



### 13. Don't Love the World, but Love the World?

1 John 2:15-17  
John 3:16-17  
James 3:9  
Romans 2:15  
Exodus 31  
Isaiah 45  
Psalm 145:9

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

The entire Bible must be kept in mind when looking at passages in different books. There is an apparent contradiction (to some people) between 1 John 2:15 (and its command to not to love the world) and John 3:16, which says that God loved the world. The word "world" has two distinct meanings: the material universe (creation, humanity, nature) which Christians should love as God does, and "worldliness," a system of thinking that treats the material world as ultimate reality. Christians are called to love the world in the first sense by honoring human dignity (since all are made in God's image), caring for creation, reaching the lost with compassion, and living for God's glory, but to reject worldliness (the mindset that this life is all there is).

Worldliness results in fear, despair, and misplaced priorities, because it anchors hope in temporary things. Christians are called to live from the perspective of eternity, considering what will matter forever. This is why investing in people, speaking the Gospel, and seeing the eternal realities around us are what we are all called to embrace.

- How does Jesus' incarnation - taking on human flesh and keeping His resurrected body - reveal God's ultimate view of the material world and our physical existence?
- What does Jesus' statement, "I did not come to condemn the world, but to save it" teach us about how we should approach non-believers and secular culture?
- How can we follow Jesus' example of engaging with "worldly" people while maintaining His resistance to worldly systems and values?
- What can we learn from Jesus' ability to appreciate beauty, truth, and goodness in unexpected places while never compromising His mission?
- How does Jesus' command to "love your enemies" relate to loving people made in God's image while hating sinful systems?
- What does Jesus' teaching about being "in the world but not of the world" practically look like in our careers, relationships, and cultural engagement?
- How should Jesus' example of compassion for crowds of "lost sheep" influence our attitude toward cities, demographics, or regions we might want to avoid?