

“Where Love of the World Leads” - 1 John 2:15-17

- **Author:** John the apostle, son of Zebedee, brother of James (Mt 4:20-22).
- **Audience:** General epistle to churches in Asia minor, like those in Rev 2:1-3:22.
- **Historical Background:** “Docetists” have split off from the church, teaching an early form of Gnosticism (spirit = good/body = bad) with a heretical view of Christ – saying He only “seemed” (dokeo) to be a human being but was not truly one (1 Jn 2:19-23, 4:3).
- **Purpose:** John wants believers to know that they know Jesus (cf. Gen 1:1 w/Jn 1:1, 5:12-13) as the One who forgives and transform us (1 Jn 2:1-2), not being led astray by false teachers (1 Jn 2:26).
- 15 – Love of the world is not referring to loving the people in the world (cf. Jn 3:16) but inordinate desire for or focus on any created thing (v16, Mt 18:7, 1 Cor 10:7-14, 3 Jn 15).
 - If the love of the Father is in you, then you will *battle* the love of the world (Rom 7:18, Eph 6:10-17, 1 Pet 5:8-9) and more and more find it shrinking in your heart. Don’t be content to be conformed. Be *transformed* by the renewing of your mind by the Holy Spirit using His powerful Word (Rom 12:2, 1 Cor 2:12-16, Heb 4:12).
 - App: This does not mean removing yourself from society. Remember, the body and material things in this world are not evil in themselves... but the human tendency is to make idols out of literally *anything* that is not God (Ex 20:3-4, 20:23, Ps 115:4-8, Isa 44:9-20, 45:20, 46:2, Gal 4:8-9).
- 16 – John spells out all that is in the world in this famous trio – KJV uses “lust” for the first two. We *misuse* things God has created good, not the anti-materialism of Docetism...
 - “Desires of the flesh” – body is for holiness, not hedonism (Eccl 2:1-11, Isa 5:11, 1 Pet 4:3, Lk 8:14, 2 Tim 3:4, Gal 5:19-21, Titus 2:12, 3:3, Rom 12:1, 1 Cor 6:13).
 - “Desire of the eyes” – this lust is never satisfied and ultimately leads to death (Prov 27:20, Prov 6:25, 2 Sam 11:2-5, Ezek 6:9, Mt 5:28, Job 31:1, Jas 1:14-15).
 - “Pride of life” = pride in human accomplishment or possessions. The first sin in the garden tempted Adam and Eve that they “be like God” and somehow be the masters of some part of creation (Gen 3:5, Prov 6:16-17, 11:2, Lk 16:15, Eph 2:8).
 - App: Do we wear ourselves out so that others will think that we are greater than we really are? Rather, leave a godly legacy by living for God’s glory before men, but not *for* the praise of men (Prov 29:25, Mt 5:16, 6:1, Gal 1:10, 1 Thess 2:4)!
- 17 – The world and its desires will come to nothing (Mt 6:19-24, 1 Tim 6:6-8, 2 Pet 3:10-13). Yet God’s kingdom is forever (Ex 15:18, Ps 45:6, Lam 5:19, Dan 4:3, 7:27, 2 Pet 1:11).
 - App: Where are you focused? What hopes and dreams do you contemplate when your mind wanders? Hope in the One who is Himself eternal and gives an everlasting and certain hope of glory: Jesus (Heb 12:1-3, 13:14, Eph 1:18, Col 1:27, Titus 1:2, 2 Tim 3:1-2, 2 Pet 3:13).