**Do Not Love the World**

**The Word**

Read together 1 John 2:15-17

**The Big Idea**

John draws attention to our hearts—their loves and cravings—and he calls us out of a love for what the world offers so that we might fill our hearts with God’s goodness, truth, and beauty. Each day we must cultivate our hunger for God so that we don’t have a need to seek satisfaction in the world.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. To what extend do you think a person can actually be freed from love of the world in this life? As you discuss that together, consider what experiences or biblical perspectives shape your answers.

2. Consider the “love of the world” as John describes it in v. 16: “the cravings of the flesh, the cravings of the eyes, and the pride of life.” As those were described on Sunday, what did you most relate to in your own life?

3. Where have you seen the “expulsive power of a new affection” play out in your life or in the lives around you?

4. Sunday’s message concluded with the idea that the primary business of our spiritual lives is to daily feast on the goodness of God in such a way that when we come to the world we are already full and don’t need what it is offering. How specifically do you feel called to “feast on God” this next month?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. John’s focus on our hearts

A. What do they “love?” (v. 15) and what do they “crave?” (v. 16)

B. Just like our bellies crave food, our hearts crave significance, security, recognition, pleasure, satisfaction

C. The question is this: where do we go to satisfy the cravings of our hearts?

II. Two loves

A. Love of Father

 1. God’s love for us (see 1 John 3:1)

= a deeper understanding and experience of God’s love for us

 2. Our love for God

= loving God in return by treasuring him and serving him

 B. Love of the world

 1. By “world” John means the world’s ways and all it tries to offer us

 2. By “world” John means the three things in v. 16

 a. The cravings of the flesh

 = the desire for mere sensual pleasure (food, drink, sex, etc.)

 b. The cravings of the eyes

= looking around at what we see with our eyes and always saying, “I want what I see; I need what I see”

 = a greedy and coveting attitude towards the things around us

c. The pride of life

= pride in our possessions and accomplishments

= looking to what we possess and achieve as ways of feeling legitimate and significant

= playing the comparison game with those around us

 3. Love of the world takes many different forms

 a. Base and “low brow” versions

 b. Cultured and refined versions

 c. Secular versions

 d. Religious versions (consider the Pharisees: Lk 16:14, Jn 5:44)

III. The Fundamental incompatibility of these two loves

A. They cannot coexist because love of the world pushes out love for God and vice versa (v. 15-16)

B. It’s as if our hungry hearts only have room for one or the other

C. We resist this idea of incompatible and seek to love God and the world

1. But Scripture is clear that we can love both well (James 4:4, Mt 6:24, Jn 5:44)

2. When we try to do that our faith gets “choked” (Lk 8:14)

3. When we try to do that our faith doesn’t mature because our hearts are already “stuffed” with the world

“The weakness of our hunger for God is not because he is unsavory, but because we keep ourselves stuffed with other things. If you don’t feel strong desires for God, it is not because you have drunk deeply and are satisfied. It is because you have nibbled so long at the table of the world. Your soul is stuffed with small things, and there is no room for the great.” —John Piper

IV. The radically different destiny of these two loves (v. 17)

A. John’s perspective is we live at the dawn of a new day. The night (kingdom of the world) is passing and the day (kingdom of God) is coming

B. The world and its desires are passing away, so to devote ourselves to the world is a very short-sighted investment

 C. God’s kingdom lasts forever as does everyone committed to his kingdom

V. Conclusion

A. Where are we called to fast from an unhealthy attachment to the world?

 B. Where are we called to feast on the goodness, truth, and beauty of God?

“The human heart has such a grasping tendency, that it must have something to lay hold of. And if that something is taken away without the substitution of another something in its place, it will leave a void and a vacancy as painful to the mind as hunger is to the body. The heart is such that the only way to dispossess it of an old affection, is by the expulsive power of a new one. We know of no other way by which to keep the love of the world out of our hearts, than to keep in our hearts the love of God.”—Thomas Chalmers