

Lesson Three: 1 John 2:15-29¹

15 Do not love the world nor 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 and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

Verse 15

1. John is still speaking to Christians. He instructs them to not love the world or the things in the world. Loving the world is characteristic of those who do not have the love of the Father in them (are not Christians), so of course, Christians should not behave as non-believers.

The expression "if any man love the world" is a hypothetical condition in the subjunctive mode. The verb is in the present tense. John could have used the aorist tense, expressing merely the fact of loving the world. But he goes out of his way to use the present tense, which tense in the subjunctive mode always stresses continuous, habitual action. This marks this hypothetical person as one who loves the world as a habit of life to the exclusion of any love for God. This is an unsaved person. In this person, the love of the Father does not exist. This is love for the Father as generated in the heart of the yielded believer by the Holy Spirit. And here the word "love" (agapē) is used in its New Testament sense. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Vol. 2

(2:15-17) The word "world" here is Kosmos which in its use here is defined by Vincent as follows: "The sum-total of human life in the ordered world, considered apart from, alienated from, and hostile to God, and of the earthly things which seduce from God (John 7:7; 15:18; 17:9, 14; 1 Cor. 1:20, 21; 2 Cor. 7:10; James 4:4)." Kosmos refers to an ordered system. Here it is the ordered system of which Satan is the head, his fallen angels and demons are his emissaries, and the unsaved of the human race are his subjects, together with those purposes, pursuits, pleasures, practices, and places where God is not wanted. Much in this world-system is religious, cultured, refined, and intellectual. But it is anti-God and anti-Christ. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Vol 2.

Trench quotes Bengel as saying that this world of unsaved humanity is inspired by "the spirit of the age," the Zeitgeist, which Trench defines as follows: "All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitutes a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale." This is the world-system to which John refers. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

¹ Unless otherwise stated the main text of scripture is from the NASB, and the majority of supporting Scripture is from the NKJV.

2. Thankfully, John clearly defines what “the world” means—what it is that we are not to love.

“Lust” is epithumia, “a craving, a passionate desire,” good or evil, according to the context. Here it refers to evil cravings. The word “lust” is obsolete today, as it is used here, since the present day usage confines its meaning to an immoral desire. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

- a. **The lust of the flesh** can be defined as the craving to please oneself in a way that immoral—opposed to God. Flesh can refer to the physical or anything that is not spiritual.
- b. **The lust of the eyes** can be equated with coveting—the “evil craving” to have what one sees.
- c. **The boastful pride of life** is the constant pursuit of exalting self.
- d. **All of these are evident in the life of unbelievers.** We see it all around us. However, loving the world should not be characteristic in our lives. However, we will be tempted to get drawn into the world’s system. John is encouraging the believers to be separate.

3. Jesus gives us a window into understanding what it means to be of “the world” as being those (and that) opposed to Him.

John 15:18-21

“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.”

4. Paul reminded the Corinthians not to be part of the world.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

*“I will dwell in them
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.”*

¹⁷ *Therefore*

*“Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you.”*

¹⁸ *“I will be a Father to you,
And you shall be My sons and daughters,
Says the LORD Almighty.”*

5. Paul instructed the Corinthians not to keep company with sexually immoral people, but he didn't mean those who are of this world, but with those who call themselves Christians but live like "the world".

1 Corinthians 5:9-11

I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

6. **The world walks in darkness. We are light. If we walk in love, we will not behave as the world behaves.**

Ephesians 5:1-12

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

7. **Because we live in the world, it is very easy to get caught up in it.** For our own sanity, we need to remember that this world is not "it". We are in the world, but not of the world. We seek a city whose builder and maker is God.

Hebrews 11:13-16

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

8. **Paul tells us to not be conformed to this world**

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 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.

- a. **We are transformed by renewing our minds, by changing the way we think.**

*2 And do not be conformed **syschēmatizō** to this world, but be transformed **metamorphoō** by the renewing **anakainōsis** of your mind **nous**, so that you may discern **dokimazō** the will **thelēma** of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Mounce*

- b. **The way to not conform is to be transformed by renewing your mind.**

- c. The world system is held captive by its thoughts and ways of thinking.
- d. We are not prisoners of our thoughts!
- e. We can control our thinking.

Philippians 4:8-9

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

18 Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

- 9. There will be an individual called the Antichrist who will stand in the temple defiling it and claiming to be God. This individual is yet to come.
- 10. Then there are those who exalt themselves as some sort of savior—a false christ.
- 11. There are also antichrists who can rightly be called such because they are opposed to Christ.

As to the term "Antichrist," Vincent says that "the absence of the article shows its currency as a proper name. The distinction between a false Christ (pseudochristos) and an antichrist (antichristos) is that the former is a pretender to the Messianic office, whereas the latter is against Christ, not pretending to be Christ, but proposing to do the work of Christ." Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

His word on the subject of a false Christ is as follows: "The pseudochristos does not deny the being of a Christ; on the contrary, he builds on the world's expectations of such a person; only, he appropriates these to himself, blasphemously affirms that he is the foretold One, in whom God's promises and men's expectations are fulfilled. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

That is, the antichrists did not have their source in the Mystical Body of Christ composed only of true believers. They were merely members of the visible, organized church on earth. They did not partake of the divine life animating the members of the Body of Christ, made up of true believers. All of which means that an apostate is an unsaved person who has mentally subscribed to the doctrines of the Christian faith and who then rejects those doctrines while still remaining within the organization of the visible church and posing as a Christian. John argues that had these antichrists

belonged to the Body of Christ, thus possessing divine life in company with true believers, they would in that case have remained with these true believers in matters of doctrine. But, he says, they departed from the doctrinal position of the Church so that it could be shown that they did not belong to the company of the saints. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.0

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. 21 I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

12. Perhaps as a means of comfort, but clearly with the idea of antichrists being among them, John assures the believers that they each individually have an anointing from God and know the truth.
13. He then clarifies how to know the difference between the truth and a lie: Jesus Christ is God, separate but one with the Father. If someone claims to know the Father but then denies the Son, that person does not have the Father.
14. We might find this obvious, but in light of John's Jewish heritage, this is a stunning statement. One cannot have the Father without confessing the Son.

The particular word for "know" here is not ginōskō, "to know by experience," but oida, "to know absolutely and finally." The antichrists, being unsaved and thus devoid of the Holy Spirit, do not have that ability. This ability to know the truth gives the saints the ability also to detect error. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

The denial therefore is that the Person called Jesus was neither God nor man, and that on the Cross He did not offer an atonement for sin. Present day Modernism denies the deity of Jesus of Nazareth and the substitutionary atonement He offered on the Cross, while subscribing to His humanity. Modernism is branded here by John as "the liar."-Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

The definite article appears before the word "antichrist." John says, "This one is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son." Here we have present day Unitarianism with a vengeance. The Jews denied the same thing in the first century. Our Lord asked the Pharisees, "What do you think concerning the Christ (Messiah)? Whose son is He?" They answered, "The son of David." Our Lord asks, "How then does David in (the) Spirit call Him Lord? (kurios, "Lord," the Greek word used in the LXX to translate the august title of God, Jehovah). If David therefore calls Him Lord, how is He his son?" Our Lord was pinning down these false teachers, these Unitarians, to an admission of the two Persons of the Trinity, God the Father and God the Son. They believed in the One God who manifested Himself as the Jehovah of the Old Testament, but they refused to believe in the deity of Jesus of Nazareth and His relation to their

God as Son of God. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

He says: "Everyone who denies the Son, not even does he have the Father." That is, the Modernist who professes to worship the God of the Bible, and who at the same time rejects His Son as very God of very God, does not sustain a saving relationship to the God he professes to worship. He is not His child, not a Christian, but an unsaved individual. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

15. **He was speaking of those who were not of the truth.** "As for you" is addressing the believers who know the truth. What truth? It is the truth that Jesus is the Christ. He instructs them to abide/to stay in that truth.
- This is to imply that Christians will be tempted to stray from the truth. "The world" will do its best to distract us, to lie to us, to deceive. We have a responsibility to abide in the truth.
 - When we abide in this truth, we will abide in the Son and in the Father.
16. **Abiding in Jesus happens when we BELIEVE in Him (as the Son/the Christ).**
17. **When we keep in mind that "abiding in Him" means to continue believing that Jesus is the Son of God, we can better understand John 15:1-8.**

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away (airo)

ah'ee-ro

A primary verb; to lift; by implication to take up or away; (lifts us);

and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides(meno)

men'-o

A primary verb; to stay (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy): - abide, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand,

in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you

will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

25 This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

18. Abiding in Him; that is to say, continuing to believe in Him gives the promised eternal life, not just in the future, but from now on into and throughout eternity.

1 John 5:13

*These things I have written to you who **believe** in the name of the Son of God, that you may **know** that you have **eternal life**, and that you may **continue to believe** in the name of the Son of God.*

25. this is the promise—Eternal life shall be the permanent consummation of thus abiding in the Son and in the Father (1Jo 2:24). -Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary

26 These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you. 27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

19. Verse 26 demonstrates that John still has in mind those who are trying to deceive the true believers. He repeats that true believers have an anointing which we received from the very one who abides in us. These deceivers set themselves up as someone we NEED in order to know the truth. They have “special knowledge” above Scripture and above the truths John had taught them from the beginning. He is comforting those who might fear these likely intimidating teachers. They don’t need to listen to them. They have the Son and the Father. If they continue to believe in the Son (abide in Him), they will know the truth.

John 8:31-32

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

“But as for you, the anointing which you received from Him remains in you,” teaching that the Holy Spirit who is that with which the saint is anointed, stays in that person forever. We have the same truth brought out in James 4:5, “The Spirit who has been caused to take up His permanent residence in us.” The verb is katoikizō, the prefixed preposition Kata, the root meaning of which is “down,” giving permanency to the act of taking up His residence. David could pray, “Take not thy Holy Spirit from me” (Psalm 51:11), since the Spirit came upon an individual in Old Testament times for the period of that person’s ministry, and left him when that ministry was over, without affecting his salvation. But in New Testament times, the Spirit is in the believer to stay. Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

"Teach" is in the present subjunctive, emphasizing continuous action. The translation reads, "and no need are you constantly having that anyone be constantly teaching you." This does not set aside the usefulness and necessity of God-appointed and equipped teachers in the Church (Eph. 4:11, "teaching pastors," Acts 13:1), but merely means that the saints are not at the mercy of these Gnostic teachers or at the mercy of any teachers, for that matter. No teacher, even a God-appointed one, is the only and ultimate source of the saint's instruction. He has the Holy Spirit and the Word. And in the case of saints who are subjected to the teaching of Modernism, their court of appeal and refuge is the instruction of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

20. **"You abide in Him", according to Wuest is a command.** When we are commanded to do something, the implications are: 1) That we are ABLE to obey the command, and 2) We have a choice NOT to obey. So, again, what is he commanding them to do? Abide—continue to believe in Him. Simple. Don't be distracted by the world and don't be deceived by those who deny the Son.

The words "ye shall abide" are present imperative in the Greek text. This is not a predictive future, but a command. "Him" refers to the Lord Jesus. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Volume 2.

21. **It is important to note that the phrase "abide in Him" is frequently taught to mean to maintain or improve our relationship with God through the constant awareness of "sin in our lives", through "getting forgiveness" for those sins, through daily prayer and Bible reading (in the obligatory sense), and through holy living.** Instead of holy living and a desire to pray and learn from the Bible being a RESULT of believing/abiding in Him, many teach that they are a REQUIREMENT of abiding in Him. Remember, Jesus said that IF we abide in Him, we will bear much fruit and NOT that if we bear much fruit, we will abide in Him.

28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

22. **Only when we understand that to "abide in Him" means to continue to believe in Him, can we decipher verse 28. "Little children, continue to believe in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming."**

1 John 3:22-24

And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³ And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. ²⁴ Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

23. **“If you know that He is righteous”, in other words, if you believe that Jesus is the Son of God—the Righteous One—again, if you are a believer...then you also know that those who are born of Him practice righteousness.** Again, this is not saying that IN ORDER to be righteous a person must practice righteousness, but that those who do know Him will practice righteousness.
24. **It makes no sense for someone who knows that He is righteous to live any other way.** As John wrote in verse 2:5-6, **“But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”**