

1 John 2:15-27

God Over The World

Learning Objective

- It is crucial to love God and not the world. God set us apart for a reason, and while people and events will try to distract us or pull us away, we need to choose God.

Steps To Prepare (For Leaders)

- Read the passage and study, taking time to formulate personal answers to the subjective questions.
- Think in particular about how the application portion applies to you. Your openness and willingness to share will help facilitate authentic group discussion.

Pray for your time together in God's Word!

Read Out Loud: 1 John 2:15-27 (NIV)

¹⁵ Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

¹⁸ Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ²¹ I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. ²² Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

²⁴ See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is what he promised us—even eternal life.

²⁶ I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

Questions For Discussion

? John mentions "the world" in verses 15-17. What does he mean by "the world?" What does it mean that we are not to love the world?

Possible Answers: John is not talking about the literal world, but using "the world" to embody all things that are not Christ. He says not to love the world because when we love anything more than Christ it is an idol.

? In verse 16 John mentions three things from the world. What are they?

Possible Answers: The three things are "the cravings of sinful man," "the lust of his eyes," and "the boasting of what he has and does."

? What are examples from today's culture that would fit in to each of these three categories?

Possible Answers: Cravings: overeating, sex; Lust: greed, instant gratification; Boasting: ungratefulness, arrogance because of achievements.

? How do we navigate the slippery slope of engaging with the world to share the Gospel, but not embracing what the world idolizes?

Possible Answers: It's important to keep our hearts and minds focused on God, to make sure that while we are in the world we are not seeking worldly things over God. We can do this by studying the Word, praying, doing devotions, spending time with other believers, and stopping to ask ourselves, "Does this glorify God?"

? John warns against antichrists that are already among the people (vs. 19). From what we see in this passage, how would John define "antichrists"?

Possible Answers: Antichrists are those who have denied that Jesus is the Son of God (vs. 22). The people John wrote to were dealing with others challenging the authority of Jesus (literally those who are anti/against Christ).

? What form do antichrists take in today's culture?

Possible Answers: The post-modern idea that all roads lead to God, the elevation of success and our ability to do things on our own (i.e. without Christ), those that say Jesus was just a nice guy, etc.

Leaders' Note: Some people in your group may have grown up in a church culture that identified specific people or aspects of culture (e.g. Al Gore, Google) as "the" or "an" antichrist, typically leaning towards

passages found in Revelation. Please steer the conversation away from this direction, as our goal here is to have a broader discussion about things that point us away from Christ.

Read Out Loud: After defining and discussing the work of antichrists, John shows a contrast between them and believers. In verse 20, he reminds his readers they “have an anointing from the Holy One,” and they “know the truth.”

? The Holy One could refer to any of the persons of the Trinity—Father, Son or Holy Spirit. Jesus promised the Father would send the Spirit after His death (John 14:23-29). What is the significance of “The Holy One” anointing believers? In what ways should we respond because of this anointing?

Possible Answers: It signifies that we’re not called to spread the Gospel and speak Truth alone—the Spirit has set us apart and equips us to do so. It’s not a human anointing we receive. We’re set apart by God Himself for a specific reason! This brings purpose and meaning into our everyday lives. In the same way, the truth referred to in verse 20 is not from human minds but God’s eternal wisdom. We can rejoice that we know the truth!

In the Old Testament, “anointing” was an act that set people apart for a specific task, such as being king. This involved pouring oil over the person’s head and was often done by a priest or prophet.

? John says that we know the Truth (vs. 20). What is the “Truth”?

Possible Answer: The Truth is that Jesus is the Son of God.

? Why does the truth need to be central in our spiritual lives?

Possible Answers: See verses 24 and 25. Holding on to what we have learned (the truth) keeps us in relationship with the Father and Son which allows us to inherit eternal life.

? In verse 26, John says he is writing to them about those who are trying to lead them astray. What are things in your life that attempt to lead you astray?

Possible Answers: It could be individuals who don’t believe in Christ (like those John is writing to who are dealing with people who have left the church). It could be your busy pace of life that distracts you from spending time with God. It could be your tendency to rely on yourself, thereby denying the power of Christ in your life. Really, it is anything in your life that runs counter to the Gospel.

? Why is it important that our anointing “remains”? (vs. 27)

Possible Answers: We don’t need anyone to teach us (God brings us understanding); it gives us a reason to remain in Him.

For Discussion And Accountability

? Do you struggle to believe that you are anointed by God, set apart for a purpose? How can you bring this eternal purpose to your life this week?

? What are some practical things you can do this week in order to choose to love the things of God instead of the things of the world?

Possible Answers: Prayer, accountability with other believers, spending time in the Bible.