spiritual nature/divine nature – is the nature that we received when we were born again by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:4)

So, because of our physical nature – we are all going to have desires.

However, not all desires are bad desires.

If I am thirsty – I desire something to drink

If I am hungry, I desire something to eat

If I am tired, I desire rest

If I am lonely – I desire company

But here is the thing – can we satisfy those desires in such a way where we dishonor God?

And the answer of course is – yes.

And that is the key issue

The world system will say – it doesn't matter as long as we pursue our desires and try to quench our desires by whatever means necessary – if it feels good – do it.

Even if it will displease God or is prohibited or forbidden by God

John is saying – we need to ask ourselves, are we satisfying those desires while still honoring God?

The next one – the lust of the eyes.

Covetousness

What is covetousness?

The desire to have something we already have.

Eve wanted the fruit because it was pleasing to the eye – but she had access to all the other trees in the garden.

Achan saw the silver and the Babylonian robes – he had to have them.

David wanted Bathsheba as he saw her bathe and he had to have her – so he took her and then arranges to have her husband killed in battle when he finds out that she became pregnant.

Ananias and Saphira wanted the recognition that Barnabas received – so they lied to the Holy Spirit.

We see and we become obsessed with what we see

This is the way that the world works.

The pride of life –

This is the sin of self-centeredness.

We want others to love us as much as we love our selves.

So – we boast in order to impress.

I was reading a book about this mega church pastor who wrote a book – and in the book, he claimed to live a life virtually free of temptation, and urged readers to join him on this new plane of holiness. “I can withstand temptation and control my actions,” he wrote. “I am a Christian, and I live like a Christian.”

And as he was promoting his book – a male escort revealed to the world of the relationship and drug use that he shared with the pastor.

Pride will get us into trouble every time.

We need to cultivate humility

And one way we cultivate humility is by serving others

That is exactly what Jesus was showing His disciples as He washed their feet.

Remember, they were arguing among themselves – they were being self-centered.

I really don't want us to miss what John is saying here –

John has told us to not love the world –

But in doing so – he has not given us a list of do's and don'ts

Instead he wants us to focus on the inside

On our desires, our motivation

Why is he doing this?

Because the invisible world of motives and desires often go undetected.

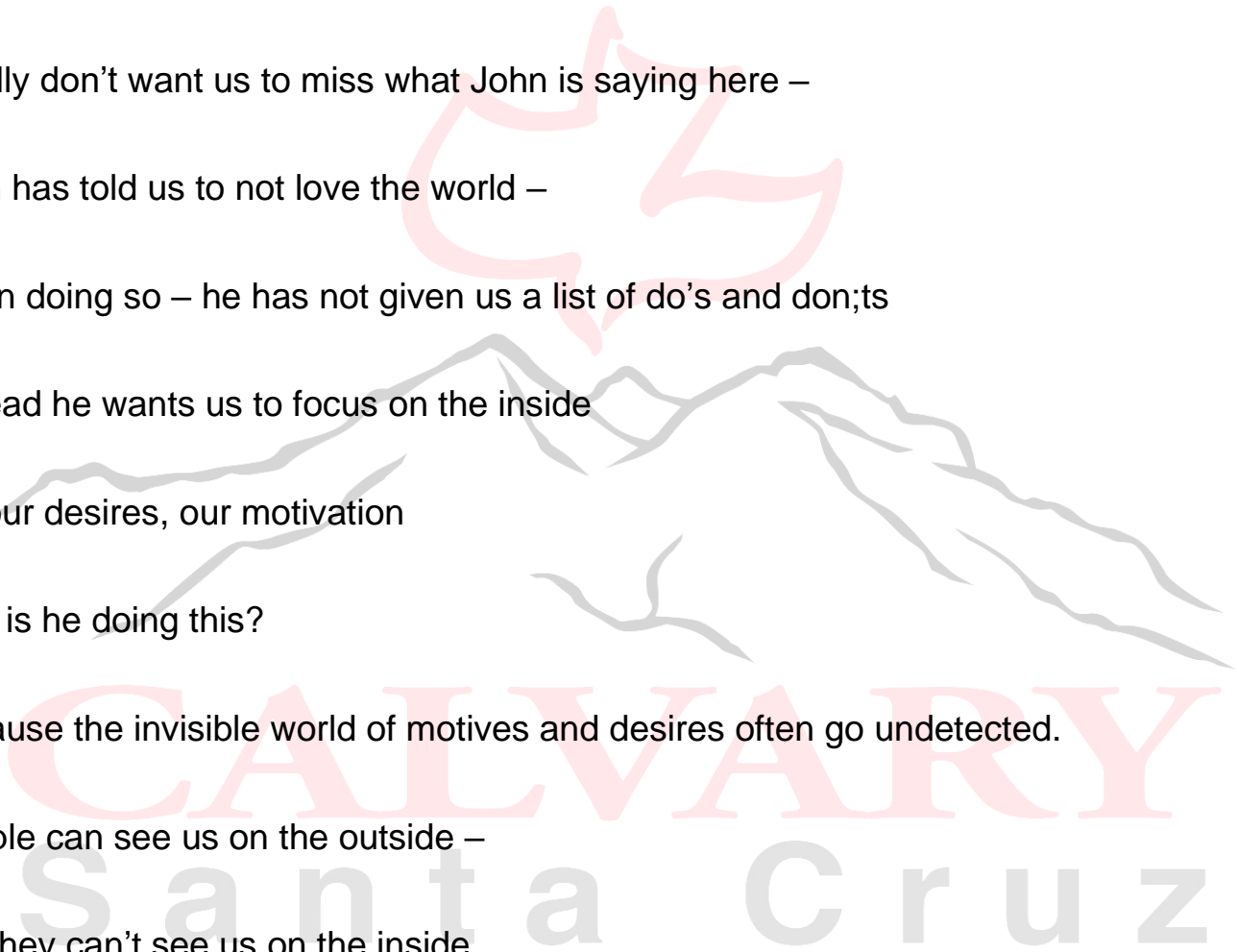
People can see us on the outside –

But they can't see us on the inside

It's possible to show false humility or refrain from acting upon our desires.

But inside – we still have the desire to do it.

So how do we deal with this?



We don't simply denounce sinful cravings – we announce a new passion – we announce a new desire

And the moment that we do that, things will begin to change as He works in us and through us.

17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

The world is dying

The world is not eternal – it is temporal

It is not going to go on forever, it is all going to come down to a crashing halt

Satan's system – is destined to ruin

Satan is the prince of a temporal kingdom

But Jesus is King to of an eternal king

Jesus told us that heaven and earth will pass away

[1Co 7:31 NKJV] 31 and those who use this world as not misusing [it]. For the form of this world is passing away.

Everything that we have, everything that we see – it is all going away

It is all temporal

And church, this is why the world cannot permanently satisfy anyone – it was never supposed to.

So John is asking us –

Where have we placed our affection?

On the temporal or the eternal?

Where have we placed our hope?

Our confidence?

We spend so much time looking at the world and shaking our heads

John is saying, we should spend our time focusing on what is inside of us.

but he who does the will of God abides forever.

What is the will of God?

There is the general will of God or we can get specific in what the will of God is in each one of our lives

It is the will of God to have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

That everyone of us realize that we are a sinner in need of a Savior

It is the will of God that people turn from their sin and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior

That all may enter into a right relationship with God

That we may know Him and we may love Him and we may experience that love for each other

Worldliness is anything that keeps us from loving the Lord, knowing His will and living our life as God intended.

And the only way we can do His will is through fellowship

We walk in fellowship with the Lord, we walk in fellowship with each other, we understand His will, we understand how the world operates –

[Mar 8:36 NKJV] 36 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?

Jesus and John were really asking – are we ready for a better world

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

John reminds us that –

We are incapable of resisting the devil and the ways of this world until we first love the Lord.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

