

A. Introduction

1. the text: ¹⁵ Love not the world, neither that which is in the world. If anyone should love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ Because everything that is in the world: the lusting desire of the flesh and the lusting desire of the eyes and the boasting of life, does not have its source from the Father, but rather its source is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away and its desires; but the one doing the will of God abides unto eternity.
2. the three tests of fellowship that we have looked at are
 - a. Test 1: how do I ...
 - b. Test 2: do I ...
 - c. Test 3: do I ...

B. Two Focal Points for Love verse 15

1. the three kinds of love in the Bible
 - a. 'eros'
 - b. 'philadelphia'
 - c. 'agape'
2. the wrong focus is
3. the right focus is (see I John 2:5, Romans 5:5, Matthew 6:33)
4. Matthew 6:24: these two foci are

C. what 3 things may the word 'world (*Greek, kosmos*)' describe ...

1. ... as in Acts 17:24?

2. ... as in Psalm 49:1, John 3:16?
3. ... as in John 15:18 (also 1:10-11)?
4. Which one is in view here and in I John 5:19?

D. Their Two Sources verse 16

1. love for the world has as its origin ...
2. love for God has as its origin ...
3. Psalm 2:2; as a result these two are totally ...
4. Luke 6:44; their true character is shown by ...
5. rather than resultant behaviour, this verse addresses ...
6. the three major components of the secular world view
 - a. lust of meaning
 - b. lust of meaning
 - c. pride of meaning

E. Their Two Ends verse 17

1. what reminder do we need when the world becomes too attractive?
2. what happens to all our human purposes, plans, programs when they do not include God (I Corinthians 3:15)?
3. Romans 2:2; the love of God will also involve ...

F. Conclusion

1. to increase our love for God, we need to ...
2. James 4:4; friendliness to the secular world view makes one ...
3. Colossians 3:1; we should seek ...

A. Introduction

1. The Rich Man

- a. A rich man bought an island so he could get back to the beauty of nature and solitude. Friends convinced him to build a golf course so he'd have something to do - then a hotel to house the guests who came to play golf - then a shopping mall for the wives of the golfers - then a hospital to care for emergencies – then a police station to take care of the crime that developed. Soon, he could no longer see the natural beauty of the island or the ocean, nor could he hear the sounds of nature or the crashing of the ocean waves. He had put too many things in the way. —{2}.
- b. our text this morning is about how we can put too many things in the way and fail to have the fellowship with God which He intends for every Christian

2. the Text: ¹⁵ Love not the world, neither that which is in the world. If anyone should love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ Because everything that is in the world: the lusting desire of the flesh and the lusting desire of the eyes and the boasting of life, does not have its source from the Father, but rather its source is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away and its desires; but the one doing the will of God abides unto eternity.

3. let's pause to recall the context of 1 John, that God has saved us from sin in order that we may have fellowship with Himself;

- a. John has given 3 tests whereby we can verify if we have that fellowship:
 - (A) Test 1: how do I deal with sin?
 - (B) Test 2: do I obey God?
 - (C) Test 3: do I love God's people?
- b. In today's verses John warns of an insidious enemy that would interrupt this fellowship that God has made available — that of misplaced love

4. On this text and the subject of the proper focus for love, let us look at these verses this morning as follows:

- a. Two Focal Points for Love
- b. Their Two Sources
- c. Their Two Ends

B. Two Focal Points for Love verse 15

- 1. "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." (NAS)
- 2. Love is an amazing and wonderful thing
 - a. I am a hopeless romantic – believe it or not!
 - (A) in the study of the book of Ruth which we just finished in the Sunday Bible class, this became obvious
 - (B) and I was not alone
 - b. but when we speak of love we have to keep in mind that the Bible speaks of 3 kinds of love:
 - (A) there is *eros*, the love between a man and a woman, the aspect of marriage which entails passion

- (B) there is *philadelphia*, the love between siblings and friends, of genuinely liking another person
 - (C) and there is *agape*, love in its noblest form, caring for and seeking the best for another; the love shown by God in sending His Son into the world
- c. and it might be tempting to suppose that having that last form of love makes it right in itself and that 'it covers a multitude of sins' – well that is a misinterpretation of truth
- (A) for that is the word used here
 - (B) 'do not *agapate* the world'
 - (C) for *agape* love to be noble it must have its proper focus
3. there are two possible foci for our love
- a. one is the world: this is illicit love, forbidden love
 - b. the other is the '[love of the Father](#)' which echoes what John has just said in verse 5 about the obedient Christian: "[... but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:](#)" (NAS)
 - c. now that phrase '[love of the Father](#)' or '[love of God](#)' is very striking: it encompasses both the responsive love of the believer for the God who has saved him as well as the loves that He puts in our hearts that we should love as He loves, that we should love whom He loves, "[...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.](#)" (Romans 5:5 NAS)
 - d. so the proper focus for *agape* is God and His people – God tells us to focus on Him ... "[But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness ...](#)" (Matthew 6:33 NAS)
4. these two foci are mutually exclusive, says this verse
- a. there is an essential dichotomy between the Christian and the world; a separation, a division, an antagonism
 - (A) like oil and water, they just do not mix
 - (B) as supposedly exists between cats and dogs
 - b. this is proven in the Christian in the war between
 - (A) his old nature, which the Bible calls the flesh
 - (B) his new nature, which is called the spirit
 - c. if we love the world, we cannot love God: "[No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.](#)" (Matthew 6:24 NAS)
5. what is this world, this *kosmos*, that we are not to love?
- a. *kosmos* means things that have been arranged in order
 - b. when you make cosmetic changes to something – a photo, a report, a face – it means you put it into order so that it is presentable to others
 - c. this word to describe different things
 - (A) first there is the created, natural world ... '[God ... made the world and all things therein ...](#)' Acts 17:24
 - (1) for those of you enjoy God's creation
 - (2) that is not what is meant here
 - (3) for God looked on His creation and it was good

- (4) and it declares His glory incessantly (Psalm 19)
- (B) then there are the people who populate this earth
 - (1) Psalm 49:1 calls these 'inhabitants of the world'
 - (2) these are not what is meant here
 - (3) 'for God so loved the world (*kosmon*) that He gave His only begotten Son ...'
- (C) no, it is a third meaning of 'world' that is intended
 - (1) it is the world as an order, an arrangement, that arrays itself against God
 - (2) it is the world view engendered by Satan and by sin, with its philosophies, values and attitudes that leads people to go on rebelling against God
 - (3) in our Scripture reading today, Jesus talked about this world: 'If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.' (Jn 15:18 NAS)
 - (4) and is described so poignantly in John 1:10-11 (which, by the way, seems to use *kosmos* in all these meanings): "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him." (NAS)
- d. how would it be possible, then, to love this world, a world completely in the grip of Satan — "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." (1 John 5:19 NAS) — to adopt this world view of those philosophies, values and attitudes which rejected Jesus Christ and crucified the King of glory?

C. Their Two Sources verse 16

- 1. "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." (NAS)
- 2. the reason that these two focal points of love are incongruous, totally opposed to one another, is that they have totally differing sources; origins at opposite poles
 - a. the love of the world has its source in the devil
 - (A) sometime look at the temptation by Satan in the third chapter of Genesis and compare it to this verse
 - (B) I think you will find there all three items listed here
 - b. and the other source is, as we have already noted, from God, by the Holy Spirit which He gives to Christians
 - c. the world – the things it desires, the things it values, the attitudes it espouses – is totally opposed to God and Christ
 - (A) "The kings of the earth take their stand, And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed:" (or, Messiah; Psalms 2:2 NAS)
 - (B) it is anti-Christ; it is anti-Christian
 - (C) in fact, these words introduce John's description of anti-Christ, which we will examine next week
 - d. Jesus tells us in Luke 6:44, "For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush." (NAS) and nature of the love directed to these two points of focus is demonstrated by the fruit that they bear.
 - (A) John has more to say about this in chapter 3
 - (B) but in this verse we can see what sort of fruit is borne by those trees which are rooted in this world order
 - (1) lust of the flesh

- (2) lust of the eyes
- (3) the pride of life
- (C) let us consider these

3. the 'lust of the flesh,' of the human nature inherited from Adam
 - a. now it is easy to use these verses to preach against worldly behaviour; to set out rules for Christian living
 - b. Pastor Ray Stedman, a noted expositor of a generation ago, comments on this passage, "Surely this is a much abused passage ... used to denounce everything from buttons to beer, from opera to operations, from the waltz to the watusi. Anything that is currently the subject of Christian disfavor has been crammed into this passage, labeled 'worldliness,' and denounced. I am not interested in adding to that list. I am not interested in denouncing, but understanding." ⁻⁽³⁾. (preached, November 20, 1966)
 - c. when you look at verse 16 you find it deals not with the behaviour but with the attitude and desires that are at the root of behaviour; the old, human nature that is going to be with us until we are taken from this human body
 - d. and it has been pointed out that this 'lust of the flesh' includes those very natural, human desires – to eat, to sleep, to play, to read, to ... you name it – to do things which are not in themselves wrong or sinful
 - e. which would not cause any of you to remark on how bad behaviour they are if you saw them in others or yourself
 - f. but that the desire for them surpasses the desire for God; no, indeed, but that the desire for them is not part of our desire and love for God: as Augustine phrased it, "For too little doth he love Thee who loves anything with Thee, which he loveth not for Thee." ⁻⁽⁴⁾.
4. the 'lust of the eyes,' all those desires inflamed by what we see
 - a. C. H. Dodd defines the lust of the eyes as the "tendency to be captivated by the outward show of things, without enquiring as to their real value." ⁻⁽⁵⁾.
 - b. as Stedman remarks, such lust can be crude or cultured
 - c. frowned upon or accepted by society or the church
 - d. The famous pastor of Westminster Chapel in London, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, said, "The best way of defining this is to say that it is the kind of man or woman who lives according to false values. They judge by appearances ... by outward show." ⁻⁽⁶⁾.
 - e. do not set your values
 - (A) by the external ... but by the internal
 - (B) by the apparent ... but by the real
 - (C) by the seen ... but by the unseen, invisible God
5. the 'pride of life,' the arrogance aroused by OUR possessions, OUR prowess, OUR pursuits, OUR plans
 - a. the word 'life' encompasses not merely being alive, but all of those goods and abilities in which we can take pleasure
 - b. this is something that can be really insidious
 - c. because it can be disguised by such fine sounding terms as 'human dignity' or 'self esteem' or even 'serving the Lord'
 - d. the story of a young seminary student illustrates this ⁻⁽⁷⁾.
 - (A) A senior student in a Christian college was known for his excellent grades and his effective Christian service. He was out preaching each weekend and God was using him to win people to Christ and challenge Christians to greater

growth in the faith.

- (B) Then something happened to this young man. His preaching was no longer effective, his grades began to drop, and even his personality seemed to change. Noticing that something was wrong, the president of the college called him into his office for a conference.
- (C) "There has been a change in your life and your work," the president said, "and I wish you would tell me what is wrong." The student was evasive for while, but then he told the story. He was engaged to a lovely Christian girl and was planning to get married after graduation. He had been called to a fine church and was anxious to move his bride into the parsonage and get started in the pastorate.
- (D) "I have been so excited about it that I have even come to the place where I do not want the Lord to come back," he confessed. "And then," he added, "the power dropped out of my life and ministry." This young man's plans, as good and beautiful as they were, came between him and the Lord.

D. Their Two Ends verse 17

1. "And the world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever." (NAS)
2. What would help us remember this?
 - a. Long ago an Eastern monarch, plagued by many worries, harassed on every side, called his wise men together. He asked them to invent a motto, a few magic words that would help him in time of trial or distress. It must be brief enough to be engraved on a ring, he said, so that he could have it always before his eyes. It must be appropriate to every situation, as useful in prosperity as in adversity. It must be a motto wise and true and endlessly enduring, words by which a man could be guided all his life, in every circumstance, no matter what happened.
 - b. The wise men thought and thought, and finally came to the monarch with their magic words. They were words for every change or chance of fortune, declared the wise men ... words to fit every situation, good or bad ... words to ease the heart and mind in every circumstance. And the words they gave the monarch to engrave on his ring were:
 - c. "THIS, TOO, SHALL PASS AWAY." ⁻⁽⁸⁾.
3. now here is a fact that is given to us
 - a. a fact that will enable us to keep our two feet firmly planted upon the foundation of truth
 - b. the purpose for a man, woman or child
 - (A) to turn from this world; from its values and attitudes
 - (B) to turn to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour
 - (C) is that we might not perish with this perishing world
 - c. so, having them come to Christ, having been made part of the family of God by the new birth as one of His children
 - (A) why would we then seek to go back to the world from which we have escaped? ... been given deliverance?
 - (B) Paul warns of those who follow such a course: "each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is *to be* revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. ... If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire." (1 Cor. 3:15 NAS)

4. so, we see that the opposite of loving the world

- a. a transient, ephemeral world whose values are perverted
- b. a foolish love for it is fleeting; the opposite
- c. is that of having the love of God dwelling in our hearts by His Holy Spirit
- d. which will be made abundantly evident because we desire and love to do the will of God, a will that Romans 12:2 tells us is 'good and acceptable and perfect'

E. Conclusion

1. Pastor Don Horban, in a message whose title captivates me, "Putting your eggs in a Perishable Basket," ⁽⁹⁾ suggests that there are two ways to seeking to love God more
 - a. the first is to stir up feelings in our hearts by constant efforts, which is likely to fail because it is incomplete, dealing with only one part of our being: our emotions
 - b. the other, the only sure way, is to eliminate the competing objects of affection.
 - c. if God puts *agape* love into our hearts by His Holy Spirit, then making any other thing the object of that love is idolatry, pure and simple
 - d. James tells us this is spiritual adultery: "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." (James 4:4 NAS)
2. you are going to be attacked this week on every hand
 - a. newspapers, magazines, radio, television, advertising
 - b. with a message, with a world view
 - c. that is totally antagonistic to the mind of Christ
 - d. which will creep insidiously into your thoughts
 - e. and seek to replace God in your affections;
 - f. take, then this admonition from God's word
 - g. "If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." (Colossians 3:1 NAS)

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, www.holwick.com. Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. From a message, “The Truth of the Light” by Rev. Robert AuBuchon, Kerux sermons #13994
3. “The Enemy Around” by Rev. Ray C. Stedman, Peninsula Bible Church – Kerux sermons #5536
4. “The Confessions” by Augustine, Book X, [xxix] 40
5. From a sermon, “God’s Sworn Enemy” by Rev. David Keithly – Kerux sermons #11369
6. From “Fatal Attraction” by Rev. J. David Hoke – Kerux sermons #2628
7. From “The Love God Hates” by Dr. David Clark – Kerux sermon #10940
8. “Light from Many Lamps” edited by Lillian Richler Watson – Kerux illustrations #3326

9. Pastor Don Horban, Cedarvale Community Church, Newmarket, Ontario – Kerux sermons #11622