

Series: "LOVE LETTER from JOHN"

For Message: 1 John 2:12-17

Message Title: "What NOT to Love: Part 2"

Introduction: Welcome to BMZ CHURCH! Glad you're here as we CONTINUE our WORSHIP SERIES called: "**LOVE LETTER from JOHN**"! This is a SUMMER Bible Study. When we're FOCUSED on God's WORD, we're LESS DISTRACTED by the THINK/GS of THIS WORLD.

John wants us to experience REAL LIFE, according to JESUS ... WHAT we are CREATED to EXPERIENCE! FELLOWSHIP with OTHERS, GOD, and JESUS. JOY may be FULL and OVERFLOWING. Meaningful and DEEP PURPOSE.

Last week we talked about WHAT NOT to LOVE ... John WARNS of a WRONG KIND of LOVE ... that GOD HATES. We SEE in the BIBLE that **GOD HATES our LOVE for the WORLD**. NOT to LOVE the SYSTEM or the THINGS of THIS WORLD.

THIS WEEK ... LIKE LAST WEEK ... JOHN gives CLEAR WARNING (not a threat) for WHAT to DO and NOT to DO as we GO AFTER the "**REAL LIFE**" OFFERED by CHRIST. AGAIN, WE will NEED to THINK. We can NOT LA-LA our WAY THROUGH THESE VERSES.

BRIEF RE-CAP ... So, "**DO NOT LOVE this WORLD NOR the THINGS it OFFERS YOU...**" (1 Jn 2:15) is about our ENEMY and HIS INVISIBLE **SPIRITUAL SYSTEM / WORLD** he USES to OPPOSE GOD and JESUS.

4 REASONS TO NOT LOVE THE WORLD

In Psalms (97:10) ... "**You that LOVE the LORD; HATE EVIL.**" In Romans (12:9) ... "**HATE what is EVIL and CLING to what is GOOD.**" GOD WANTS US to HATE EVIL! WE can NOT SERVE TWO MASTERS ... the WORD or the WORLD. WE MUST LOVE ONE and HATE the OTHER. It is like a **SLIDING SCALE** ... The MORE you LOVE ONE (in whatever AREA of your LIFE), the MORE you HATE the OTHER ...

So ... 4 REASONS to NOT LOVE the WORLD. #1 =

#1 = What the World IS

Well, the "**WORLD**" in the BIBLE, is SATAN'S SYSTEM for OPPOSING the WORK of CHRIST on THIS PLANET and with HUMANITY. It is the OPPOSITE of what is GODLY and HOLY. According to PAUL, the DEVIL has an ORGANIZATION of EVIL SPIRITS working with him to INFLUENCE "**the WORLD.**"

Satan USES PEOPLE to accomplish EVIL. UNSAVED and SAVED, whether they REALIZE IT or NOT (SOME DO - MOST DON'T) ... **EPHESIANS 2:2 = You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.**

Jesus called UNSAVED people the "**CHILDREN of THIS WORLD**" (Luke 16). Whereas, a CHRISTIAN is part of the HUMAN and PHYSICAL WORLD, but NOT a part of the SPIRITUAL WORLD ... SATAN'S SYSTEM for OPPOSING GOD. And THAT CREATES PROBLEMS for FOLLOWERS of JESUS. Because, IF we LOVE the WORLD, it TENDS to LOVE us BACK. IF we HATE the "WORLD" and LOVE JESUS (sliding scale) ... JESUS says, **JOHN 15:18-19 = "If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first. 19The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.**

It's like THIS WORLD is NOT where we BELONG. We're ALIENS in our OWN WORLD. STRANGERS in a STRANGE LAND. A CHRISTIAN'S HOMELAND is in HEAVEN ... and ALL our RESOURCES for LIVING / SURVIVING / WORKING in this FOREIGN LAND COME from our FATHER in HEAVEN.

We NEED the SPIRITUAL RESOURCES (the HOLY SPIRIT LIVING within US) of PRAYER, WORSHIP, The WORD, and FELLOWSHIP, or we would NEVER **"MAKE IT"** in this WORLD. So ... **1 JOHN 2:15 = Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.**

SLIDING SCALE (Love for GOD vs. Love for the World)! #2 = MORE SERIOUS ...
#2 = What the World DOES to US

You can NOT LOVE the FATHER and the WORLD. IF you start to LOVE the WORLD MORE in WHATEVER AREA of your LIFE ... It is to THAT MEASURE that you do NOT LOVE the FATHER. Let's KEEP this SIMPLE: **ANYTHING in our lives that CAUSES us to LOSE our ENJOYMENT of the FATHER'S LOVE for US OR My DESIRE to DO HIS WILL is of the "WORLD."**

John POINTS out THREE DEVICES Satan USES to PULL us AWAY from God's LOVE and WILL ... **1 JOHN 2:16 = For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.**

3 THINGS: LUST of the PHYSICAL, LUST of the EYES, and our PRIDE.

These DEVICES will CAUSE us to WANDER AWAY from GOD and TOWARDS the WORLD. It is ALWAYS a SLOW FADE ... AND WHEN we DO WANDER SLOWLY AWAY from The FATHER'S LOVE and WILL, we BEGIN to be LOVED BY the WORLD. And, when we are LOVED BY the WORLD, it is just EASIER and EASIER to LOVE the WORLD in RETURN and CONFORM to the WAYS of the WORLD (Romans 12:2).

That BRINGS us to THIS QUESTION and THIS WEEK ... So, WHAT does a CHRISTIAN LOOK LIKE and HOW does HE/SHE KEEP from GETTING too CLOSE TO the WORLD and START FALLING FOR the WORLD?

As we get to the THIRD REASON NOT to LOVE the WORLD, let me BACK UP to VERSE 12 ... **1 JOHN 2:12-14 = I am writing to you who are God's children because your sins have been forgiven through Jesus. 13I am writing to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning. I am writing to you who are young in the faith because you have won your battle with the evil one. 14I have written to you who are God's children because you know the Father. I have written to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning. I have written to you who are young in the faith because you are strong. God's word lives in your hearts, and you have won your battle with the evil one.** #3 = Because of ...

#3 = What a CHRISTIAN IS

OK ... let's ASK that QUESTION AGAIN: WHAT is the NATURE of a CHRISTIAN and HOW do we PREVENT OURSELVES from getting TOO CLOSE TO and START FALLING FOR / LOVING THE WORLD. The ANSWER is found in THESE VERSES ... did you CATCH that JOHN called us **GOD'S CHILDREN / the MATURE / the YOUNG?**

In VERSE 12: **"GOD'S CHILDREN"** refers to ALL BELIEVERS. It LITERALLY means (in the Greek) **"BORN ONES."** All FOLLOWERS of JESUS are BORN INTO the FAMILY of GOD through FAITH in JESUS, and their SINS have been FORGIVEN!

The FACT that we are PART of / ADOPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY, able to SHARE the NATURE of ALMIGHTY GOD ... Like, we are HIS KIDS ... SHOULD SLOW US DOWN from BECOMING TOO FRIENDLY with the WORLD.

You know, WHEN we are CHILDREN, we do NOT NOTICE or UNDERSTAND what all our PARENTS DO FOR US, DO WE? What TIME / ENERGY / RESOURCES are SPENT by our PARENTS for OUR DEVELOPMENT / MATURING PROCESS ... TOTALLY goes OVER KIDS HEADS ... OBLIVIOUS! KIDS sometimes REFUSE to LISTEN TO or HONOR their PARENTS and start to LISTEN to EVERYONE ELSE in the WORLD.

BUT, as we MATURE, I HOPE we START to RECOGNIZE ALL we've been GIVEN and HOW MUCH our PARENTS OFFER us and CONTINUE to OFFER. We're GRATEFUL.

WITH ALL our HEAVENLY FATHER OFFERS US, including His AMAZING GRACE and UNCONDITIONAL LOVE and DIRECTION for a GREAT LIFE that lasts for ALL ETERNITY ... MAYBE we should HONOR HIM and NOT be FRIENDS with the WORLD.

Listen, JAMES 4:4 = *4You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God.*

In VERSE 13, JOHN mentions the MATURE in the FAITH. NO FOLLOWER of JESUS who has EXPERIENCED the JOY of OBEDIENCE / SERVICE to the FATHER and the FELLOWSHIP with JESUS ... will WANT to LIVE on the SUBSTITUTE / FLIMSY / SHALLOW PLEASURES of THIS WORLD. They will NOT want to be an ENEMY of GOD.

Then JOHN WRITES of the YOUNG in the FAITH and HOW they've ONE the BATTLE with the EVIL ONE. READ DOWN through that SCRIPTURE again and NOTICE the YOUNG are STRONG and have WON the BATTLE with the EVIL ONE (prince of this world) by KNOWING GOD'S WORD! WHEN we KNOW God's WORD and are OBEDIENT to it, we WIN our BATTLE with EVIL MORE than we LOSE SAID BATTLE. AND we become STRONGER in our FAITH RELATIONSHIP with JESUS.

To THESE who are getting STRONGER by KNOWING God's WORD and MATURING in their FAITH, what the WORLD has to OFFER is NOT very APPEALING. These who GROW in their FAITH START to REALIZE that the ATTRACTIONS of this WORLD are JUST TOYS and are NOT about REAL / ETERNAL LIFE.

Re-Cap: A FOLLOWER of JESUS does NOT FALL for the THINGS of this WORLD because of (#1) what the WORLD IS (a satanic system that OPPOSES Jesus and God's Kingdom), because of (#2) what the WORLD DOES to US (tries to get us to LIVE on SINFUL / SHALLOW / MEANINGLESS Substitutes), and because of (#3) who a CHRIST-FOLLOWER IS ... a CHILD of GOD.

As we get to REASON #4 ... this verse will HELP ... *1 JOHN 2:17 = 17And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.* #4 = NOT LOVE the WORLD because ...

#4 = Where the World IS GOING

Let's START SIMPLE. It seems ABSURD to LOVE the WORLD OVER JESUS / The WORD (sliding scale), SIMPLY because the WORLD is TEMPORARY, and the WORD is ETERNAL! ONE DAY, the SYSTEM of THIS WORLD and ALL the PLEASANT ATTRACTIONS that GO WITH IT will be GONE! Do you KNOW what will NEVER be GONE? ANYTHING and EVERYTHING that is PART of the WILL of GOD. That's IT! END of DISCUSSION.

FOLLOWERS of JESUS are THINKING and AWARE of the NEED to REMAIN “Loosely Attached” to THIS WORLD ... BECAUSE they LIVE FOR something WAY BETTER that LASTS LONGER. JOHN CONTRASTS these TWO WAYS to LIVE, kind of like he did with LIGHT vs. DARK and SAY vs. DO. This is ETERNAL LIFE vs. TEMPORARY LIFE. There are contrasts.

Do you REMEMBER Last Week when we talked about THREE DEVICES SATAN USES to CONVINCe us to CLING to the TEMPORARY WORLD? Well, we make CHOICES ... A WORLDLY person LIVES for the PLEASURES of the FLESH, while a PERSON of the WORD LIVES for the JOYS of the SPIRIT. A WORLDLY BELIEVER LIVES for what he/she can SEE while a JESUS' FOLLOWER LIVES for the UNSEEN REALITIES of GOD. A WORDLY person LIVES for GETTING their OWN GLORY and the APPORVAL of PEOPLE because of their PRIDE; but a CHRISTIAN who is OBEDIENT to the WILL of GOD, LIVES for the APPORVAL of GOD. GOD gets the GLORY. This is REAL LIFE.

LIFE is TEMPORARY. NATIONS are TEMPORARY. CIVILIZATIONS are TEMPORARY. Some NINETEEN WORLD Civilizations have SLIPPED into MEMORIES ... and MOSTLY FORGOTTEN. Great EMPIRES and NATIONS have ALL been DEFEATED at SOME POINT. There is NO REASON to BELIEVE our NATION will EXIST FOREVER.

THIS WORLD and EVERYTHING IN IT is “*FADING AWAY.*” BUT John tells us here that THOSE who *DO* (not just say) *what IS PLEASING to GOD will LIVE FOREVER.*

And ... it's OUR CHOICE. It's YOUR CHOICE. TEMPORARY or ETERNAL?

WHY TRUST / CRAVE the THINGS that are FADING AWAY / DISAPPEARING?

GOD wants for YOU and ME the THINGS of the ETERNAL. And JOHN reminds us that the WAY to GET THERE is to DO what PLEASES GOD ... GOD'S WILL. We DO it. We LIVE IT OUT in our DAILY LIVES in the CIRCUMSTANCES we are IN.

“*ANYONE WHO DOES WHAT PLEASES GOD WILL LIVE FOREVER.*” Let's do THAT!

So, **HOW does one DISCOVER the WILL of GOD?** It BEGINS with our SURRENDER. WE OFFER OURSELVES ... our BODIES ... our WHOLE BEINGS ... as a SACRIFICE to GOD. NOT JUST a SACRIFICE, but a LIVING SACRIFICE ... we SACRIFICE what WE LIVE FOR and OFFER to LIVE this LIFE for GOD. WHY? Well, WHY NOT? THINK of ALL that GOD has OFFERED YOU and DONE FOR YOU!

So, we SURRENDER our ENTIRE LIVES to the ENTIRE WILL of GOD (NOT just the PARTS we THINK we LIKE). And THEN, we UNDERSTAND that GOD REVEALS His WILL THROUGH His WORD! THEREFORE, we MUST KNOW His WORD. A FOLLOWER of JESUS SPENDS TIME in God's WORD (Next Steps) and CONTINUALLY LEARNS to APPLY it to LIFE ... WE BECOME DOERS of The WORD.

When we BECOME DOERS of the WORD, that is TRUE WORSHIP of THE WORD!

Let's NOT be FRIENDS with THIS WORLD. Let's KEEP a LOOSE CONNECTION with the WORLD. Let's NOT COPY the WAY the WORLD BEHAVES. Instead, let's ALLOW GOD to TRANSFORM US / YOU / ME into a NEW PERSON ... THINKING as FOLLOWERS of JESUS would THINK. Let's CONTINUALLY spend TIME in GOD'S WORD and LEARN GOD'S WILL ... Here's how PAUL WROTE it to the ROMAN CHURCH ... *ROMANS 12:1-2 = I And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is*

good and pleasing and perfect.

GOOD / PLEASING / PERFECT ... according to THE ONE who HOLDS ALL ETERNITY EASILY in His HANDS ... THAT is REAL LIFE!

A FOLLOWER of JESUS MUST DECIDE. Will I LIVE for this TEMPORARY LIFE ONLY, or will I LIVE FOR the WILL of GOD and ABIDE WITH HIM FOREVER? Jesus TALKS about this CHOICE be PREACHING in His SERMON on the MOUNT about TWO MEN ... ONE BUILT on SAND, the OTHER on ROCK. What will BE your CHOICE?

Let me ask: What if ALL THIS (Bible) is TRUE? OK. NOW CHOOSE.

Let's PRAY Together!

Next Steps: *I will Memorize 1 John 2:17*

I will Read 1st John and Romans 2

I will invite someone to worship with me this summer.

Hosting (Closing)

HEY, it has been a GREAT DAY here at BMZ... Glad you've been here with us! In a moment, we are going to RECEIVE the OFFERING so please take this time to finish COMPLETING any information.

- Or NEXT STEPS on your CONNECTION CARD (**FULLY FILLED OUT!!**)
- AND when our ushers come around to RECEIVE our OFFERING
- You can drop that card in the offering basket.

IF you are a First-Time Guest with us today

- We are so glad you joined us ... And we have a GIFT for you.

It's this book "**UNSHAKABLE**" and it's at the BACK TABLE / By the DOORS...

- all you need to do is **HIT "SEND"** your COMPLETED Connection Card

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- I just want to remind you ... STEWARDSHIP is DISCIPLESHIP ... we RECEIVE an OFFERING EVERY Sunday BECAUSE it's BIBLICAL ... AND it HELPS us GROW in our FAITH!
- STEWARDSHIP VERSE ... **1 JOHN 2:17 = 17And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.**
- FIRST of our EARNINGS go back to the ONE who Blessed us in the first place! That's why WE/I do Automated Giving! I get paid ... the TITHE comes OUT FIRST!
- God's plan for BUILDING His Church was through TITHING and GIVING of the FOLLOWERS ... Share the GOOD NEWS! To REFRESH OTHERS!
- As Developing Followers of Jesus Christ, WE need to KNOW what the BIBLE says about GIVING ... NOT just what we THINK it should say.
- **MONEY is a HEART ISSUE.** And GOD wants what is BEST for your HEART! Listen, if GOD LOVES US so much that HE is willing to GIVE UP His OWN SON FOR US, WHY would GOD LEAD us ASTRAY in FINANCES?! USHERS ...
- NEXT WEEK: **LOVE LETTER from JOHN ...**

"Truth without Grace is Fundamentalism (Brutality). Grace without Truth is Sentimentalism (Hypocrisy)."

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