



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

1 John 2:15-17

"Squandered Love and the Abiding Life"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] 1 John chapter 2 verse 15 through verse 17 and reading the three verses. The apostle has been talking about such things as walking in the light, loving one another, keeping his commandments, and now he introduces a new thought, but one that is not only a Johannine thought, but is also a New Testament thought.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

All who have ever read these verses have thought of two incidents in Scripture. I'm not going to say anything much about them in the message. I mention them now. The temptation in the Garden of Eden has often been likened to the words of the Apostle John in which lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life were more or less involved. The same thing, as one might expect, in the temptation of our Lord. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life have been thought by many to be involved. The relationship is not quite as close as it might appear at first

glance, but there certainly are some similarities to them, and we should bear them in the background at least of the message and our time together when we pay attention to these verses in exposition.

May he bless the reading of his word, and let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Our Heavenly Father, we thank Thee, and we praise Thee for the revelation that Thou hast given us in Holy Scripture. And we thank Thee also too Lord that in Holy Scripture Thou hast reminded us that in the creation about us there is also a revelation of the eternal power and deity of our God, and so we look out, and we worship Thee for the greatness and the power that are manifested in this remarkable creation of which we are a part.

Most of all we thank Thee for the revelation made to sinners in the word of God reminding us of our need of divine grace and then unfolding to us the provision of divine grace in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son who suffered and died under the judgment of God for us that we might have life.

We thank Thee, and we praise Thee for the accomplishment of the work that was for our good and our eternal glory. We praise Thee, Lord today on this, the Lord's Day as we remember him and all that he has done for us. We thank Thee for the privilege of the meeting together, of the enjoyment of Christian fellowship in a world that is hostile to Christian things. We thank Thee for the support that we receive one from another and for the love that we enjoy and also that we give to others. We pray Lord that we may experience more and more of Thy grace and more and more become conformable to Thy purpose, the purpose of the ages.

We ask Thy blessing upon us as we meet and sing together and listen to the word together. We especially pray for those who unable to be here with us and those whose names are in our calendar of concern. Lord we pray for each one of them. We ask if it be Thy will that Thy wilt answer positively the petitions that are being made for the individuals, for their family and friends, for the physicians who minister to them. And we pray Lord that if it should please Thee, that there may be healing.

For the whole church of Jesus Christ, we pray. For Believers Chapel, we pray and it's ministries, and for our country, we remember our country and ask Lord again Thy hand may be upon us for good. And now bless as we sing as we hear the word of God. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] The subject for today in the exposition of 1 John is, "Squandered Love and the Abiding Life." J. C. Ryle said in one of his most popular books, *Holiness* that, "if one desires right views of holiness, one must begin with sin." The reason for this is that there would never be any desire for holiness, there would never be any desire for salvation if we did not know why we needed grace. And it's in exposition of human sin that we learn that we need grace.

One could also say that if Christians desire to overcome then one must know one's enemies. There are many enemies, but three of the most significant are mentioned by the Apostle John here when he speaks of "the lust of the flesh," "the lust of the eyes," and "the pride of life". The Christian life, contrary to the opinion of some, is a life that involves continual and irreconcilable war, to use a phrase from the Westminster confession of faith, and a continuous and irreconcilable war within and without. The apostle talks about those conflicts that we have within and the conflicts that we have without expressing that idea.

In fact this classical threefold chord of "the lust of the flesh," "the lust of the eyes," "the pride of life" which is never easily broken, incidentally, appears here and poses some questions to us as we think about them, such as, "What is the world?" There are different views that Christians have had of the world. Some have thought of the world as easily represented by a list of taboos, which we draw up. And if we draw up a list of taboos and don't do this and don't do that, then we have effectively defined the world, which we are to avoid, or we may think of the world as that which is to be avoided in such a way that the kind of life that we suggest as unworldly after all we should be unworldly, not other worldly, but the unworldly life is a life of eccentricity oddness. We have these extremes. The taboos on the one hand and then on the other hand the eccentricities of definitions of what it is to live a spiritual life.

Another question that someone might ask is, "Is there really such a thing as worldliness? Should a Christian be concerned about that? I often think as I think about worldliness and Christianity that in our day, generally speaking, worldliness is one of the things the apostles talked about but which we avoid and occasionally we live in such an affluent age, occasionally worldliness is identified with legalism. That is that we should exhort a body of believers such as you are and urge you to be unworldly. That in many of our Christian societies would be regarded as a legalistic kind of exhortation.

I don't think the apostles would have felt that way at all. They say many things in the New Testament and our Lord himself is usually the one from whom they got their exhortations. They say many things that specifically speak of worldliness. Listen to just one of them. Paul says, "I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your body as a living sacrifice holy acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service and be not conformed to the world." So it's a perfectly legitimate and apostolic exhortation for anyone to say to a body of believers, "Do not be conformed to the world."

One must, of course, answer questions like, "What is the world? Why should we avoid the world? Why should we avoid conformity with the world?" and give reasonable scriptural answers to that question. But worldliness is something the apostles speak most strongly against, and surely when the Apostle John says, "Love not the world," he's talking about the same thing, for the simple reason that many of us are at times we are tending to love the world and the things that are in it. I think if we were to just think about it for a moment and ask ourselves the question, "Why must the church avoid conformity to the world?" one of the first things that would come to our mind as we thought about our Lord's life and ministry would be the things he said to the apostles in the upper room.

For example, as it's described in the Apostle John's Gospel in the 15th chapter of his book when he describes what our Lord says with reference to the world one thinks immediately of what the apostle writes here. Jesus said to those apostles, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me

before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

So the position of all believers is that they have been chosen out of the world by our Lord's sovereign intent. What a contradiction it would be then for Christian to be worldly when he has chosen us out of the world. We are to be unworldly, I say not other worldly, but unworldly. That is the things that characterize the world should not characterize believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. One can look through Holy Scripture and see numerous illustrations of this from the first book of the Bible on.

I think, particularly, of one of the great worldly believers, who appears in the book of Genesis in the earlier chapters and whose name is well-known to those who have read the book of Genesis, Lot. Lot, Abram's nephew, was a worldly believer. The New Testament said even when Lot was in Sodom and sitting at the gate among the important people in the city, that his soul was vexed by the ungodliness of Sodom. But nevertheless he was there. The first indication of the nature of Lot is found when there was a strife that arose between the herdsmen of Abram and the herdsmen of Lot. I have a Southern Baptist friend, and preacher, who says that's the beginning of the Baptist church. Now he said that, I didn't say that. [Laughter] But he said it with a smile on his face. Well you know what happened, Abram said, "Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren." The whole land is before us. God has brought us in it. So you take whatever part of the land you want, and I will take what's left. And so the Scripture presents it so vividly.

"And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan" (it goes on to say) "and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly. (Now Abram was left with what

was left, and after Lot left, God spoke to Abram, and he said, "Abram, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

What a picture of Lot the worldly believer pitching his tent toward Sodom and the wickedness that resided in Sodom and waiting of God to speak, Abram discovered the whole thing had been given to him.

Now that is just the beginning of the story, but you know that when the difficulties came in Sodom and finally God found it necessary to destroy the city, word came to Lot of the coming destruction. And we read, "And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, "Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city." But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law," thus the worldly believer. The person a true believer whose life is worldly has lost his testimony. He seemed as if he were mocking.

The world will not believe the testimony of a worldly Christian because the worldly Christian, by his life, denies his lips on what he says. And you know the end result of this is described in the 19th chapter and the degradation to which Lot fell is the final word concerning him, but a man who belonged to the Lord who was a worldly Christian. One thinks of the history of the Christian church and when Christianity finally became the religion of the Roman Empire, it was then that the testimony of the early church was largely lost for when the world enters the church and becomes identified with the church, then the testimony of the church is fruitless.

Well now, let's turn to some answers to the question, "What is the world?" Is there such a thing as worldliness? And why must the church avoid conformity? The apostle begins with the prohibition of love for the world. In the opening lines of verse 15 he says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." One can see if you reflect on what has been written before, he has exhorted his readers to walk in the light. He has exhorted them to love the brethren. And he's also said keep the

commandments. So if anyone were to ask the question, "What is walking in the light?" Well he has defined it up to this point as keeping his commandments. He has defined it as loving the brethren. This is to walk in the light, to walk in the light is to keep the commandments, to love the brethren, and now he further defines it as not loving the world. So love the Father, love the brethren, but don't love the world is the summary of what John is saying.

This comes very hard to our generation, we're an affluent society. You are an affluent people sitting out in the audience. Oh, true there may be some people who are more affluent than you are, I don't guess that any of us, or maybe few of us have known of the most affluent society in our world, but surely we would be regarded, you would be regarded as an affluent group of people. To say, don't love the world is the kind of exhortation that really comes home to us if our spiritual eyes are open.

Now you can see that the apostle speaks of two perils. First of all, "Love not the world." Now we said when we were in chapter 2 and verse 1 and 2 that the term world has different meanings in Scripture. You can see a difference here in verse 2 he said, "And he is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." That's a world of individuals. But when he says here, "Love not he world," he's not talking about the world of individuals, we know that's so because God calls upon us as believers to love the world of individuals, that's what he did. So if we were to define world here as the world of individuals, we would naturally ask the question, "Well then does not Scripture say, 'God so loved the world?'" Might find an easy way out, but it would not be a biblical, and certainly an exegetically unsound way out.

The term world then has different meanings, and we need to understand that and when we read Scripture, we need to ask ourselves what is the meaning of the term. Sometimes it refers to the universe as in John chapter 1 verse 10, sometimes to life on earth, as it does later in chapter 3 and chapter 4, chapter 3 verse 17, chapter 4 verse 17, but here the world refers to fallen human nature acting itself out in the human family. That's what the world is, or to put it in other words to help to

explain that, but words that mean the same thing, the world, to John here, refers to the prevailing spiritual and moral order of human affairs. And this system of things he regards as hostile to God, alien from his love, and therefore radically evil and doomed to perish.

The world system about us, from the time that Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, let me be more accurate, from the time that Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, from that time on there was introduced into our society the world as a system of organized rebellion against God and that's the world of which John is speaking. He doesn't condemn the world as God made it and rules it by his providence, but he condemns the world as lying in the power of the evil one, which he will specifically state in the 5th chapter of this book.

The whole world lies within the evil one. The world is that filled with lust and vanity whose desires are contrary to those born of the Father, the world that knows not God that crucified the Lord of Glory, upon whom God had laid the burden of its, the world's sin. So the world, we'll call it fallen human nature acting itself out in the human family. Or to put it another way, the reign of the carnal mind which is the possession of everyone of us. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God and the reign of that mind is in John's mind, the world. It's everywhere. It's in Soviet Russia. It's in England. It's in Scotland. It's in Spain. It's in Australia. It's in the United States. I was waiting for someone to say, "Amen." But it's in the United States. It's in every human society, the reign of the carnal mind. Let us never forget that.

So John says, "Love not the world," this hostile system about us. Look at the history of any nation and particularly nations that thought they would be founded as believing peoples, as the kingdom of God upon earth in some way. And they all are penetrated by the evil one and belong to what we know as the world.

The second peril John speaks about is the things that are in the world. He talks not simply about the world, but the things that are in the world. The world is a subtle snare, far more so than the flesh in the minds of many. Many lusts of the flesh, men despise themselves, and there are those who might be very much ashamed by acts of the flesh. But the world of which John speaks, this



worldly lust is quite another thing because often worldly lust looks imminently respectable. Is it not what is done by everybody of consequence? Is it not characteristic of our society? It's to covet what society likes, what is thought by those of light and leading and sweetness to be the proper thing for men and women to do. That comes under John's statement love not the world neither the things that are in the world.

Now one might ask this question at this point, "Well John that's quite a prohibition, 'Love not the world neither the things that are in the world,' but what is the ground of this prohibition which you have offered as a command?" Well he goes on to say, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The first thing he says is that loving the world and loving the Father are incompatible. These two loves just do not go together. They are contradictory, very much like our Lord speaks in Matthew 6 and verse 24 when he says, "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." And we could add as an application of that you cannot serve God and the world as that hostile world system opposed to the things of the Lord.

So the first thing that he said is that these two forces are incompatible. If you love the world, the love of the Father is not in that individual, for the world hates the Lord. That's what Jesus said in the upper room, he said, "The world will hate you because the world hates me." So when the world hates the Gospel and hates the believing man, I mean the believing man, the man who is walking in some measure at least according to the Bible, the world always responds negatively to that individual in his walk. What's happening is the world is continuing its quarrel with Jesus Christ that forced the world to crucify the Savior that they hated. So Jesus told his disciples, his apostles, and others as well, do not be surprised if in your attempt to follow me you will incur the wrath of the world. Every believing man who has ever given forth a testimony of purity has found from the world hostility. It has to be. These two operate upon fundamentally different principles. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Now John goes on to give further justification of this incompatibility between the two. He states in the 16th verse, "For," I love these little words that enable us to follow an author's train of thought, what a scholar might say is his argument. So he states in the 16th verse, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," it's almost as if he sums up everything in the world about us as finding it's place under the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, "is not of the Father, but is of the world." Here's the origin of things that are worldly, the origin of hostility. What a trinity of evil, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life. You ever felt the force of these things? One commentator calls them, this trinity of evil. He calls them, "the harpies of the soul." That's true. They are the evil harpies of the soul, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life.

Now what does John mean by, "the lust of the flesh"? I wish he were here to define his terms. I hate to define his terms for him of course, but to the best of my skill, I would say what he means is the appetite of our senses when they are out of order, or the appetites of the senses in excess. Now it's plain for example, that God has given us food. We have to have food. Our bodies created by him must have food. But there is a difference between food and foods, and an individual can become so attached to food that it can be said that he is guilty of the lusts of the flesh. If they assume such a control over him that he becomes a slave to them, the finest of foods, then worldliness is the sin that describes that.

Marriage, given by God as a divine institution, as within marriage, the normal desires are the desires created by God and which are designed by him to fulfill the relationship. But then sensuality out of order, sensuality in excess leading to other forms of sin, to mention only adultery, fornication and so on, what we have is a proper appetite out of order, in excess contrary to the word of God.

Who doesn't love beauty, beauty of landscape, beauty of garden, beauty of proportion, but even that can become lust of the flesh, music, my how our society has attached to itself music. Walk the isles of the airport and individuals walking up and down with things upon their head, listening to music. Everybody has some attachment to music, music and entertainment. We are in the age of

that kind of entertainment. There isn't anything wrong, so far as I can tell, in appreciating good music, but one can enjoy music out of order, in excess, and the appetites of the senses out of order, in excess in connection with beauty and music belong to worldliness.

Who doesn't enjoy the good things of life? But what do you make of the good things of life in your life? Are they the controlling things of your life? Are they the things that really motivate you? Are they the things that really make up your life? Let me put it negatively, when you compare the enjoyment of the good things of life, music, beauty, and such things, do those times and do those things take more of your life than the time you spend by your bedside in communion with the Lord God, in the reading of the word of God, in occupation with our Lord Jesus Christ? If they do, be honest with yourself. Be honest. John speaks to you. He surely speaks to me, as I think of my life, I think, "John you have really put your finger upon one of the problems of my life. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, even good things have become bad because I have made them that way by leaving out my Lord. Not being occupied with him, occupied with all these things that express really finally just self-indulgence.

Well that's about enough of a message for a morning like this isn't it? But John goes on and he says, "The lust of the eyes." I gather this is something else. He's not talking about the lust that leads to adultery. But this is just the lust of the eyes, the lust that is satisfied by mere sight. That is, I look off and I see that I have just driven into the parking lot of Believers Chapel and my loud sounding Cutlass Ceria, diesel to let you know I'm there, of course, and you know, and then someone drives up alongside me in a lovely new Cad [Laughter], or Mercedes, or one of the other things that, Martha likes Jaguar [Laughter]. I'll never satisfy her until I have a Jaguar, I'm afraid, I'm afraid. But anyway, I look off and before I can even control my inner manner, I'm saying to myself, "Wouldn't it be nice to have that?" the lust of the eyes. No I don't go over and ask him for his keys or anything like that, [Laughter] I just would like to have it. I want it. Now I don't really want that, I don't actually, but there are a lot of things that I have said I want. And that's the lust of the eyes that John is talking about, our neighbor's possessions, the things that he has that I don't have, that I envy.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and to put it more practically, have you ever felt like this? You have a neighbor or a friend, and a Christian friend even, and at times they irritate you, and surely it is because of flaws in their character [Laughter] that they hate you, and so something bad happens to them, and there's a kind of feeling down within. Well, it should have happened to them and not to me. And you're kind of glad it happened to them before you realize what's happened, and then you have to get down on your knees and ask for forgiveness, the lust of the eyes, lust satisfied by mere sight, envious, grudging, and greed and then also the little sense of satisfaction when things happen to others but don't happen to you.

You've never felt that way. Never been in business, you businessmen and something happens to a fellow that you don't really like and it kind of pleased you as a Christian, amazing. Lust of the eyes, I assume would cover such things as pornography. That is you're not going to engage in adultery, you're not going to engage in any of the sensual sins suggested by that, but you're just going to enjoy looking. That world is hostile to the Lord who died that you might be saved.

And finally the pride of life, the last weakness John mentions. To have done with the world's seemings, to be simply what I am. How nice it would be if I could really be sure that I am just being what I am, that there is no pretentiousness, no hiding. Preachers are susceptible to this too, all of the ways in which we subtly boast of the ministries with which we are associated, subtle boasting. I think of our Lord, the devil took him up to the pinnacle of the temple. Cast yourself down, you'll be able to fulfill Scripture and people will be able to say signs and wonders, like John Wimber, are performed by the Lord. He said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thy serve." So the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, they are, my Christian friend, three evil harpies of the soul. And they dwell within each of us.

There is a lovely story. It's a true one. Oh incidentally, we could have other subtle ways of expressing these things, I won't mention them, but you know you can even fall prey to them when you're doing ostensibly what is scriptural. R. C. Chapman was a gospel preacher who came from a very wealthy family. His father was a very wealthy man, had every kind of convenience you could

have. He had a carriage with horses and drivers. He grew up that way. He went out, preached for many years when the time came for him to retire, he actually could have retired on a large country estate like one of those manor homes like you see when you go to England. He determined he was not going to parade his wealth. So he went to the little city which was near where he had grown up, and he bought himself a small home, like a laborer in a factory might have on a back street. He said afterwards that he never got over his pride. See it's even possible for us to be worldly in our self-denial.

But this story was a story of Thomas Chalmers, it's supposed to be true. He was writing in the Scottish highlands and he was on, this was in the 19th century, he was on a carriage that was driven by a man in a box seat and by horses. He said they were riding in the highlands and they were coming around a curve and as they came around the curve, there was a steep cliff. The horses took fright panicked began to pull at their traces and he said he was sure that they were going to be plunged over the cliff to their deaths. And the driver reached back and pulled out his whip and began to beat the horses unmercifully and he managed to get around. And Mr. Chalmers said when he was able to speak he asked him, "Why in the world did he beat those horses so unmercifully?"

He said, "I had to give them something else to think about." [Laughter] And as he was going home, he thought of that and thought of how it pertained to spiritual things and he conceived one of his greatest sermons. And he entitled it, "The Expulsing Power of a New Attraction," and talked about how the love for Christ is the answer to love for the world. When an individual Christian is so occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ then the attraction of the world wean from him. I recommend that to you, I believe that with all my heart that that is true. Occupation with Christ delivers us from our occupation with the world. Frankly, the more I'm occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ, the less I want a Jaguar. [Laughter] The less I want anything in this world because the greatest thing in this world is the love of Jesus Christ for lost sinners such as I am.

Well there are I say other subtle forms of the worldliness. I won't talk about them. They're characteristic of the academic life, and they're characteristic of preachers who have an academic

background, who like to start off by saying, "Now existentialism is an unbelieving philosophy, but it can teach us one thing," and then we present the Gospel in such a way that we have in effect brought the world into our presentation of the Gospel when the Scriptures said what he was trying to say all along without identifying it with the world.

The second ground of the prohibition is stated in the final verse, "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever," now, what a magnificent way to conclude John, the transitorieness of the world. In the 8th verse he has said, "Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is passing, and the true light now shining." And now he says the world is passing away, using the same verbal form, incidentally, and the world is passing away and its lust, that is the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, it's passing away, but he that doeth the will of God is abiding and abides forever. What a magnificent statement.

Rome, in which John wrote this epistle, that great worldwide empire, magnificent in its glory and greatness, the apostle said, is passing away. Rome is like the darkness of verse 8. It's going, and the reason John knew it was going is because he'll say in a few moments in the 3rd chapter, the purpose the Son of God was manifested for was that he might destroy the works of the devil and he's accomplished that purpose and those works shall be destroyed.

Well of course it's like D-Day when the allies made their beach head on the continent on the way to victory, which was not recognized until V-day. D-Day, June 6, 1944, V-day, May 8, 1945, but the victory was won, the mopping up was necessary. My Christian friend, D-Day has taken place at Calvary. V-Day is coming, and it is sure to come at the Lord's Second Coming when things are settled. And so, the region where God's will is not done, the world, is disappearing. And the time, when God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, is on its way.

So why must I love the world? It's passing. It's on its way out. The ground of it has already taken place. It's just a matter of time. Why should I occupy myself with that which is passing when that which is coming is on the way? Of course, when I think about this I think of a person loving

the world. Can you really think of it in the light of Scripture? What is there about the world that's great, nothing really? And the reason I think probably that we don't see that is because the world's constantly changing, and so by the time we get ready to point out that the world is worthy of no one's worship and praise and high regard, the world has changed, because the world is always changing.

But the time is coming when the world won't change anymore. And then you'll see how foolish it is to be involved with the world. When is that coming? Scripture tells us that everything is going to be cast into the lake of fire. That's when it's coming, thrown into the place where the fire is not quenched and there worm dieth not, the world and all. Then how foolish will we look loving the world? So the very thing that makes the world attractive to us is that it is never the same. It's changing, what we might call its endurableness, as someone has said. But ultimately it will find its home in the desolate unfurnished prison house of eternal justice. So love the world, no I don't want to love the world, hostile to the Lord God, constantly changing, ultimately designed to be put in Gehenna.

But now look at how he concludes that sentence, he says, "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." You'll notice he doesn't say, "He that will do the will of God will abide forever." No, No, it's he that is doing he will of God now, is abiding and he will abide forever. In other words, the individual who, not loving the world, but loving our Lord and his word, and seeking by the help of God by the Holy Spirit to do the will of God, and in measure, as he's been talking in this book, in measure, doing the will of God, is already partaking of the world that is to come.

More perfectly, when the will of God is done in earth as it is in heaven, universally, but look, my Christian friend, you can enjoy that now, if you do his will. You abide now and you abide forever. That's the kind of life we believers enjoy by God's marvelous grace. The world is the foreign element in this earth. God's created the earth for great things, but the world introduced, when Adam sinned in the Garden by Satan, is the foreign force. The world is to go, but the earth remains, and those who do the will of God remain. They abide forever. Magnificent picture isn't it,

great contrast, then, loving the world, the lust of the world versus doing the will of God. One must draw the line within. That's where it begins by God's grace to do his will. Two-fold movement on in the earth, some things are moving away, some things are staying. Judgment already taken place, disillusion is underway. As John says in verse 18, in a few moments, "Little children, it is the last time." It's not too far away, perhaps now nineteen hundred years after John said that we are nineteen hundred years closer to the consummation of the will of God for this earth.

You, who believe in Jesus Christ, may your affections be affections for him, may by his grace in the study of his word, in the fellowship and communion that you may have with him today and tomorrow and the days of this week, may they so occupy you that the world may lose its attraction for you. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pretentiousness of life, may the Lord God deliver us from them.

If you're here today and you've never believed in our Lord Jesus Christ, let me remind you that there is a way for you to escape the judgment of the world. It is by what Christ has done for sinners. Through the blood that was shed on Calvary's Cross, atonement has been made. If God in his grace has brought you to the sense of your own sin, and therefore your guilt and condemnation, you may find deliverance through the death that Christ died for sinners, for sinners, all who recognize that they are sinners. You're eligible for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. We invite you as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus to come to him and trust in him. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, help us by Thy grace to find deliverance from love of the world, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pretentiousness of life. O God deliver us from that kingdom of evil indwelling our souls by virtue of the Father. May O God, by Thy grace, we be motivated to be occupied with him loved us and gave himself for us with the Lord Jesus Christ. Deliver us Lord, as believers, from those things that are stumbling blocks to the communion that we desire and should



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have with Thee. If there be some here Lord who have not believed, at this very moment, touch their hearts, may they turn to Thee, receiving the free gift of eternal life through the awful sacrifice...

**[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]**