

JCI #175 August 2016

Just Checking In – Livin' In but not Lovin' the World

1 John 2:15-17

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1 John is all about evidences of true saving faith. The marks of a new birth is a changed life! John's first letter focuses on three major things that the new birth brings into the believer's life: Truth, Righteousness, and Love. Every paragraph of 1 John focuses on one of these areas.

So, this letter calls us to a spiritual self-examination.
Am I a believer in Jesus Christ?
Is there any proof of a new birth in my life?

The key area of examination in 1 John 2:15-17 is love.
It begins with an examination of love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. 2:1-14
It continues with an examination of our love for God. 2:15-17

1 John 2:15-17

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.

COMMAND	<i>Do not love the world or the things in the world</i>
CONSEQUENCE	<i>If you love the world you don't love God – can't love both</i>
CONTRAST	<i>All that is in the world is not from God and will be destroyed Those who do the will of God live forever</i>

First, the Command
Do not love the world or the things in the world

What in the world is “the world”?

Words have varied meanings determined by the context in which they are used. I may say “that was a real bear” in the context of hunting and it means a large, black, furry omnivore. However, I may say the same words (“that was a real bear”) in the context of having finished a huge, project and it means tough, hard, exhausting and difficult. So, what does the phrase, “the world”, mean in its varied uses in the context of scripture, and more narrowly the New Testament.

The word “world” in the New Testament is translated from the Greek word “kosmos” or “cosmos.” The basic meaning of “cosmos” is organization; that which is organized, ordered, working together. Keep this idea of “organized and working together” as we look at the three basic uses of the word.

#1 John 17:5 “The world” can mean “**creation**” – the organized, created world. God brought order out of chaos and causes it to work together to sustain life. This is “the world” that is to be cared for and used for His glory. This is the world God made to be: the creation.

#2 John 17:18-2 “The world” can mean “**population**” – organized tribes, the world of men. As people live together they organize and work together to sustain their common existence. This is the “world” God tells us to love and into which He sends us. The world of men.

#3 John 17:9, 14 “The world” can mean “**rebellion**” – organized rebellion against God. Sinful beings organized in their rebellion working together to overthrow and destroy God’s purposes. This is the world that neither Jesus or we are “of”. We do not find our identity or commonality in this “world.” This “world” hates Him and hates us. This is the “world” God has chosen us out of, called us out of, and saved us out of, and commands us not to love.

It is in this obvious context we are commanded to never love the organized system of rebellion against God’s purposes. In Galatians 6:14 Paul says he has fully rejected this “world” and this “world” has fully rejected him. There will never be compromise, agreement or peace between the “world” and the “Believer.”

WORLD This Satan Controlled Organized Rebellion Against God

Willful

Organized

Rebellion

Led

Demonically

It is Spiritual – demonic Eph 2:1-4

It is Religious – deception & rejection of Christ Antichrist 1 Jn 2:18

It is Political – authorities rejecting God’s reign and standards BABEL Genesis 11

It is Sensual – desires of the body for pleasure in and of itself 1 Jn 2:16

It is Personal – within our own depraved & sinful nature James 4:1-4

What in the world is love?

To love is to desire, demand, want, seek, and pursue.

Therefore, to “love the world” is to desire, demand, want, seek and pursue a life of personal rebellion against God and contrary to His will. To love this world is to pursue “things” that are not pursued for God’s glory but for selfish purposes, all the while believing *these things* will satisfy our deepest longings. To love the world is to *pursue the desires* that spring from our sinful hearts and are opposite to God’s plan and purposes.

What do I want more than anything? Why do I want it?

What am I pursuing more than anything? Why do I want it?

What consumes my thoughts, plans, desires? Why am I focused on it?

This is what I love. And it is either “of God” or “of the world!”

I can’t love both at the same time! If my heart is pursuing rebellion against God, I can’t have the love of God in my heart at the same time. Love is, by its very nature, all possessing. So if I am possessed by my own selfish, willful rebellion, I am not possessed by a desire for God and His will.

Matt 6:24 “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

John goes on to further define “all that is in the world”, all that this rebellion consists of...

Desires of the flesh – We can simplify this as the sensual desires that demand satisfaction Sex, sleep, hunger, and thirst. God created us with these desires, while also giving us clear boundaries and motivations for their satisfaction. They are not desires that were meant to become gods. In that same Matt 6 passage, Jesus tells us not to pursue, fixate, or obsess on satisfying these desires, but rather seek and pursue God’s rule and righteousness and that God would supply these “things” as we need them.

These desires of the flesh are sinful when the satisfying of these desires are not seen as gifts from God to be received with gratitude and experienced as a means of knowing Him better, but seen as demands, rights, and necessities for me to have at any price for my own enjoyment regardless of the consequences.

There is no victory over the desires of the flesh in either monastic separation (1 Tim 4:1-5 Paul declares that celibacy, food restrictions, and OT law keeping will not remove the inner rebellion of the soul) or in self-deceiving pursuits using religion as a means to satisfy sinful rebellion. (1 Tim 6:3-10 Paul condemns the passionate pursuit of greed & gain using religion as a means to obtain them.)

Desires of the eyes – In addition to the inner drives of sex, sleep, hunger and thirst is the desire for entertainment, attractiveness, and beauty. Again, God has made us with eyes to see. But He has also told us what to look at and what to avoid. He has told us that all things are to be for His glory. So what I see and what I seek to see must be for His glory and must be seen through His eyes first. Beauty for its own sake becomes idolatry. We desire beauty so that others see us, appreciate us, are drawn to us so that we become the focus. Hence, Peter tells us that true beauty is Christ-likeness in the heart. 1 Peter 3:1-6. Solomon pursued the desires of his eyes, and sought to have, make, create, buy, possess all manner of things for their own sake and for his own personal pleasure, and at the conclusion of a misspent life, declared the whole thing was a waste. Ecclesiastes 2:1-18.

Pride of Life – The word “life” is the word “bios” which refers to possessions. In Mk 12:44 Jesus referred to the widow who cast into the offering box all her “life” or “living”, that is, all she possessed. In Lk 15:12 the father of the two sons distributed to them his “living”... that is, all he possessed. Even in this same letter, in 1 John 3:17, we are told that if we possess “goods” (same word – bios) we are to share them. So, the pride of life is arrogant self-promotion based on position or possessions and accomplishments in our lives. It is seeking the esteem of men and self-exaltation from others. It is in reality self-worship, the very opposite of what we were created for. It keeps us from confessing and desiring Christ, John 12:42-43. It is the very thing that drove Saul (Phil 3:4-9) before his conversion, and the very thing that disgusted him the most once he was set free. (dung!!!)

No matter where we go, we face the constant temptation from within to leave our first love, and to love the world. We must recognize worldliness for what it is: that “willful organized rebellion led demonically” that dispossess the love of God in the soul. Love is the driving motivation in every life. And that love is either well directed towards God, or it will be demonically misdirected into self-destructive pursuits that consume and ultimately crash and burn the soul.

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

We are called to be Joyful Misfits! John 15:19 Livin' in the world, but not lovin' it!

Self-check

- 1) Am I pursuing God and His rule and righteousness, or have other longings replaced and displaced my love for God?
- 2) Am I any different from the world of unbelievers internally? Beyond the exterior, are my deepest desires and pursuits any different? Or am I just a religious, self-seeking worldling?
- 3) Flesh, eyes, or pride – which of the three are most troubling to you in your war against sin?

For Further Study:

Worldliness verses – select a few to memorize.

James 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

2 Timothy 4:10 for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me...

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

You worship before me, it shall all be Yours." read more.

John 17:14 "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

John 15:19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.

Titus 2:12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

1 John 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.

"Lord, I want to want You more and more with each passing day. Teach me to receive your blessings without letting my heart attach itself to them, and turn good things into false gods. Deliver me from loving the world. Rescue me, so that it not take me a lifetime to see what Solomon saw... that I not reach the end of life saying "I hated life" because I wasted it on that which would not last. Fill me with your life changing, perspective purifying, longing liberating love. I pray in the Name of Him

*Who alone is worthy of all pursuit, desire, longing and effort... by gracious Redeemer, Jesus Christ,
Amen."*

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4

Ron& Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable,
changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible
with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity,
owning nothing yet possessing everything
that matters and lasts.

We are Pilgrims in Paradox.

Welcome to THE JOURNEY