

FAQ: 1 John Lesson 34, "God Hates This Love"

September 3, 2025

1. What is the fundamental definition of "the world" according to the sermon?

The sermon defines "the world" not as creation or people, but as an anti-Christ system – everything around us that is inspired by Satan. This system encompasses the thinking processes of unconverted individuals, often referred to as "sons of this world." It is a system that fundamentally opposes the gospel of Jesus Christ and actively promotes ideologies that misrepresent God and the glories of salvation.

2. How does one's relationship with "the world" change upon becoming a Christian?

Upon becoming a Christian, an individual makes a conscious choice to affirm the gospel of Jesus Christ and confess Him as Lord. At this moment, they are considered "dead to the world" because the world's system fundamentally opposes this belief. While Christians can still be tempted by material things, pride, and self-interest, their purest and truest expression of a redeemed soul should be to hate anything that opposes Jesus Christ. Their citizenship shifts from this world to heaven (Philippians 3:20, NKJV).

3. What is the "common denominator" of all anti-Christian systems and beliefs?

The common denominator across all anti-Christian systems, whether they are called agnosticism, atheism, sophisticated forms of religion, Islam, Buddhism, cultism, Eastern religions, or aberrant forms of Christianity, is that they all misrepresent Jesus Christ and the glories of salvation. These misrepresentations are continuously spread by false prophets who are inherently against Christianity.

4. Why is it argued that true Christians cannot remain in false religious systems for long?

It is argued that true Christians cannot remain in false religious systems for long because these systems inherently hate everything that genuine believers love. False religious systems often bring reproach upon Jesus Christ. A person who genuinely loves Christ should have a very short tolerance level for such dishonor. Ignorance of a religious system's false teachings is not considered an excuse, as true love for the Lord should ignite a desire to protect and honor His name, leading to an intolerance of anything that discredits Him.

5. What is "common grace" and how does it differ from a personal blessing from God?

Common grace refers to the general goodness and provisions that God extends to all people, regardless of their spiritual standing. Jesus, in Matthew 5:44-45 (NKJV), explains that God "makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

This means that positive experiences like good fortune or favorable circumstances are not necessarily direct blessings for righteous actions, but rather manifestations of God's universal grace. It's important to distinguish this from specific blessings that might be a result of a personal relationship and obedience to God.

6. What kind of warfare are Christians engaged in, and with what weapons do they fight?

Christians are engaged in a constant spiritual warfare, which is described as the kingdom of God against the kingdom of darkness, Christ versus Antichrist, and truth versus lies. This warfare is not fought with carnal or human weapons because spiritual entities like demons cannot be affected by physical means. Instead, Christians are mighty in God, and their weaponry is spiritual. The purpose of this spiritual might is to pull down strongholds, which are defined as anti-God thought processes, ideologies, and spiritual fortresses that Christians may carry with them from their unconverted lives.

7. How are strongholds formed and how can Christians overcome them?

Strongholds are formed when individuals, after becoming Christians, retain anti-God thoughts, ideas, and belief systems from their past. These unaddressed thoughts and ideologies can degrade the Holy Spirit's influence in their lives, allowing sins to rise up and impact their spiritual walk, relationships, and joy. To overcome these strongholds, Christians are instructed to cast down arguments, speculations, imaginations, and every high lofty thing that is raised against the knowledge of God. This involves actively bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5, NKJV), essentially smashing anti-God ideas with the Word of God.

8. What is the significance of Paul's conversion story in understanding the concept of "loving the world"?

Paul's conversion, as detailed in Philippians 3, serves as a powerful example of dying to the world. Prior to his conversion, Paul was a devout, zealous Pharisee who found confidence and righteousness in his religious achievements and actively persecuted Christians, believing he was doing God's work. This represented his system, stronghold, and fortress—an anti-Christ position. However, upon being confronted by Christ, everything he once valued became loss for Christ and was counted as skubalon (Greek: σκύβαλον, pronounced SKOO-bah-lon), meaning refuse, garbage, or trash. This internal transformation demonstrates that true love for Christ necessitates a complete abandonment and hatred of the world's anti-Christ system. If one still loves that system, even a little, the love of God is not in them because true love eliminates all rivals.

Greek Words

- σκύβαλον (skúbalon, pronounced SKOO-bah-lon): Meaning refuse, garbage, or trash. Paul uses this word in Philippians 3:8 to describe his former accomplishments as worthless compared to knowing Christ.