

Briefing Description 1 John Lesson 37: God Hates This Love & The Heart of the World

September 24, 2025

Executive Summary

This document synthesizes the key themes from the "1 John Lesson 37" teaching, which focuses on the believer's mandated separation from "the world" and provides a detailed diagnostic on the nature of sin. The core argument establishes a stark contrast between the destiny of the world system, which is in a perpetual state of self-destruction and headed for eternal punishment, and the destiny of the believer, who is promised to "abide forever." The teaching outlines four primary reasons why believers must not love the world: its inherent nature as Satan's system, the believer's identity as a child of God, the world's function as an incitement to sin, and its ultimate destination of ruin.

The analysis then transitions to an in-depth examination of sin, identifying its three primary gateways as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. Sin is defined as "lawlessness"—any violation of God's perfect law in act, word, thought, or motive. The teaching provides a comprehensive characterization of sin's nature, describing it as defiling, rebellious, ungrateful, incurable by human means, and ultimately deadly. Despite its destructive nature, humanity is depicted as actively and tirelessly pursuing sin. The lesson concludes by addressing the ongoing struggle believers face, warning against "flirting with the world," which can lead to the formation of "spiritual strongholds" that oppress the Christian and hinder their spiritual life.

The Believer's Relationship with the World

The lesson concludes a topic on why believers must reject "the world," which is defined not as the created physical order or humanity, but as the system of evil and sin orchestrated by Satan.

Four Reasons to Not Love the World

The teaching consolidates four principal reasons for this separation:

1. **Because of what it is:** The world system is identified as the domain of Satan.
2. **Because of who we are:** Believers are identified as the children of God, whose identity is fundamentally separate from the world.
3. **Because of what it does:** The world actively incites believers to sin, requiring resistance and a longing for righteousness.

4. **Because of where it is going:** The world's destiny is destruction, which is diametrically opposed to the believer's destiny of eternal life.

The Two Destinies: A Study in Contrast

A central theme is the divergence between the ultimate fate of the world system and that of the believer.

- **The World's Trajectory:** The world is described as "passing away" (from the Greek *paragita*), a term used in the present tense to indicate that it is currently in a process of disintegration. This concept is likened to "devolution" or a self-destructing mode, with the "death principle" actively causing its own destruction. This is supported by 2 Timothy 3:13: *"Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse deceiving and being deceived."*

- The ultimate destruction of the physical world is foretold in 2 Peter 3, culminating in a renovation after the Tribulation and Christ's millennial reign, resulting in a "new heaven and a new earth."

- The world system, including all unbelievers, false religions, fallen angels, and Satan himself, is in a "death spiral" heading for eternal punishment in the "lake of fire."

- This judgment is presented as a necessary act of a just God. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 states that God will take *"vengeance on those who do not know God... These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord."*

- **The Believer's Trajectory:** In stark contrast, the one "who does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:17).

- Believers are defined as those who do the will of God.

- The will of God is explicitly defined as believing in His Son, Jesus Christ. John 6:40 is cited: *"everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have everlasting life."*

- Therefore, believers are not passing away but are operating under a "principle of life" that ensures they will live forever.

A Diagnostic on the Heart of the World: The Nature of Sin

The lesson transitions to a new section focusing on the essence of sin, using 1 John 2:16 as the primary text to diagnose the "heart condition of worldliness."

The Three Gateways of Sin

All worldly temptations and sin are said to flow through three fundamental gateways:

1. **The Lust of the Flesh:** Based on corruptible human imagination.

2. **The Lust of the Eyes:** Seduction based on what one sees, leading to desire.

3. **The Boastful Pride of Life:** A foundational arrogance and drive for self-fulfillment, summarized as, "I want what I want when I want it and I'm gonna go ahead and get it."

Defining Sin

Sin is presented as a universal problem that has generated "cosmic chaos" and affects every human from the moment of conception.

- **The Definition:** The fundamental definition of sin is given from 1 John 3:4: "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness. Sin equals lawlessness."

- **The Scope:** It is any violation of God's holy and perfect law, encompassing any "act, word, thought, [or] motive" that falls short of His established standards.

The Essential Characteristics of Sin

The teaching outlines five essential components of sin's nature.

Characteristic Description		Scriptural and Puritan References
Defiling	Sin is an internal pollution that stains the soul, degrades human nobility, and darkens the mind. It turns beauty into ugliness and joy into sorrow.	Likened to "filthy rags," "sores that come from a deadly plague" (1 Kings 8:38), and "filthy garments" (Zechariah 3:3). Puritan writer Thomas Goodwin is quoted, describing sin as "poison," "vomit," and "the stench of graves."
Rebellious	Sin is not merely a mistake but a willful act of rebellion against God. It is described as God's "would-be murderer," an attempt by the sinner to dethrone God and be their own god.	Psalm 12:4: "Our lips are our own; Who is the Lord over us?" Jeremiah 44:17: "We will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth."
Ingratitude	Sin is an act of profound ingratitude. The sinner receives God's "common grace"—life, breath, food, love—but abuses these privileges and betrays God, choosing to be a "friend of Satan."	Romans 1 is cited as identifying a key characteristic of the sinner: "he is not thankful to God." The sinner is compared to David's son Absalom, who plotted to kill his father after receiving his kiss.

Incurable	Humanity is incapable of fixing its own sin. Man is "sin to the bone." Sin is a sickness "from head to toe" that cannot be healed by human means like good works, reformation, or education.	Isaiah 1:5-6: "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints... there's no soundness in it." Puritan John Flavel is quoted: "The everlasting burnings in hell cannot purify the flaming conscience from the least sin."
Deadly	The consequence of sin is death. The Bible is clear that "The soul that sins it will die" and "The wages of sin is death."	This is presented as the ultimate, inescapable outcome for the unredeemed sinner.

The Paradoxical Pursuit of Sin

Despite its devastating nature, humanity is described as pursuing sin with immense commitment and effort.

- People "weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jeremiah 9:5), working so hard at sinning that they become tired.
- They "can't sleep unless they do evil" (Proverbs 4:16), finding comfort and pleasure only in their sin.
- The reason for this pursuit is that "men love darkness rather than the light because their deeds are evil."

The Christian's Ongoing Struggle

The final part of the lesson addresses the reality that even believers, who are destined for eternal life, continue to struggle with the temptation of the world.

- **"Flirting with the World":** It is acknowledged that Christians still "dabble" in the world, a practice described as "foolish but real." This happens when they are not "consumed with the things of the eternal kingdom of God."
- **Spiritual Strongholds:** A significant danger for believers is returning to old sins. This is illustrated with the metaphor of a saved person getting a "little itty bitty wagon" and picking up old sins to drag around.
 - This practice leads to the formation of "spiritual strongholds."
 - It results in "quenching the Holy Spirit," causing the Spirit to recede in the believer's life.

- This state is described as being "oppressed" (distinct from being possessed).
- A consequence is that the Christian becomes "ashamed to tell anybody about Jesus" because they are aware of their own hypocrisy. The teaching concludes that "most Christians fear that someone will know the truth about them."

Community Context: Announcements and Prayer Requests

The teaching was delivered in the context of a church gathering, which included the following community updates.

Category	Details
Announcements	Memory Verse: Matthew 5:14. Events: Reception for Tyrus and Emily (living in a fifth wheel, gift cards recommended); New Life Kids Praise Team performance; Hospitality team meeting; Wedding shower for Caroline and Dylan; Spaghetti dinner fundraiser for Intended Hope. Initiatives: Operation Christmas Child (OCC) boxes; Donations for New Life Kids Christmas Store.
Prayer Requests	Individuals: Miss Rusty Shobe (serious health issues, pain); Chris (upcoming MRI); Tony and Judy (respiratory illness); Joyce (continued recovery); Lois, Donna's sister (rough time). General: Family matters and issues for fellow believers; a prayer for strength to "stand" and "fight" in critical times, inspired by Charlie Kirk.
Current Events	Mention of recent events, including "people shooting at ICE officers" and the death of Charlie Kirk, which was seen as a potential "wake-up call" for believers. An observation was made that church attendance and Bible sales have increased, similar to the period after 9/11. The concept of the "morality pendulum" was introduced to explain the cyclical but worsening decline of societal morality.