

The Believer and the World

1 John 2:12-17

by Dr. Wayne Barber

Turn to 1 John 2:12-17. We have already looked at “The Believer and Sin,” “The Believer and Obedience” and “The Believer and His Relationships.” Now we are going to look at “The Believer and the World.” Remember, 1 John is written as a contrast of what believers are and what believers are not.

John is combating the Gnostic heresy of that day. 1 John 2:26 says, “These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.” We know the Gnostic heresy was having an effect on that church. In 1 John 1:4, he says, “And these things we write, so that our [but really your] joy may be made complete.” Something had robbed them of their joy. Any time your focus gets off of Jesus on anything but Him, your joy goes with it. John is trying to share with them, “Hey, something is going on and I am writing these things because there are those people who are trying to deceive you and lead your eyes off of your sufficiency in Christ.”

Look in 5:13. He says again, “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life.” One person said there are about eleven different signs of whether or not you are a Christian in 1 John. I am not teaching it quite that way, but I think it would be helpful to read it and find out what they are. It is a contrast: this is a Christian, this is not a Christian. As we work our way through it we have to remember that. So when it comes to the believer and the world, we have to understand what our relationship to it is. How are we to be in it but not of it? What does God have to say to us? What are the marks of a person who knows Christ? How does he live in this world but not be of it?

Well, in 2:12-14 we find the audience to whom John is writing. This is sort of comforting to me because in every church you have different levels of maturity. You can't force a level on people. People are where they choose to be in their personal walk. I can't put your level any higher or any lower. You can't make my level any higher or any lower. It is by my choice. It is by the measure of my willingness to surrender to Christ that gives me the level of maturity that I am on. In verse 12 he says, “I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.”

“Little children” there is the word *teknion*. This refers to newly born children. They

have the potential of growth. Everything is there. They are fully equipped. Don't you wish sometimes you could give a child his legs when he is ten and hand him his arms when he is fourteen? Some of the things they do just drive you nuts around the house. You see, they come fully equipped. This is what John is talking about, a newborn baby, fully equipped, has all the potential to grow but has not yet had the opportunity. He has just been birthed. He is a brand new Christian.

Their new birth was due to the fact that their sins had been forgiven them. The word "forgive" is in the perfect tense. This is a beautiful picture here. Perfect tense means that something happened back here which is determining the state that you are in right now. In other words, you will never hit a place in your life when your sins are not forgiven you, if you are a believer. That is already taken care of. That is perfect tense. That is in the past. Now I am living in a state where my sins have been forgiven. The word "forgiven" is the word *aphiemi*. It means they were sent away, never to return. It is the picture of the scapegoat in the Old Testament when the priest would come out and declare the sins of Israel on its head and send it off into the wilderness for that goat never to return. They have been forgiven.

Do you know your sins have been forgiven? God is not holding you guilty for your past. That doesn't mean we don't deal with sin. We have already studied that in 1 John. But he wants these little believers, these brand new believers, to understand that they can know that their sins are forgiven them. They never have to worry about that. What Jesus did upon the cross is complete and lasting and eternal.

The Gnostic heresy obviously could throw a young believer off track. Number one, it denied the deity of Christ. Number two, it presented a lifestyle that you didn't even have to deal with sin. Can you imagine? These people had gotten amongst the Christians there. John wants to assure those new Christians that their sins have been forgiven them.

Second, in verse 13 he says, "I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning." John addresses the older believers, the more mature believers, this time. Isn't it funny the extreme here? He goes from the brand new ones with the full potential of growth, all the way to the ones who have matured and have had the experience for all these years. He says in that verse, "I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning." Actually, it says "you have known Him and you know Him now." It is again in the perfect tense. If you will look at the perfect tense and how it is used in the book of 1 John, it is an incredible picture. You knew Him back there. As little babies you had the full potential to know Him and you took advantage of it. Through the years you have known Him. Now today you are in the state of knowing Him.

The word "know" there is the word *gnosko*, which means to experientially know. I want to know Him. John says, "Listen, this is a beautiful picture of what life can be for you and me. We have the full potential. If we will take advantage of it, if we will let life work for us and not against us, it will drive us to Him and to the cross. As we get there, we find a brand new revelation of Him that we have never known before." You have known Him. You are in the state of knowing Him and experiencing Him day by day.

They have had the advantage. There is no definite article. It says, "You have known Him who was from the beginning." There is no definite article which means before there was ever a beginning, you know the One who lived before then. You are convinced in your heart that He wasn't just born of a woman here on this earth and became flesh at that point. He was preexistent before the foundation of the world. You mature fathers, you have walked with this One who is preexistent and was birthed of a virgin. You know Him now in your heart. You experience Him daily in your life.

Third, in verse 13 he addresses the young men who are in the prime and vigor of manhood. "I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one." The best I can determine, the term that he has used here for young men signifies the toughest age I suppose that a person lives in. It is a time when he can make his choices. It is a time when he has all the strength of his youth. It is a time when he has all the chances and opportunities before him. It is the most trying time of his life because this is when he is pulled more than ever before to get astray and to not honor the Lord Jesus in his life. But he says, "You young men have overcome the evil one." The term "overcome" is the Greek word *nikao*, and it is in the perfect tense. You have overcome him and you are in the state of overcoming him day by day. The word "overcome" means that you have had victory over him. You have conquered the evil one.

The word "evil one" means the one who is out to do you harm. In other words, when you had the full potential to grow like these little ones, you took advantage of it and through the years you have understood that there is an enemy out there and the evil one is out to get you and he is out to harm you, but you have had victory over him. You are now living in victory over him.

What is their secret? How many young men do you know right now who are falling by the wayside? What is their secret? How can they know this victory? Look in I John 5:1 and I will show you who the overcomer is and why these young men have overcome the evil one. Verse 1 says, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him." That is the key. That is the principal. They love the one born out of God. Look in verse 5 of that same chapter: "And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" That word "believe" means more than just mental understanding. It means you are willing to submit and obey and do what He has asked you to do. That is what it really means to believe. Look at verse 10: "The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him [God] a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son."

Then verse 13 reads, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life." You see, these young men believed in the Son of God. They loved the Son of God, and they loved His Word. They were committed to obey and through their obedience, they had learned to overcome. That is how you overcome the devil. Can you imagine somebody getting up and saying, "Satan, I bind you"? I am sure Satan goes, "Oh,

you scare me to death.” The way you bind him is to love and obey the Lord Jesus Christ, to love Jesus Christ, to obey Jesus Christ. In doing that, you overcome. You have victory. You conquer anything the devil is trying to do in your life. You young men, you are in the state of overcoming.

Let me ask you a question. Where would you be on this? Would you be a young Christian with all the potential in the world but you haven’t had the time yet to grow? Are you an older Christian who has been a Christian for years and now you can truthfully say to your family, to your friends and to the people you work with, “I have known Him. I have lived and experienced Him for years and I am in the state right now of walking with Him day by day.”? Are you a young Christian and yet you have grown through? You are in that perfect stage of your life. You have all the opportunities in front of you. Could you say you are overcoming? Well, if you are you are saying, “It’s because I am fully obedient to whatever God wants in my life.”

In verse 13 John also brings up one more group. He says, “I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.” The word “children” here and the one that was used back in verse 12 are different words. *Teknion*, used in verse 12, is the word for little child. This word right here, *paidion*, stresses not so much the birth but the immature age. You are a young child. You have been born back here and you are in the state of growing. You are in that potential time, but you are in need of tons of instruction because you are very immature when it comes to the things of God. You see, you are not like the one just birthed in. You are down the road a bit, but you really need a lot of discipling. You need a lot of instruction. You really don’t seem to understand the things of God.

He said, “I am writing to you because you are children of the Father.” The picture here is His divine family. You are in His divine family. You know the Father.

If you think about it, these are maturity levels that are present in every church. That is kind of comforting. What does John want them to know? As he writes these, you have to remember, they are hearing him on four different levels. That is something that challenges me every time I step in the pulpit. It is different than when I am preaching at a place where people are studying eight to ten hours a week on what you are studying. When you step up and start speaking they come alive and they just mesh with you. They have already studied it ahead of you. They know it better than you do. They are just waiting to see if what you are saying is what the Scripture said.

It is different when you come to church and people have been busy all during the week and other things have been going on. You step up in the pulpit and you know that there are four levels of maturity out there. But I like what John does. He doesn’t water it down. Although there are four levels of maturity, he just says it like it is and knows that the Holy Spirit will interpret that to the hearts of whatever level they are on.

There are some things John wants them to know, three things basically. First of all, in verses 15-17, the believer is commanded not to love the world. That is what he wants them to know. He kind of changes his whole format. He has been building on what you are and the identifying marks. Now he orders them, he commands them,

he says, "You are not to love the world." Look at verse 15: "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Then he goes on to talk about the things that are in the world that we are not to love. But first of all, the believer is commanded not to love the world.

The word for love, *agapao*, is in the present imperative. The present tense means "don't be loving the world." You are living in a state of loving the world. You have to understand that. The present tense is significant.

There are times in any of our lives when we watch the world going by and it kind of catches our eye. We may even go after the world for a while. It doesn't take us long to find out that is one train we don't want to catch. Immediately we confess and repent, and we come right back.

That is not what John is talking about. He is talking about the person who doesn't catch that train. He is talking about the person who engineers that train. He is riding that train. He loves the world. He lives that way. The things of the world dictate his life. Everything about him speaks of the world. That is what he means when he puts it in the present tense.

The imperative mood means that it is a command. Do you realize that is what we have to understand? When you get a new car and drive it up in your driveway, it is so pretty. You just love that thing. Six weeks later you haven't washed it because you have been too busy to take care of it. Then the guy next door drives one in that is nicer than yours. All of a sudden you want to throw rocks at yours and go get his. All of a sudden you don't like what you have. It is insatiable. It is sin. We know it is sin because we are never satisfied with it. God clearly shows us we are in this world but we are not of it. It has nothing to offer you and me.

Therefore, John says, "You are not to love the world." Then he makes a powerful statement in the second part of verse 15. He says, "If anyone loves this world [present tense again, as a lifestyle loves this world], the love of the Father is not in him." He uses the word for "not" there that means absolutely in no way possible is it in Him. You see, the unbeliever is delighted with the world. If you will read Scripture, you will find out that a person who does not know Christ loves this world and lives in its system. In some churches you ought to just choose a night to worship the dollar bill. Just hang a big dollar bill across the front of the church and have everybody come down and bow down to it because that seems like what everybody is pursuing. It takes their time, their energy and everything else. They love this world. They do it as a lifestyle. They drop in church periodically to pay their token appreciation to God and think for some reason that they know Jesus Christ. No sir!

John is asking, "Do you want to know what a believer is? He cannot in any way habitually, consistently, be in love with this world. Whatever else he thinks, he knows the Holy Spirit has separated him and this world is not what is to be pursued." They live for it. The Spirit of God draws the people of the world, but they live for it. The Spirit of God in a believer causes us to be pulled away from the desire of what the world offers and enables us to live in it but not be of it.

Look in 4:17: "By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in

the day of judgment; because as He [Jesus] is, so also are we in this world.” Gracious! Do you mean to tell me just as He walks totally in oneness with His Father, we can do the same thing in this world? Yes. We are to do that as Abraham said, “seeking a city not made with human hands.” Remember, this book is a book of contrasts and you see a contrast right here. You see the people who live in this world and love it, and you see the people who are in this world but definitely are not of it. They are seeking the things that God wants in their life. Every believer is commanded not to love the world. A boat in water is by design. But water in the boat is disaster. It is by design that you put a boat in the water. But it is disaster when you put the water in the boat. We are in the world, but we are not of the world. How about you? Do you love this world?

The second thing is just as significant: we are cautioned as to what it is in the world that we are not to love. You have to be real careful here. You can’t say, “Well, there are people out there in the world who live ungodly lives. I don’t love them because I am not supposed to love the world.” You are cautioned here because he tells you what it is about this world that we are not to love. In John 3:16 he says, “For God so loved the world.” He is not talking about the evil system. He is not talking about these things that we are going to bring up. There John is talking about the people who are in it. We are to love them, but we are cautioned as to what it is in the world that we are not to love.

What is that? Well, he says in 1 John 2:16, “For all that is in the world,…” The word “all” is the word *pas*. It means all, but it means more than that. It means each thing separately that he talks about and all of them together. They are a unit that he is going to bring out. Whatever John is talking about, the whole matter is included. There is no cafeteria style of interpreting this. So when we get into what we are going to look at all three of these things are linked together. You can’t just pull one of them out and say, “Well, I am doing pretty good on the first two, but I am not doing too good on the third.” No, if you are not doing good on the third, you are not doing good on the first two; because they all are meshed together. It is a whole. It is a unit. We are not to love that in the world.

What in the world is he talking about then? Look with me in verse 15: “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, [1] the lust of the flesh and [2] the lust of the eyes and [3] the boastful pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world.” John narrows it down and tells you exactly what he is talking about. Love the people who are in the world. 1 Corinthians 5 says, “I didn’t tell you not to associate with immoral people in the world. I told you not to associate with an immoral brother.” That is interesting theology! You can’t put the salt in one barrel and the fish in another barrel and expect to win it. Love the people who are in the world. Get out there among them.

But there are three things that are linked together you are never, never, never to love. The Spirit of God will not allow that. You will be the most miserable individual that ever walked the face of this earth if you are trying to go against the grain. Well, let’s look at it. First of all he says, “the lust of the flesh.” Now the word “lust” is the

word *epithumia*. The kind of lust he is talking about is an irregular and inordinate desire or appetite. It derives its meaning from the word *epi* which means extreme concentration upon something. It is an intensifier. You know there is lust in your life when you can't get your mind off of something. It compels you. It is your focus. It is not a lot of things, it is something that is focused.

Second, it comes from the word *thumos*, which means desire, emotion or passion. Now, in itself the word *epithumia* is not a bad word, but in the way John is using it, it is irregular and inordinate. Let me show you the difference. The same word that is used here is used when Jesus intensely desired to eat the Passover meal with His disciples in Luke 22:15. That is the word that was used of Jesus' own mind-set. But it doesn't mean in a bad sense. Using the same word, in Philippians 1:23 Paul intensely desired to depart to be with Christ. Paul intensely desired to be with the believers of Thessalonica in 1 Thessalonians 2:17. It is the same word. So don't get confused. There is a desire. God created us to be concentrated and focused on the things that God has put before us. But when that focus becomes the things of the flesh and pleasing the flesh, that is the lust that we are never to love. That is a lust that did not come from God. It came from this world and the one who rules in it. This lust that John speaks about is an inordinate desire because it is the passion that is intended on pleasing the flesh.

This lust of the flesh is from the world and not from God. There is nothing wrong with money. It is the love of money, the love of whatever the flesh wants that is the problem. You can fill in the blanks. Look in Jude verse 16. It uses a word that shows us what it means to follow after the flesh, to lust after the flesh, to do what the flesh wants. It gives you sort of an example of the character. "These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts." If you ever want to find somebody who is doing that, listen to them for a while. They are always complaining, always grumbling and finding fault with everybody but themselves because they are following after their own lusts.

This lust of the flesh is fed by the next thing he mentions there in 1 John 2:16, the lust of the eyes. In other words, the eyes are bringing in the information that is causing the lust of the flesh to be quickened: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes." Now the word for "eyes" is *ophthalmos*. We get the word ophthalmology from it. It primarily means the physical eye through which the inner perceptions are formed as we view the outer world. What he is talking about here, in the general sense, is when a person can see what he is looking at and he is forming an inward perception. It may not always be exactly right, but he is forming an inward perception.

In the spiritual sense, what our eyes delight to look upon depicts our inner spiritual condition. What do you enjoy looking at? What do you enjoy watching? That will tell you something about what is going on inside. It is feeding it. The more you look at it, the more it feeds the lust of the flesh which wants to be pleased and pampered. The eyes are that part of the body which communicates worldly desires to our souls, thus leading the whole body to immorality. So we are not to look upon that which our flesh desires but upon that which is of God. It was Job who had to make a covenant

with his eyes because the eyes were where the problem was. You begin to see something and you form an inner perception. Then it begins to quicken the desire that is within, the desire of the flesh, the lust. The lust begins to go into gear and now you want to please it. You want to pamper it. You want to do what it is calling you to do. That is why these are all linked together. You can't separate them. You can't say, "Well, I am doing good here, but I am not doing good there." No, no, no. If you are doing bad here, you are doing bad in all three. They are hooked together. Eyes feed the lust of the flesh.

Have you ever been watching the television set and you just channel surf? I like to flip from channel to channel. I can tell in a second whether I want to watch it or not. I can be flipping through, and Ohhhh. I have to make a covenant with my eyes because of my flesh. I am never to love that which is of the flesh, that which pleases the flesh. That is not from God. That is from the world. I am not to love it. That is what we all deal with. I don't care who you are. If you point a finger at somebody you are the biggest hypocrite in this place. Every one of us deal with it. We have to learn that if we are in the world, we are not to be of the world. The flesh is activated by what it sees. Make a covenant with your eyes that you will look on the things that God wants in your life.

It is fed by the lust of the eyes; however, it is driven by the pride of life. The big problem in the whole thing is the last thing he mentions here. He says, "and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world." The word "pride" tells you what he is talking about. It is the word *alazonia*. It means thinking of oneself to be what he is not. This is a problem. When a person begins to get into a mind-set of something that he is not, he becomes a braggart. He boasts to others about himself. The word "life" is the key here. It is not the word *zoe*, which means the essence of life. That is what Jesus is. It is the word *bios*. It means basically that it is life in its concrete manifestation. Let me say it again. It refers to that which one has and that which one does, a boastful pride in who I am and what I have.

I am going to ask you a question. Does that rule your life at all? When somebody comes over to your house for dinner do you wish you lived someplace nicer? Why is that a problem to you? Is the lust of your flesh so strong that you find your identity in what neighborhood you live in and what size house you have or how big your car or your bank account is? That is the boastful pride of life. And that is the driver, the motivator of this whole thing. You have to have something, because you want to boast.

It is not only what a person has but what a person has done and what a person is going to do. This is the boastful pride of life. It drives the eyes to look upon the things that will feed the flesh which can be pampered and pleased. John said, "These are the things that are of this world that you and I are never to love."

All of these, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, work together and they are not from the Father. They are from the world. We are not to love these things that are in the world.

It is interesting that in verse 14 he mentions the evil one. You know who that is. That is the devil. In verse 15 he mentions the world: "Do not love the world." In verse

16 he says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes." He mentions the devil, the world and the flesh there together in three verses. There is your whole scenario. You see, I have these lusts in my flesh. You do, too. You have them, too. You find a person who says, "I don't have any lust in my flesh," he is either lying or he is dead. Don't pay any attention to him. Every one of us has that. That is what James says. It is the lust of your flesh. That is your problem. All of us have it.

Now the devil is out there. He is the one who rules in darkness. He is the one who knows this flesh. When he convinced Adam to sin he knew the weaknesses of our flesh. He is good at what he does. He knows how to put stuff in your path so that you will look at it and then desire it and go after it. So you have the world, which is the pulpit that he preaches from. You have the devil doing the preaching and then you have the flesh that you have to contend with. You are not to love any of that.

Let me give you a picture of how it works. In James 1:13 it says, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone."

Now look at verse 14. It shows you the process right here. "But each one [underline that, "each one." "Am I included?" Yes, you are. Quit blaming the rest of us] is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust."

Let's look at those two words, "carried away" and "enticed". Have you ever been trout fishing? There is a big rock and you throw your line out. You always fish up-stream when you are fishing for trout. You throw it up under that thing and you let that line follow that eddy water. It will go right up under that rock and come on around. Those trout are lying up under that rock. It is safe up under that rock. You and I are safe when we make up our minds that we are going to honor God and live like a believer ought to live, be in it but not of the world. You can watch those little trout. I can think like them. That trout is saying, "Whew! That looks good." The next time it comes down, you just keep doing it because you have to lure him out. You have to continue to entice him out.

That is the whole idea of those two words. It means to come out from under but to do it by being baited, being enticed. About the fifth or sixth time if the water is clear, you will see a trout dart out. Then he will turn back and say, "Boy, that was close. That was close." But if you know something about that trout, you will just keep throwing it. Don't leave. My Dad used to say, "Son, if you will stay in one place for a while you might catch a fish." You keep throwing it in there. Finally, he will come out and he will look. It is so funny if you can see them in clear water. He will come out and boom, he will grab that thing. And when he grabs it, you've got him.

That is exactly the way sin works. You keep walking by something and keep walking by something and keep walking by something. How dumb can we be? I mean, good grief! It is like taking a match and striking it and holding your hand over it. It is not burning, it is not burning... now it is burning. It is amazing how we are all this way, putting ourselves into situations, thinking that it doesn't work against us, it just works against other people. Every one of us has the lust of the flesh to deal with.

Well, James says in verse 15, "Then when lust has conceived [when the desire

and the temptation now have met and you have taken the bait] it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.” There is not one single thing you and I can do, pursuing the lust of our flesh, that will have any life in it whatsoever. There is a death, a death, a death of relationships, of something every single time. We fall into the trap of letting the lust of our flesh dictate what we do. We are not to love those things that are in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Not only are we commanded not to love the world and not only are we cautioned as to what it is in the world we are not to love because we love the people, but thirdly, we are challenged as to why we are not to love the world. I want to show you this. This was probably the biggest blessing to me in studying this passage. I have studied the passage before but this really grabbed me for the first time. Verse 17 says, “And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.” The Apostle John wants them to know something here and he is making a huge contrast. One part of the contrast is “things that are passing away.” It is like a river and a rock. A river is constantly flowing away. It is going away. You can have a little boy put his sail boat in the river and he will watch the sailboat go away and disappear. It is moving away. But a rock is something that is steady and stable and it will always be there. He is drawing a contrast for you.

The world is passing away. Now what does he mean by that? He means the world is passing away every day that the clock ticks. The world is inching that much closer to total destruction. In other words, whatever it is that you are coveting that this world offers you, it is going to burn. Every day you live you are getting closer to the world passing away. Why in the world would you anchor yourself to something that is temporary and passing away? That is what he is saying.

Look over in 2 Peter 3:9-11: “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.” Every bit of it is passing away. Not only the world, but he says the lusts are passing away. What does that mean? It means your body is dying. One day you are going to lie in a casket and your body will be in the casket and your spirit will either be with the Lord or in Hades. That body, once it is lying in the casket is not going to desire one single thing. All of the desires that you sought to please are dying.

The desires are passing away. People pursue them and pursue them. John asks, “What are you doing? They are passing away. Anchor yourself to something that is real, not something that is passing away.”

Then John goes on in verse 17 and says, “but the one who does the will of God abides forever.” Why are we not to love the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life? Why is it? Because all of that stuff is passing away and it offers absolutely nothing for eternity. Anchor yourself to the things that are eternal.

One day you will understand that if you don't understand it now.

What is the believer like with the world? He doesn't love the world. He does not love the world. We are commanded not to love the world. We are cautioned as to what in the world we are not to love and we are challenged as to why we are not to love the world. It is passing away.

I don't know where you are but that is some of the stuff I deal with every day. Don't anchor yourself to things that are passing away. "If the world is going to be burned one day," Peter says, "what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and reverence because you are going to abide forever." You are the children of God. Who is a Christian? Who is not a Christian?