

Lesson for August 21, 2005

The Book of I John

Chapter 2:16-17

Verse 16

“For all that is in the world”

The world is the Greek word “kosmos” and refers to Satan’s cosmic or world system. This system is a way of thinking we call Human Viewpoint Thinking and is opposed to God’s Divine Viewpoint Thinking. John is going to “break down” the results of Human Viewpoint Thinking into three categories.

“the lust of the flesh”

Lust is the Greek word “epithumia” and means strong desire of any kind. In this verse it is the kind of desire produced by Satan’s world system. *The flesh* is the Greek word “sarx” and refers to mankind’s sin nature. There is another word for flesh in Greek, “kreas” that refers to flesh as meat. Since the sin nature resides in the body of man, the flesh is a reference to man’s inherent sin nature. Therefore, the desires of the sin nature are part of Satan’s world system.

“the lust of the eyes”

Lust is the same Greek word meaning strong desire. *Eyes* is the Greek word “ophthalmos” and is used metaphorically in this verse as an instrument of evil desire. The desires of the eyes can be a reference to worldly possessions, but can also refer to any evil desire that is contrary to God’s will.

“the pride of life”

The Greek word for *pride* is “alazoneia” and means boastful or arrogant. The word in Greek for *life* is “bios” and means manner of life. Taken together this phrase means an arrogant lifestyle devoid of anything to do with God or His mandates.

“is not of the Father, but is of the world”

The contrast is obvious. If the believer is exhibiting any or all of these three categories of Satan’s cosmic system, it is certainly not from God. On the contrary, this lifestyle, attitude and evil desire emanate from man’s sin nature. At salvation, the believer immediately enters into a spiritual battle. This battle is between the believer’s sin nature and his new spiritual nature (human spirit).

The soul of the believer is being bombarded by these three worldly categories in an attempt to establish and maintain control. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit is attempting to fully influence the human spirit so that the spiritual nature of the believer will establish and maintain control. In both cases it is strictly up to the individual as to who gains and maintains control of his soul.

Two illustrations of this are:

Eve in the Garden

Satan tempted Eve in all three of these categories in Genesis 3:6. The lust of the flesh was that the fruit was good to eat. The lust of the eye was that it was pleasant to eat. The pride of life was that it would make her wise. As we know, Eve fell for Satan's deception and disobeyed God.

Christ Tempted by Satan

In Matthew 4, Satan used the same tactics on Christ, but of course without success. The lust of the flesh was "command those stones to be turned to bread." The lust of the eyes was "sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world... all these things I will give thee." The pride of life was "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down [from the mountain]...and the angels will bear thee up."

Satan and the World System

Since the fall of Adam in the garden, Satan has been the ruler of this world system. Therefore, he uses the world system to influence the believer. His greatest weapon is to counterfeit the truth. He always gives us something as close to the truth as possible, so that we are easily deceived (Satan's greatest ploy).

Some of Satan's counterfeits are:

1. Religion - Galatians 1:6-8; I Corinthians 10:21
2. Satanic evangelists, ministers and apostles - II Corinthians 11:13-15
3. Satanic doctrine - Ephesians 4:14; Colossians 2:8; I Timothy 4:1-3
4. Satanic pseudo-righteousness - II Corinthians 11:15; Matthew 23:27-28

We know from God's Word, that Satan or his demons cannot indwell a believer (I John 4:4), but they can influence him, which is accomplished mainly through the world system in which we live.

Here are some ways used by Satan and his demons to influence the believer:

1. Accuses the believers in heaven - Revelation 12:10
2. Uses demons to indwell unbelievers who deceive believers – I Timothy 4:1-3
3. Deceives believers himself (only a few in history) – I Corinthians 11:3; I Peter 5:8; Acts 5:4
4. Uses the pleasures of this world - Colossians 2:8
5. Uses demons to abuse, oppress or attack - II Corinthians 12:7; Acts 10:38; Ephesians 6:12
6. Hinders us by using outside forces - I Thessalonians 2:18

What should be our response to these Satanic attacks?

1. Recognize false doctrine when you hear it - I Timothy 4:16; II Peter 3:1-2
2. Resist him by relying upon the grace of God - James 4:7
3. Don't give him a place in your thoughts - Ephesians 4:27
4. Do not have things in common with him - I Corinthians 10:20
5. Keep "looking to Jesus" (think divine viewpoint) and do not depend on this world for your happiness - Hebrews 12:1-4

Verse 17

"And the world passes away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

There will come a day when the world will be destroyed and all that is in it, including Satan and human viewpoint thinking. Satan and his demons have a date with the Lake of Fire, whether they acknowledge it or not. It is actually the Apostle John who writes about the final chapter in human history in the book of Revelation. In the end, God wins and Satan loses. (II Peter 3:10-12; Revelation 20:10)

When this day of world destruction comes, all things that are part of this world system will disappear. This includes satanic or corrupt desires. All who have trusted Christ as Savior will be in resurrection bodies and will spend eternity in a state of perfection. Doing God's will is a matter of believing the record that God gave concerning His Son, Jesus Christ and believing in Him. At the moment a person believes in Christ as Savior he is given eternal life and will "abide" (live) with God forever. (I John 5:10-13)

The Great White Throne Judgment

After the destruction of the world, all unbelievers from all dispensations will appear before God for the final judgment. A person's sins will not be the issue at this judgment, since Christ paid the penalty for all sin. The issue will be acceptance or rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and the fact that human good deeds are not adequate to get a person into Heaven. The unbeliever's name, which had been placed in the Book of Life at his birth, will be blotted out and the sentence will be the Lake of Fire for all eternity in a full state of consciousness. (John 3:18, 36, 5:22-29; I John 2:2; Revelation 20:1-15)

The Judgment Seat of Christ

The Judgment Seat of Christ is for believers only and takes place some time shortly after the Rapture of the Church. At the Rapture, all living and dead believers from the Church Age will meet Jesus Christ in the air and will be led in a processional to Heaven, having received a glorified body like Christ's, fully conscious, fully recognizable and with "increased knowledge." God's Word seems to indicate that there will then be a time of celebration, when we worship and praise our Savior. (I Corinthians 4:5; 15:51-54; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Philippians 3:21)

Scripture tells us that our Savior has already departed to prepare a dwelling place for us, the Bride of Christ (as we will be called in Heaven). But before the Lord can reveal all that will be ours for the eternal state, we must be evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is during our evaluation that we will suffer shame for those failed opportunities to fulfill our spiritual lives. (John 14:1-3; II Corinthians 5:8-10; Romans 14:11-12)