

Study Guide



1 John 2:12-17 "Do Not Love the World" Sept. 25, 2016

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

In this section of 1 John, the author once more addresses himself directly to his readers. First, he addresses them in turn as those whose sins are forgiven, who know him who is from the beginning, and who have overcome the evil one in order to affirm and encourage them (2:12-14). Second, he urges them not to love the "world" or what is in it because it is passing away. Instead, it is implied, they are to do the will of God because the one who does so "lives forever" (2:15-17).

For more in depth study check out the following pages...

NFCC Children's Ministry Change

Please see page two for a letter from Dena Howard about the changes starting on September 25th for our Children's Ministry.

Walk Prayer & Missions

October 12-22—South Sudan
December 18-28—South Sudan
For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org

Calendar

September-November—[Women's Bible Study](#)
September 25th—Kids 1st-3rd Worship with parents
September 25th—Worship in the Annex

NFCC Children's Ministry Change

Dear Church Family,

Beginning Sunday, September 25th, our Kids' Community class schedule will be changing. All children 1st grade and up will attend worship with their parents/families for the music portion of the service. **This means the children in 1st – 3rd grades will not go to class at 10:30 AM until after they have worshiped with their parents.** If your child attends the 9:00 AM Core Class, you will need to pick him/her up at the end of the class and take them to worship with you. As Tracy mentioned in his letter that was published in the study guide this week, The Annex (previously known as the youth room) will house an additional live worship each Sunday at 10:30 AM. Parents may attend either service with their child(ren). **Since the goal is for families to worship together, we are not allowing children to attend one worship service while their parents attend a different one.**

If a parent is teaching or serving during the 10:30 AM service and the child does not have a parent to sit with, then their teacher will sit with them in The Annex service until time to leave for Bible Study. Parents should walk his/her child to The Annex to check-in with their teacher before going to teach/serve.

At a designated time before the pastor begins preaching, children up to 3rd grade will be dismissed from the service and will then go to their class for Bible Study. All older elementary aged children (4th & 5th graders) will remain in the worship service with their parents or designated pew parent (if his/her parent is serving). We will have extra helpers in the hallways to help the children arrive safely to their classes. This will be messy at the beginning until everyone gets adjusted to the new format.

We will continue to have special music for the K4 and kindergarten classes. Kids' Worship will be held in Room 8 where the adult class meets at 9:00 AM.

I know that some of the older children will be disappointed to no longer have Kids' Worship at 10:30 AM, so we encourage them to come to **Kids SHINE!** We will do the music they love during SHINE!! (Sundays – September 18th – October 23rd- 4:00 – 6:00 PM) Children in kindergarten – 5th grade are invited to attend.

Looking forward to the blessings that will come from families worshiping together!

In Christ,
Dena Howard
NFCC Children's Ministry

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Jesus?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[Father You Are All We Need](#)":

Our father who in heaven reigns
How great and mighty is your name
Your kingdom come your will be done
Now here on earth as is above
O give to us our daily bread
And keep our hungry spirits fed
May all our satisfaction be
In you whose grace has set us free

Give us hope give us faith
Help us trust in your guidance
From the depths of your grace
You have richly provided
Thank you thank you
Father you are all we need
Father you are all we need

Forgive us all our trespasses
As we forgive when sinned against
Though evil seeks to hide your face
We fix our eyes on you by faith

Give us hope give us faith
Help us trust in your guidance
From the depths of your grace
You have richly provided
Thank you thank you
Father you are all we need
Father you are all we need (repeat 2x)

We lift you high above all names
Your kingdom will forever reign
To you the glory and the power forevermore (repeat 2x)

Affirmation and Encouragement (2:12-14)

In verse 12, John addresses his readers as “little children.” On the basis of frequency, scholars understand the term to refer to all the original readers of this letter. In other words, John is not addressing three age groups: children, fathers, and young men. That sequence is rather unnatural. If John were addressing age groups, the order would be children, young men, and fathers. But if we take “children” in a general sense, then John appeals to two groups: fathers and young men. John first speaks to all of his readers and then to the fathers and the young men.

In reference to the above, John states to all his readers (little children), that “your sins have been forgiven.” **Because of our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, God forgives our sins once for all.** Our sins have been, are, and remain forever forgiven. Again in verse 13, John addresses his readers as “children.” John states that they “know the Father.” Because of Jesus Christ, all believers have come to know God the Father and have experienced his love and forgiveness.

Next, John addresses the “fathers” of the church twice (vs. 13, 14) and gives them the same message: “because you know Him who has been from the beginning.” In the broader context of the epistle, John repeatedly writes about the Father. He uses this expression to portray the close relationship between God the Father and his Son. The term “father” assumes sonship; with respect to God this fatherhood includes both the Son of God and the children adopted through him. We have natural fathers, but earthly fatherhood is only a faint reflection of God's fatherhood. Nevertheless, John appeals to the fathers, because they have gained spiritual knowledge of, and about, Jesus Christ. They have intimate knowledge of God's revelation in Jesus Christ (John 1:1). The Christian community, then, looks to the spiritual fathers for leadership, and they, in turn, must care for their spiritual children.

In verse 13, John also addresses the “young men,” or youth, of the church. He commends them for having “overcome the evil one,” which he repeats in verse 14 to indicate the significance of the truth. They have conquered the evil one, that is, Satan. They have repelled the attacks of the devil, have not joined Satan's camp, and rejoice in their salvation. They belong to Jesus and live in the light of his revelation. **They have stood firm in the face of temptation, for in their God-given “spiritual strength” and “God's word abiding in them” (vs. 14), they have overcome.**

Worldliness (2:15-17)

In verses 15-17, John now addresses his readers in a discussion of the believer's relationship to the world. When John speaks of the world, he uses the term in two distinct ways. In John 1:10, he uses the term in reference to the created universe; that is, life on earth. But John can also use the term (world) in reference to human society as controlled by the evil one; that is, the world in opposition to God. The latter sense is how John uses the term in verses 15-17.

This use of the term "world" is important to keep in mind in reference to the strong imperative found in verse 15 directed to those who walk in the light. Notice that the verse contains a contrast between the love of the world (or things in the world) and love of the Father. **Those who walk in the light cannot love the Father and the world at the same time.**

John is not telling us to hate the created order. No, John is here speaking of the world as fallen human society (1 John 5:19). That is what believers are not to love; that is, human society characterized by its darkness and by the fact that it is under the control of Satan. By this, John does not mean that Satan has absolute control, because God has sovereignty even over the Devil. But John does mean the world, as it lies in darkness, hates the light of God's word and prefers to live in the darkness where sin can go unnoticed without being exposed and subject to God's judgment. This is what we are not to love. If we love the fallen world in its fallen condition (not as Christ loved it, desiring its redemption), then we do not love the Father. The two loves, John says, are mutually exclusive.

In verse 16, John speaks in more specific terms about love of the world, or what is often called "worldliness." For John, worldliness is the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of possessions. These causes of worldliness for John are found within us, not in external objects. Worldliness is a mind-set tied to the unrestrained lust of the flesh. Worldliness is seen in the desire for ill-gotten gain, and in the pride that can go with accumulating much wealth or property. As John goes on to remind us, loving the world is the height of foolishness (vs. 17). As light comes into the world, and the darkness flees, we are given a hint of the day of final judgment. For John, the world as it lies under the control of the evil one, will pass away because on that day Christ will return and then every hint or trace of darkness will flee away in the light of Christ's coming at the end of the age. **What abides forever is the light, and what remains are those who walk in the light, and who abide in Christ as they strive by God's help to obey his commandments.**

Sermon Questions

What Does it Say?

1. To what three groups of people is John writing in this passage?
2. What does John say to the little children in verses 12 and 13 concerning why he is writing to them?
3. Why does John say he is writing to the Fathers in verses 13 and 14?
4. Why does John say he is writing to the young men?
5. What is John's command to the church in verses 15-17?
6. What two main reasons does John give why the church members should not love the world or the things in the world in verses 15-17?

Sermon Questions

What Does it Mean?

1. In verses 12-14 John is addressing "children", "fathers", and "young men". Do you think he is referring to physical age of people in the church or is he referring to different levels of spiritual maturity in the church?
2. How would you describe the tone of John's remarks about all three of these maturity levels in the church? Looking at all of these remarks together what message is John giving to this church?
3. What command does John give in verses 15 & 16? What reasons does John give in verses 15-16 for the command to not love the world?
4. What do you think John means by "the world"? Does it mean the created universe and all that is in it? What about John 3:16 which says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son..."? How does John describe "the world" in verse 16? Also please look at 1 John 5:19, John 17:11 and 15, John 12:30-31 to get a feel for what John means when he talks about "the world".

5. Look at Genesis 3:1-6 at the account of the Serpent tempting Eve. Can you distinguish the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life in the Genesis account?
6. Can loving God and loving the world co-exist (1 John 2:15 and James 4:4)? Why can't they co-exist according to verse 16?
7. Can you enjoy things in the world without loving them? Can you enjoy things in the world without having them come between you and God (1 Timothy 6:17, Luke 12:16-21)? How can you tell when your enjoyment of something has grown into loving it as an idol instead of loving God?
8. Let's meditate on verse 17. How is the world passing away? How are the worlds' desires passing away? How does the one who does the will of God abide forever?

Sermon Questions

How Does it Apply?

1. Are you in danger of loving God's gifts more than you love God? How can you determine if you love God's gifts more than you love God—what are the telltale signs?
2. What can you do to stimulate love for God in your life and what can you do to choke out your love for the world?
3. Many of us try to find ways that we can be friends with the world without compromising our religious beliefs. In other words we try to find ways to fit in with the world without violating God's Word. Is that a good and helpful endeavor for Christians or is that a very foolish and dangerous endeavor for Christians? Consider these passages. 1 Peter 2:11-12, John 17:14-18, John 15:18-20.

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in 1 John to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you lead your groups! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!

Model Answers

What does it say?

1. He is writing to "little children", "fathers", and "young men".
2. He is writing to the little children because their sins are forgiven and because they know the Father.
3. He is writing to the "fathers" because they "know him who is from the beginning".
4. He is writing to the "young men" because they have overcome the evil one, because they are strong, and the word of God abides in them.
5. John's command to the church is to not love the world or the things in the world.
6. Two reasons to not love the world are:
 - a. "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."
 - b. "the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever."

What does it mean?

1. It appears he is referring to different levels of spiritual maturity in the church? Look at how he describes the young men and fathers compared to the children.
2. The tone of John's remarks about all three of the spiritual maturity levels is positive and reaffirming. John is sending a message to this church that they are forgiven, they know God, and they are fighting evil in their lives.
3. John commands them to not love the world or the things that are in the world. He reminds them that loving the world and loving God are incompatible. They cannot co-exist.
4. John does not mean the created world and everything in it. He means the life of human society as organized under the power of evil. In verse 16 John says that the world is made up of "the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life." This is a description of human society organized under the power of evil. In 1 John 5:19 John says, "and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." In John 17 John says, "I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one". He said, "I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world."
5. The pride of life is seen in the serpent's statements like "you will be like God, knowing good and evil" and Eve saw that the fruit was desirable to make one wise. Eve saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes. This is an example of the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes.
6. According to verse 15 and James 4:4 loving God and loving the world cannot co-exist. This is because the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life (the things that make up the evil world system) are not from the Father. They are incompatible with God.
7. Yes God has made things for our enjoyment (1 Timothy 6:17)³, but they should take a subordinate place in our affections to God. If they take such a prominent place in our lives that they choke out our love and obedience to God, they become idols.
8. The things of the world—the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life do not last. They are passing away. After we strive for these things, we ask "is that all there is?" The things that we desired so much, when they are achieved, are not nearly as satisfying as we imagined. The one who does the will of God, who knows God, who has fellowship with God, who is forgiven, that person will inherit eternal life and abide in the presence of God forever.