

299. Love Not the World.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

1 John 2, 15.16.

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." According to the Word of God friendship with the world is nothing but gross idolatry. The first species of this idolatry is what St. John terms *the lust of the flesh*. Thousands in low as well as in high stations of life sacrifice to this idol; they seek to achieve happiness by gratifying their sinful lust. They seek happiness in the lust of this world and give their hearts, which belong to God, to Satan and his ally, the world.

The second species of idolatry mentioned by the apostle is *the lust of the eyes*. If we seek our happiness in any of these things, then it becomes an idol. And the enjoyment of it, however it may be admired and applauded by the world, is condemned by God as damnable idolatry.

The third species of idolatry which the apostle speaks of is *the pride of life*. This means the seeking of happiness in the praise of men, in honors bestowed by men instead of seeking one's happiness solely in that which God gives and has promised. And this is the lowest, basest idolatry of which the human soul is capable.

No wonder that Jesus said to His disciples: "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world"; and again: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon"; and again: "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" And as the Master, so His apostles. St. Paul exhorts: "Be not conformed to this world"; "Come out from among them and be ye separate." St. James writes: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, . . . to keep himself unspotted from the world." There is nothing uncertain about these statements. They declare that there is a broad and ineffaceable line between the people of God and the world. They are so far apart that no man can belong to both at the same time. The world proposes a compromise, but it always means spiritual death to the Christian. Oh, therefore, shun the world!

Prayer.

O Father of all grace and mercy, preserve me from bad company and people of loose habits, so that, when the wicked entice, I will not consent nor follow in their ways, but guard my feet from their paths, so that shame and vice may not be my portion. O Lord, Thou hast hitherto reared me as a father does his son; grant me grace to incline mine ears and listen to the words of the wise that I may become prudent and cautious walking through this world and not lose the blessed life to come. Amen.

Don't do as other people do,
Unless you know they're right.
'Tis better far to stand alone
Than with the wrong unite,

This trying to be popular
And mingling with the throng
Has led to ruin many souls
Who yielded to the wrong.

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