



VCBC Sermon Notes | Pastor Tom Cowan
May 6th, 2012. 1st John Series.

1st John 2:12-17

Being World Christians in a Dangerous World

I. **One of the many challenges that churches have is to meet the different needs of different generations.**

John introduces us to three main groups in 2:12-17

1. Young children
2. Young men and women
3. The “fathers”

Then to each group he gives the same challenge – DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD.

II. **The word for “world” is COSMOS. It can mean three different things.**

- A. There is a world to be enjoyed with gratitude to God. Psalm 24, 19, Romans 1:20. We reject the dualism of Gnosticism which saw the world as evil.
- B. There is a world of people to be loved. John 3:16. The church has sometimes been people-denying. This is not the heart of God.
- C. There is a world to be handled with care. We are not to “agape” the world.

III. **Four ways that we can be tempted.**

- A. We are tempted to find the meaning of life in selfishness – the lust of the flesh.
- B. We are tempted by the sensual nature of the world – the lust of the eyes. Temptation invites us to look!

- C. We are tempted in the area of pride.
- D. We are tempted to invest our lives in what does not last. One of the marks of our society today is transience.

IV. **Jesus teaches us about “the world”.**

- A. You do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. John 15:19.
- B. My prayer is that you would not take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. John 17:15.
- C. You are the salt of the earth. Matthew 5.
- D. You are the light of the world.

V. **Christianity calls us to a cosmic view of life; it brings together the physical and the spiritual; the private and the public worlds. So--**

- ✓ If you are a new Christian, enjoy the forgiveness of God. Do not love the world – Love God!
- ✓ If you are one of the young men and women – be strong! Do not love the world – Love God!
- ✓ If you are seasoned in the faith, keep on going! Do not love the world – Love God!

In the three main groups we identify in this section, where are you? Why would you see yourself there?

VI. **John talked about the seduction which comes from the world.**

- A. What are some of the ways in which you see the world seducing us Christians today?
- B. What practical steps could we take to strengthen our Christian lives against this temptation?

The struggle is that we have to live “in” the world, but we are not to be “of” the world. This is what Jesus prays for in John 17:15, “not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one”. How do we handle this tension?