

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:18-20**

### Chapter 30- What We Know

### 284 What We Know- Part 10

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WAOY Friday-Monday 11/21-24/08/Thursday Thanksgiving 11/27/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we are going to continue to look at the summary of all that we know- based upon this great Epistle of **1John**- so let's read **1John 5:18-20** again together:

**18** We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.

**19** We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of the evil one*.

**20** And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Now we are in the middle of studying how that in these three verses- the Apostle John is giving us a summary of all that he has taught in this great Epistle. And he begins each of these three verses with the phrase, "We know".

In these three verses- John wants us to know three things:

1. That the person who has genuinely been born of God does not dwell continually in sin
2. That those who are saved are truly born of God
3. That the Son of God has come and has given us knowledge of the one true living God.

And on the last broadcast- we were looking at the second Truth that John says that we should know and I want to continue that today- so let's read **1John 5:19** again together:

**We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of the evil one.***

Now we are right in the middle of examining what John meant when he said in this verse that the whole world lies in wickedness- so we are examining what is probably the most common and yet the most unknown sin that exists in our lives today and that sin is the sin of worldliness.

Worldliness is when the love and affection and devotion of our hearts that should only belong to God is stolen from God and placed on something that is temporary and that is passing away. Worldliness is more common today than it has ever been; it is more easily engaged in by believers and due to the fact that there is such bad teaching out there- in many areas- the sin of worldliness is actually being promoted as being a virtue and even a blessing from God. But please listen to what God said about this evil sin by reading **1John 2:15-17:**

**15 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.**

**16 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.**

**17 The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.**

Now there are several signs that warn us that we have crossed the line into worldliness. Those signs include always being too busy to study the Bible or to pray for any meaningful length of time; loving money; engaging in covetousness; and believing that more of this world's goods is a sign of God's favor- without a corresponding growth in holiness.

We can measure the degree to which worldliness has overtaken us by honestly examining what we love and what we spend time with because the Bible teaches from cover to cover that the human soul *cannot* love God and the world at the same time. It will *always* choose one over the other because God consciously made the soul to *exclusively* love and worship and serve only one object at a time. And any attempt by anyone at loving two things or worshipping two things or serving two things at the same time will always result in a schizophrenic life; a

diseased life; a fruitless life; a wasted life.

So we must choose; we must decide; we must *consciously* **abandon** one love for the other. Either you must abandon the world and love God or you must abandon God and love the world. But please understand that you cannot do both.

Billy Sunday, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Evangelist, once said,

You might as well talk about a ‘heavenly devil’ as talk about a ‘worldly Christian.’”

And as the Psalmist said in **Psalms 97:10a**

**Hate evil, you who love the Lord...**

Now the good news in all of this is that if you are a Christian, then you truly *do* love God- and Praise God for that! Have you considered what it means in your life that you have come to know the one true living God?; that you have come to know His forgiveness for all your sins; that you have come to experience something of the Father’s Love for you?

Then I encourage you to drink in what we have to offer here in this Church. Everything that we do here is specifically designed so that the Love of the Father will increase in your life while at the same time the love of the world will decrease. Get involved in one or more of the many Bible Studies that we offer here; Come and pray with us on Tuesday nights; Engage yourself in the Bible Reading Plan; go out during the week and sow the seed of the Gospel into the hearts of others; help us reach out to the local High Schools and Jails and Nursing Homes this year; go with us to the Hospitals and pray for the sick; help us to grow in Grace as we endeavor to hate sin and to love the Father and to not love this world.

Now as you read this passage, please do not make the mistake of thinking that John is calling us all to be monks in a monastery- he is not. The “world” that we are not to love here is the *system* of those creatures- men and demons- who oppose God- it is *not* the material Creation itself. *That* world- the world that God made- is very good. But to love the *other* world- the world system that opposes God- brings us into submission to the lusts of that world which always leads us into

sin.

Paul tells us in **1Corinthians** that we are to *use* the world- just don't be *captured* by it. And if we do that, then we can learn the secret of true contentment that Paul said that he had in every situation.

Jesus prayed in **John 17** that although we are *in* the world that we would not be taken captive *by* it- that we are not to be in bondage to it. That as Christians, we are not to be known for our selfishness; nor our indifference; but by active use of this world- for God's glory **alone**.

My dear friends, we are to love God first and foremost and to reflect that in our daily lives; in what we agree to do; in what we shun; in what we applaud; what we support; in how we speak and how we conduct our finances; and in all of life.

Even in our covenanting to disciplining ourselves in matters of unrepentant sin- whether that unrepentant sin is the worldliness of non- attendance; or of lying; or of adultery.

So let us all resign ourselves to this fact: Love for; ultimate regard for God will not co-exist with love for the world that is opposed to Him.

Surely we can see that our fleshly cravings; the carnal desires that fill our eyes to covet; and the desire to brag about what we possess- that all of these things are of the world that opposes and which fights against God- and the Bible says that *none* of these things are of the Father.

But inexplicably, in direct violation of what John teaches here- we live in a time when instead of covetousness being called the wicked sin that it is- it is actually being *promoted* by many famous ministries as actually being spiritual; as being desired; as being *of* the Father and something that we as Christian should aspire to.

But we must remember, beloved, that Scripture is crystal clear about this. And no matter how we might dress it up to make it look good- no matter how many ministries embrace it- no matter how many teachers may promote it- covetousness- in any shape or form- is sin.

We must know that we are not the only generation who has wrestled with the sin of worldliness. The Christians of the first century faced many of the same temptations that we do in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Their society was not impoverished. Rome was flush with prosperity- more so than any other empire on earth at that time. Many thought

that because they were Christians- that they could live any way that they wanted to. That wasn't true then and it is still not true today.

And when you ponder your loves- you may notice that love is never neutral. Even the most harmless petty love- if left unhindered and supreme and un- submitted to God will ruin you. So be careful. Exercise your Christian liberty- Yes! But be aware that not all love comes from God.

Beloved, we must know that it is a *false* religion that idolizes the world and the things that are in the world- and not Biblical Christianity. And we must also know that this false religion is in direct competition with God for your love and your affections and your devotion and your service.

So where do all of these misguided loves come from? They originate from an unbiblical and strange and yes, a sinful urge to glorify "self" in direct competition with glorifying God. They are simply the desires of our flesh; our sinful nature which constantly rebels against God's authority and which leads us all to condemnation.

This innate desire for lost Man to glorify himself is what theologians call "Total Depravity" or "Radical Ruination"- the Biblical Doctrine that says that not that all of us are as bad as we *could* be- but that *every* area of our existence has been *radically* and *negatively* affected by the Fall.

And we all have been touched by this wrong dissatisfaction with God and a hostile and open rebellion against Him. These examples that John brings out here are what the Christian Church *used* to call "worldliness". But over the last 150 years or so, that word; that term; that concept has ceased to be spoken much in Church. Whatever happened to it? Whatever happened to worldliness?

Sadly, in many, many modern Churches, the people of God have never heard worldliness mentioned one time and have no idea what it even means. If you don't think this is true, go find a young Christian convert who is 25 years old or younger and ask him what "worldliness" means. See if they tell you positive things or negative things.

Worldliness is taking an *inferior* object and treating it as your final ultimate end. Whether those are the pleasures of your flesh; or riches or pride and arrogance; or the glory of human achievement- worldliness is the attraction that we have to these things and to have your heart bound up with them.

So as we approach this verse, we must honestly ask ourselves the obvious question:

*“Am I worldly?”*

And please be real about your questions:

*What do you do with your best time? What do you do with your best thinking? What brings you the most satisfaction?*

Or you can turn the questions around and get the same answers:

*What troubles you the most? What causes you the most worry and anxiety? What is your greatest fear?*

Is your greatest fear; is what brings you the most anxiety that the Name of Christ be lifted up in every circumstance? Does *that* keep you up at night? Does *that* cause you to pace the floor and wring your hands? Are you truthfully more concerned about Christ being glorified in whatever situation the Sovereign God has allowed to come into your life or is it that you achieve your own safety and comfort?

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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