

Whatever Happened to Worldliness?

God commands you to not love the world

What is “the world?”

The world used here is the word is *kosmos*, from which we get cosmonaut and cosmetics. In its simple sense it means “what is well assembled or constructed from its individual parts.”¹

Here as in many of John’s usages it signifies “mankind organized in rebellion against God. ... [H]e is thinking of the source of opposition to God and the temptation to sin...”²

“...[I]t is used primarily to describe the *corporate consciousness* (emphasis author’s) of the people of this word who are in rebellion against God’s authority. *Kosmos* is what binds together the unbelieving world. It is a global mentality that remains a powerful unspoken force in the lives of mankind. It molds vastly different people groups into one entity which lives out its existence on earth under the domain of Satan, *unified against God*.

How is a Christian not part of the world?

Christ and his kingdom are not of the world (John 8:23; 18:36).

In divine love Christ has come to save it (John 3:16-17).

But the cosmos knows neither him nor God (John 1:10; 17:25). ...it really meets him with hatred (John 7:7).

The *Kosmos* has a leader, a ruler whether people know that or not, Eph 2:2; 1 Cor 4:4.

Christ and the cosmos are thus opponents (John 14:27; cf. 1 Jn. 4:4; 5:18-19).

Salvation history is a struggle between Christ and the cosmos, and the evil one who rules it (1 Jn. 4:3; 5:19).

The cosmos will turn its hatred on believers (John 15:18-19; 17:14; 1 Jn. 3:13).³

¹ Kittel, Gerhard, and Friedrich, Gerhard, Editors, *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1985, p. 460.

² Marshall, I. Howard, *The Epistles of John*, NICNT p. 142.

³ Kittel, Gerhard, and Friedrich, Gerhard, Editors, *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1985, p. 463.

Genuine believers are in the world as Christ was (Jn. 17:11; cf. 9:5), but, born of God, they are no longer of it (John 17:16).

When reconciled and redeemed, the cosmos ceases to be cosmos; it is the kingdom of God ... the new heaven and earth. Christ comes into the cosmos to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15); the saved are taken out of the dominion of darkness and put in the kingdom of the Son (Col. 1:13). Believers ... true life is no longer in the cosmos (Col. 2:20). The cosmos is crucified to them and they to the cosmos (Gal. 6:14).

Believers are not to be conformed to the thinking and ways of the kosmos (Rom. 12:2; cf. Jms. 1:27). To be its friend is to be God's enemy (Jms. 4:4).⁴

What does it mean, "love not the world?"

Here the word "love" means "to be attracted to something and to want to enjoy it: the thought is of appetite and desire..."⁵

God wants you to see why this is an important issue

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John 2:15b.

Love for the world and love for the Father are incompatible. Love of the world and love for the Father are in direct opposition to each other and mutually exclusive.⁶

Jesus put it this way: "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other," Matthew 6:24.

A person will either serve his lust for what the world offers, or he will serve a holy desire to please God.⁷

***The heart always drifts towards what it values, Matt 6:21. "Without exception, a person will be led throughout life by what he cherishes most."*⁸**

⁴Kittel, Gerhard, and Friedrich, Gerhard, Editors, *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1985, pp. 463, 464.

⁵ Marshall, I. Howard, *The Epistles of John*, NICNT p. 143.

⁶ Marshall, p. 143 and Gingrich, *1,2,3 John*, p. 44.

⁷ Gallagher, Steve, *Intoxicated with Babylon*, p. 26.

⁸ Gallagher, Steve, *Intoxicated with Babylon*, p. 26.

Some may say that the believer should not love the things of this world *too* much, but John says that we are not to love the things of the world *at all*.

The devil's ceaseless aim is the deception of Christ's followers, causing them to believe that they can live for the world's rewards and still maintain a viable walk with God at the same time.⁹

John is not warning weak believers of this threat, 2:12-14.

You can go to church and love the world!

One who habitually loves the world is not a genuine believer!

God wants you to understand the corridors of temptation, 1 John 2:16.

For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.

The cravings of sinful man, KJV “the lusts of the flesh”

This is all the corrupt physical desires of mankind.

Never forget that when we are dealing with any pleasure in its healthy and normal and satisfying form, we are, in a sense, on the Enemy's ground. I know we have won many a soul through pleasure. All the same, it is His invention, not ours. He made the pleasures... All we can do is to encourage the humans to take the pleasures which our Enemy has produced, at times, or in ways, or in degrees which he has forbidden...¹⁰

Included in this realm is living for pleasure, entertainment, amusement and comfort

The lust of his eyes

This has to do with temptations that enter through the eye-gate, the eye is often the source of desire. It has to do with wanting something he sees.

⁹ Gallagher, Steve, *Intoxicated with Babylon*, pp. 28, 29.

¹⁰ C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*, pp 41, 42.

The boasting of what he has and does. KJV, the pride of life

This is the pride of possession, the love of display the drive for power, the drive to be successful

The believer must be on guard and always vigilant for this matter.

What are some signs I love the world?

I regularly relax, find my pleasure under its influence, TV, movies, media, magazines, etc.

I spend much of my energy on obtaining its objects, status and praise.

I spend my discretionary time, talents and treasures there.

I spend more time at the golf course or on the lake than I do serving God or his people

I am in huge credit card debt, a sign of impulse buying

I rarely if ever read my Bible

I find God boring, not delightful.

I have no idea when the last time was I made a significant change in my life for Jesus Christ.

I do not remember the last time I won a battle over my fleshly desires.