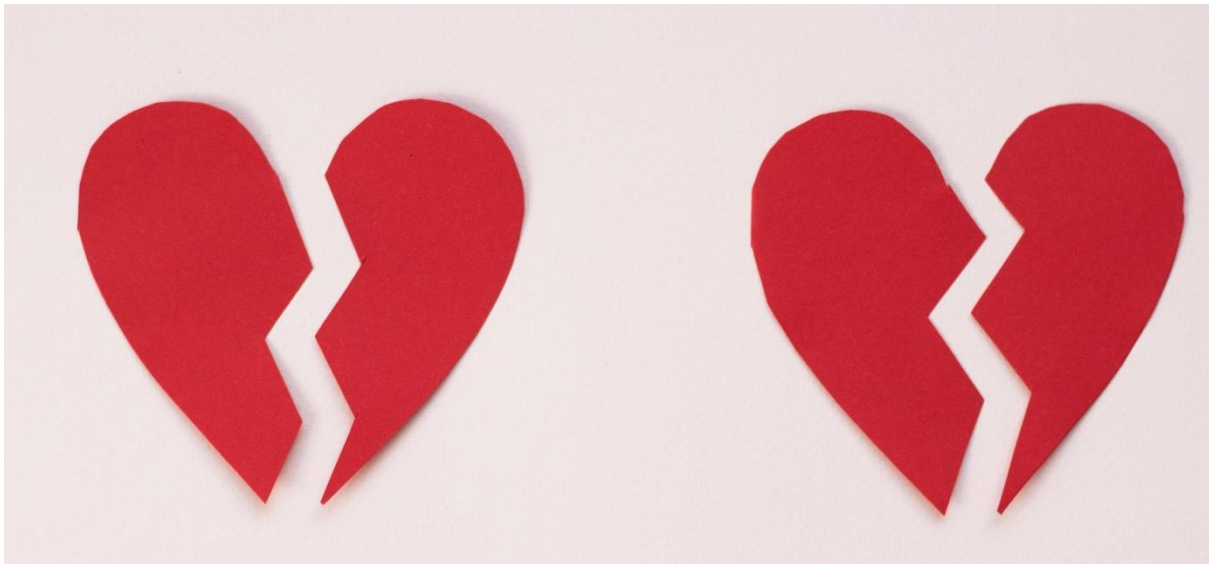


I Am Not in Love with You Anymore!

A Bible Study Lesson of The Mt. Zion Church

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We Have the Vision to be a LEARNING Church!
We are Seeking the Face of God!

Introduction: Our lives as Christians can at times seem routine in the sense that discipleship is a repetitive process. Each day we must choose to study God's Word, pray, and simply be God's people. The mundane, day to day, behaviors do not come with fanfare or hoopla. In fact, discipleship and living for Christ is like fitness training. You simply have to keep following the process and then somewhere down the line you wake up and you are better than you were at the beginning. As with all training, one must commit to some behaviors and reject others. A person must, in many ways, fall in love with their new lifestyle and fall out of love with their old lifestyle. Today's lesson is designed to help students understand that our love is to be towards a Godly life which rejects the temptation to love the world.

Key Verse: 1 John 2: 15-17

Supporting Verses: Matthew 6: 24, Joshua 24: 14-15

Scriptural Context

The second chapter of 1 John begins with an amazing idea. The writer suggests that we can live purposefully with the goal of not sinning. "I write these things to you so that you won't sin." Yet, he quickly follows with the idea that at times we do fail in our efforts but we have an advocate sitting next to God who pleads for our forgiveness. He, Jesus Christ, is the continuous payment for our sins and is a reminder that we who have accepted him as savior are safe from the eternal punishment that we deserve.

When the writer gets to verse 15, he brings in the idea that each of us must determine where we have our loyalties. The decision we make defines our true identity as followers of Christ or as people who have the label of Follower but not the lifestyle of a follower. With that in mind, the writer brings to the readers' attention that we must decide to tell the world "I am not in love with you anymore!"

I. Do Not Love the World

Loving the world is the idea that we have an inclination and desire for the order, structures, and ideas that are not of God. The world in this sense does not mean the rocks and dirt and trees we see. Rather it relates to systems and ideologies which we see presented to us. We are to hate and reject these ideologies and to cling to and love the commands of The Lord.

For example, in scripture a situation was recorded about how God's people treated their enemies. In Matthew 5: 43-45a we read:

⁴³ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

⁴⁵ That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven:

The system of the world had (and to some degree still has) defined the way people should treat one another. This system revolved around an eye for an eye attitude. Jesus came and redefined the system of treatment and declared that mankind's attitude of justice was far less than His. Jesus' attitude of justice and treatment of enemies was to show love and forgiveness and those who approached those who were enemies in this manner represented their Father in heaven. Those who followed the man-made system of treatment of people did not reflect God.

What are some other ideologies that we can identify as not reflecting Godly behavior? Think in terms of how the world defines certain categories:

Category	World view
Family	
Money	
Power	
Honesty	
Love	
Achievement	

II. Do Not Love Sinful Things

The writer continues the theme of rejecting the world's ideologies and attractions by presenting the reader with the formula that Satan uses to trick people into behaviors that do not honor God. These three, exactly match the temptation presented to Eve in Genesis 3:6.

In Genesis 3:6, Eve makes a worldly choice based on a lie that she believed. Notice the consistent approach Satan uses to entice us to question God's purpose and plan for our lives.

1 John 2: 16	Genesis 3: 6
Lust of Flesh	It was "good for food"
Lust of Eyes	It was "pleasing to the eyes"
Pride of Life	It was "desirable for wisdom"

Satan uses these same tricks to tempt us to love what is emotionally or physically pleasing rather than what is pleasing to God. Consider the last time you were upset with someone in an uncontrolled manner. The behaviors you displayed provided an emotional release and a level of pleasure as you mistreated someone for their actions rather than in love corrected them and restored them (see 2 Timothy 4:2 and Galatians 6: 1). The temptation to sin in many ways gives us immediate pleasure but puts us at odds with Christ.

The conclusion we must make is to hate the world and all that it offers. We must not have a longing for the lusts that the world offers. Are you a person who will do anything to satisfy your flesh, your eyes, or your pride? These are hindering you and I from attaining the purpose God has set for us. We are as attempting to serve two masters which Matthew 6: 24 declares is an impossibility.



Which of the three lusts is the most difficult for you? _____

(flesh, eye, pride)

What do you need God to do to help you in this area? _____

III. Do Not Love What is Temporary!

The concluding thought for the verses of this lesson center on the idea that our goal should be for what is permanent rather than temporary. We are reminded that what we see around us and what we emotionally feel and experience is temporary.

To love what is temporary is to put our hopes and future in some possession, some person, some position, or some power that will be here today and gone tomorrow. John wrote, do not love temporary things because the world and its lusts will eventually end. We struggle with the future because we are so tied to our now and what we desire for now. God, however, is focused on our future as well as our now. He gives us now to use our lives in service to Him and others. He also gives us now to accept Jesus' salvation so that when the here and now ends (either Jesus returns or we die) our future will be secured.

Those who love the world will find that they put their hope and trust in something they could not hold onto nor cause to last longer than its appointed end. The world has no permanence. A Godly life does have permanence and when the world ends, those who loved the Lord will have an eternity to celebrate God's glory.

Conclusion: The love of the world is an option that Satan presents to us as something to be attained and held onto. The world is not the physical planet, rather it is the systems and possessions which we see in action daily. God's word teaches us that we must make a choice. Either we will love the world or we will love The Lord. In the words of Joshua, when he challenged the Israelites to commit to God fully, each of us must "Choose to love God or choose to love the world." Choose you this day! As for me and my house, we are not in love with the world anymore.