**Lessons from a Lockdown**

**Volume II**

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**Day 66**

**1 John 2:15-17**

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. Do I love anything in the world? How does knowing that the world and its desires will pass away help me?
2. How does loving the world affect my love for God?
3. How am I tempted with “lust of the flesh”? How do I deal with it?
4. How am I tempted with “lust of the eyes”? How do I deal with it?
5. How am I tempted with “the pride of life”? How do I deal with it?

***Insight:***

When John says we should not love the world or anything in it, does he mean to say we should not love our families and friends, animals and plants or the planet itself? When John speaks of “the world” he doesn’t seem to mean people per se or the planet but the values and desires of human society. When he speaks of “everything in the world” he lists three things: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life. This is the world he speaks of – the human society that is characterized by these things. This is the society we find ourselves in and we have no choice but to live in it. This is our world. But we don’t have to love it or anything in it. We don’t have to be worldly. We cannot love this world, because we cannot love God too if we do. It’s not because we can’t love more than one thing. It’s because godliness and worldliness cannot co-exist in the same heart. So to drive out worldliness from our hearts we just have to focus on loving God.

Lust of the flesh. The world teaches that we should indulge ourselves and give in to our desires for physical pleasures. Worldliness says: If it feels good, go ahead and do it. The addictions that destroy people’s lives (e.g. alcoholism, pornography, drugs, gambling, digital addictions) all come from the desire for pleasure. People in the world do everything to feel good except go to God. Are we driven by pleasure? Where do we spend most of our time and money on? What do we do with our free time? Are we lovers of pleasure or lovers of God?

If we clothe ourselves with Christ, we will not think about gratifying the desires of the flesh (Romans 13:14). This means that when we are thinking about the desires of the flesh, we have forgotten to clothe ourselves with Christ. Focusing on feeding our desires reflects a lack of focus on Jesus.

Lust of the eyes. We are enticed by what we see, the superficial or the things which are designed just to gratify our sight but not our souls. People in the world run after celebrities because of their appearance, popularity and wealth despite the absence of morality in their lives. They desire to be like them because their lives look so good on Instagram or Facebook. They want what other people have and focus on the outward appearance but not the heart. What do we like to look at when we surf the internet or look at social media posts? What gets our attention or approval?

Human eyes are never satisfied (Proverbs 27:20). The world teaches people to always be greedy for more. So even if they don’t need something, people still want it for themselves. They just have to get what other people have. What do other people have that I want as well? As the Teacher says, “all achievement spring from one person’s envy of another” (Ecclesiastes 4:4).

Pride of Life. People in the world boast about their achievements. They are concerned about how many championships they have won, how many awards they have received, how many degrees they have earned, how big their house is, how expensive their car is, how influential they are in government, or how many twitter followers they have. They show off everything they have accomplished in every social media platform they have and they talk about themselves all the time. What are we proud of? What do we love talking about?

Do any of the things John listed characterize us? Are we conforming to the pattern of the world?

We need to remember that friendship with the world is hatred towards God (James 4:4). We can only love one master (Luke 16:13). We cannot have both God and the world. We have to choose. It is easy to say that we have chosen God and not the world. But what do our social media posts say? What do our spending habits say? What do our schedules say? Would they prove that we love God or that we love the world?

If we love the world, we will die with it. If we love God, we will outlive the world. We should not be too engrossed on things in the world because all of them are temporary. The true value of things is measured in the context of eternity. Why sell your eternal soul for something fleeting like pleasure, money, popularity or achievement? That sounds like a bad investment. What good is it if you gain the whole world and yet lose your soul? As someone has said, why spend your life on something that death can take away?

Let us love God and not the world.