

You Cannot Love Two Opposing Masters

1 John 2:15-17

1. **A Distinct** _____ (v.15a)

This is the first of only ten imperatives (commands) in First John. Many people may be most familiar with verses in John's writings about what we are to love (1 John 4:7-8) or about what God loves (John 3:16), whereas this command *not to* love something may seem extremely foreign. We are to focus our affections, not on the basis of what may be the most alluring to our physical senses, but on the basis of what God has indicated is good and lovely (cf. Phil 4:8).

2. **A Significant** _____ (v.15b)

First John is full of contrasts which delineate between what is pleasing to God and what is not (e.g. 1 John 1:5-7; 2:3-6). Jesus frequently contrasted two possibilities in order to help His hearers understand the significance of responding rightly to His teaching (cf. Matt. 6:24; 7:24-29). It is impossible for a Christian to be characterized both by loving God and by loving the world (cf. 1 John 3:13-15).

3. **A Simple** _____ (v.16)

John's list of sinful categories has much in common with two prominent biblical examples of sinful temptation (Gen. 3:1-7; Luke 4:1-13). The manner in which John describes these three categories points to a common idea that sin elevates the gift of God (food, satisfaction from a good day's labor, etc.) to the place of greatest importance which is to be reserved for God alone.

4. **A Different** _____ (v.17)

A Christian is to continually keep in mind the fact that all men are going to continue to exist forever whereas all of the things of this earth will pass away (2 Pet. 3:7; Revel. 21:1; cf. Matt 25:45-46). The person who is characterized by using this short life to pursue fulfillment through the temporary world will be left with nothing positive in eternity, but the one who is characterized by seeking God's desires will find everlasting joy and fulfillment (John 14:1-3; 17:3).