

# Sermon 9 – 1<sup>st</sup> John

## Dealing with the Flesh

*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.*  
– **1 John 2:15-17 NKJV**

*15. Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 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. 17. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.* – **1 John 2:15-17 NIV**

### **ESV 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 in possessions—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.*

**John is addressing the issues that face the Christian in his process of living the life in Christ. We all have issues. Christians have issues. John says deal with the issues. Here they are...**

1. Deal with Sin (1:8-10)
2. Deal with the Devil (2:12-14)
3. Deal with the World (2:15-17)
4. **Deal with the Flesh (2:15-17)**
5. Deal with Evil People (2:18-29) May 4
6. Deal with One Another (3:11-18) May 11, Mother's Day
7. Deal with Doubts (3:19-25) May 18
8. Deal with Idols (5:21) May 25

**The question this morning is, “Are you in love with God and His things, or in love with this world and the things of this world?”**

**A discerning question is, “How do we know if we are in love with the world or in love with God and the things of God?” Is there a litmus test?**

**This lust for the world is the passionate pursuit of something (and anything in this world) that is more important than God.**

This morning we tackle the meat of the passage before us. John outlines the basic ingredients of the world and worldliness...

**“All that is in the world...”**

- The lust of the flesh...(desire to gratify flesh)
- The lust of the eyes...(desire to have, own, possess)
- The lust of ego...(desire to be king)

In each case – flesh, eyes, or ego, lust or desire is at the core. We are all made up of flesh and blood. Check it out. Pinch yourself. Pinch your neighbor. We all bleed blood, feel flesh. Feelings are part of this human life. We are in the flesh, but we don't have to live after the flesh.

Commercial advertising has captured this truth better than believers. Almost, if not all, advertising appeals to the world's values, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride (or lust) of life and or ego. Advertisers don't go after the brain. They go after the flesh – the baser instincts of man. Face it “Ugly Betty” will not sell beer.

Lust, when given in to, is covetousness, and all covetousness is idolatry. Nothing illustrates this like the New Testament word “mammon.” Mammon is a personification of covetousness. The word is Aramaic. There is no direct translation of it. It is a Jewish concept that riches and accumulated things are demonically personified.

Lusts are anchors, or pitons of the soul. They tether us here. They glue our attention, our affections, and our focus on the earthly rather than the heavenly. They make us earth bound, captivated by stuff, things, money, people, and pleasures.

We each own our own lusts, our own propensities, our own weaknesses, our own attractions to worldly desires. Desires are normal and expected. Lust is deep craving for what you cannot and should not have. It is not yours to have but you want it anyway.

Poor people can be as in love with money as rich people. It is a matter of love and attention. What do you spend you time pursuing, wishing for, longing after, craving, pining, and whining for? Homely and/or introverted people can be just as addicted to the fantasies of the flesh as glamorous movie stars. Unsuccessful people can be just addicted to the pursuit of success as the rich and famous.

It is the consumer mentality of the carnal nature which is at fault. (See James 4:3)

James 4:3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures (lusts). 4. You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely?

## **Introduction**

Review – Eight Deal With It!

Words – 17 times “kosmos” is used in 1 John, 59 times in Gospel of John

**Watchman Nee**, *Love Not the World*

### **Word #1: “Love not” – Agapao**

Set your heart upon = love, lust - passionate desire – Ps 62:10

Set your affections on things above not on things below.” – Col 3:2

### **Word #2: “The World” - Kosmos**

“World” – dark sinister world controlled by Satan (ie) Darth Vader

World dominated, hijacked, controlled by the prince of this world the spirit that is at work in the children of disobedience. The mind behind the system –

- a) hostile to God
- b) rebellion against laws of God
- c) doesn't like God in memory
- d) under God's judgment
- e) disordered world system.

## **All that is in the world...**

### **1. Define word “lust”**

**2. “The lust of the flesh...” (craving to gratify flesh)**

**3. “The lust of the eyes...” (craving for things, possess)**

**4. “The lust of ego...” (pride of possession, achievement)**

The end result of flesh and eyes being satisfied

## **I. Define the Word: “Lust”**

Like love, sets its heart upon the cravings of its old sinful nature.

Passion – cravings, appetites –

1939 epithumia – concupiscence, over-desire, forbidden desire

3806 pathos– inordinate affection, affliction of mind & emotions

3730 hormone– violent impulse, sexual drives

3715 orexis– orgasm, to stretch self out to, give self over to

*licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, profligacy, prodigality*

James 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

*All that is in the world...*

## II. “The lust of the flesh...” (desire to gratify flesh)

**sarx** (people’s sexual desires, lust after beauty, sex, body parts)

### The Battle

Galatians 5:17 For the **flesh lusts** against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

### The Old Sinful Nature

2 Peter 2:13-22 “lustful desires of the old human nature.” More, more... never satisfied.

**Eyes of Man** – lusted after, dress, sexual allurements, cleavage,

Proverbs 27:20 Hell & destruction are never full; so **the eyes of man** are never satisfied.

**Look on a Woman** - Matthew 5:28 **If a man lusts** after a woman in his heart he has already broken the command. Every sin is birthed in the heart first, then in the flesh – adulteries don’t just happen

*All that is in the world...*

## III. “The lust of the eyes...” (desire to have, own, possess)

**ophthalmos** (possession desires, riches, money, greed)

(ie) Gullum’s attitude in Lord of the Rings. - “Mine, my precious!”

### Mammon

Matthew 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 the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

*“Riches are called by the name of a devil, namely Mammon, for Mammon is the name of a devil, by which name riches are called according to the Syrian tongue.” - Peter Lombard*

### Deceitfulness of Riches

Mark 4:19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

### Love of Money

1 Timothy 6:10 For **the love** of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

*All that is in the world...*

## IV. “The lust of ego...” (pride, desire, satisfaction of achievement)

The end result of flesh and eyes being satisfied, pride of owning

*Pride over looks, brains, GPA, SAT, IQ, physical prowess, talents, achievements, etc*

*Has the idea of bragging about accumulated wealth and achievements.*

- Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take **thine ease**, eat, drink, and be merry.
- Psalms 62:10 **If riches increase**, set not your heart upon them.
- Deuteronomy 8:17 And you say in your heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand **hath gotten me** this wealth.

# Conclusion

## APPLICATION AND RESPONSE:

The question this morning is, “Are you in love with God and His things, or in love with this world and the things of this world?” A discerning question is, “How do we know if we are in love with the world or in love with God and the things of God?” Is there a litmus test?

This lust for the world is the passionate pursuit of something (and anything in this world) that is more important than God.

Are you in love with God  
or in love with your world?

**THERE IS A BATTLE FOR AFFECTIONS.**

What preoccupies your idle thoughts?  
Is it sexual fantasies?  
Is it things or money?  
Is it success or fame?

Listen to Isaiah when he saw the Lord...

5. "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and ***I live among a people of unclean lips***, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." 6. Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." (Isaiah 6:5-7)

Our response should be like that. "I live in Sodom and Gomorrah... I am a man of unclean eyes, and I live among a people of unclean eyes..." **Touch me and take away my love of sinning! Until that truth gets a hold of you, until you and I cry out in our tainted sinful lives in a tainted and sinful culture, we will never have victory.**

**Revelation 3:16** So, because you are lukewarm--neither hot nor cold--I am about to spit you out of my mouth. 17 You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. 19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.

**Closing Song:** *I Repent, Making No Excuses*

# I Repent

I regret the hours I have wasted  
and the pleasures I have tasted  
that you were never in.  
And I confess that though your love is in me,  
it doesn't always win me when competing with my sin.

## CHORUS

And I repent, making no excuses.  
I repent no one else to blame.  
And I return to fall in love with Jesus.  
I bow down on my knees and I repent.

I lament the idols I've accepted,  
the commandments I've rejected  
to pursue my selfish end.  
And I confess I need you to revive me,  
put selfishness behind me and take up my cross again.

And I return to fall in love with Jesus.  
I bow down on my knees and I repent.

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