

1 John 2:15-17

2:12-14 were words of encouragement based on the assurance the believers have in Christ. John follows this exhorting the believers about the danger, the opposition and the emptiness the world brings to the believer.

The basic breakdown of 2:15-17 is seen in this flow chart:

The World: Your love of world (2:15) → comes from the world itself (2:16) → but, this relationship is empty because the world and its “love” is passing away. (2:17)

The Father: Your love of God (2:15) → comes from the Father himself (2:16) → and, this relationship that began today will continue in fullness forever. (2:17)

2:15 – “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

- “Love” in “Do not *love* the world” is present tense imperative of *agapao* which means this is a command.
 - The word “love” (*agapao*) is used in both context of “love for the world” and “love for God.” This is NOT an emotion. These might better capture the intent of “love”:
 - a desire,
 - an attraction,
 - a value,
 - a tendency to seek after,
 - a motivation to please
 - How and towards what a person sets their “love” is decisive.
 - Do they desire the world (temporary) or God (eternal)?
 - Are they attracted to the world (temporary) or God (eternal)?
 - Is value found in the world or in God?
 - Are they motivated by the world or by God?
 - A person CANNOT desire the world and God at the same time...CANNOT value the world and God at the same time...CANNOT be motivated by the world and God at the same time.
 - We use the things of the world, but not at the expense of sacrificing the things of God:
 - 1 Corinthians 7:31 – “those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.”
 - 2 Timothy 2:4 - “No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.”
 - Allegiance to God confirms the war you are at with the world. You can never exist peacefully with both the Lord and the world.
 - **Philippians 3:18** - For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ,
 - **Romans 5:10** - For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
 - **James 4:4** - You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.
 - **1 Corinthians 15:25** - For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.
 - **1 Corinthians 15:26** - The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

- **Hebrews 1:13** - But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"?
 - **Matthew 4:10** - Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"
 - **2 Thessalonians 2:4** - who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.
 - **1 Corinthians 16:9** - for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.
 - **Matthew 13:25** - "But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.
 - **Mark 8:33** - But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."
 - **Matthew 13:28** - "And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?'"
- "world" is the word *kosmos*.
 - *Kosmos* is used by John in these three contexts:
 - The **created universe**
 - 1 John 3:17 – "if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need..."
 - 1 John 4:17 – "as he is so also are we in this world."
 - John 1:10 – "He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him."
 - The **world of people**
 - John 3:16 where God loved the world
 - 1 John 2:2 – "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world."
 - John 3:16 – "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
 - The **system of the earth** under the power of Satan organized in every fashion and at every point against the Kingdom of God.
 - 1 John 4:3-5 – "Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already...for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them."
 - 1 John 5:19 – "We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."
 - John 16:11 – "...concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."
- Note the physical world is not evil, flesh is not evil and there is no Star Wars type of dualistic forces of good vs. evil. (Gnosticism; Greek philosophy) The world is temporarily under the control of the evil one, Satan. But, there was a day in the past where the world was good (Genesis) and a day coming where the world will be good again.

2:16 – "For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life — is not from the Father but is from the world."

hoti pan to en to kosmo,
For all that is in the world

[e epithumia tes sarkos kai](#)

the **lust** of the **flesh** and

[e epithumia ton ophthalmon](#)

the **lust** of the **eyes**,

[kai e alazoneia tou biou,](#)

and the **boastful pride** of **life**,

[ouk estin ek tou patros all' ek tou kosmou estin.](#)

is not from the **Father**, but is from the **world**.

- Creation is good. The world, the earth, the flesh are all good by design. But, man's fallen nature has corrupted these and turned them against the Kingdom of God.
 - Romans 1:20-21 – “For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”
- Three corrupted things in man's nature that pervert the goodness of creation are listed.
 - These three may not be an exclusive list although they can seem to match the temptation of:
 - Eve
 - Christ
 - All three of these focus the sinful human on the present, temporal world and not on the eternity of God.
 - “the desires of the flesh” –
 - “desires” is **epithymia**
 - can be positive or negative when describing man's nature.
 - 1 Thes. 2:17 – Paul desires to see the Thessalonians.
 - Philippians 1:23 – Paul desires to be with Christ.
 - “flesh” or “sinful man” is **sarx**
 - “flesh”, likewise, does not need to be negative, but in this context it is
 - this refers to any of man's corrupted nature that can be driven to excess.
 - “the desires of the eyes” –
 - “desires” is the same Greek word as above (**epithymia**).
 - The eyes are the gateway through which things can be introduced to the sinful mind. They are the window/doorway to the soul.
 - Mark 7:21-23 – “For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”
 - Matthew 6:23 – “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!
 -
 - “pride of life” –

- [alazoneia tou biou](#) can be translated as “the vain glory of life”
 - the silliness of wasting a life seeking the praise and recognition of the emptiness of a fading system. Not only is it fading, but it is in rebellion towards God. The problem is not merely with the fact this world’s glory is temporary, but that it is in a militant conflict with the everlasting creator’s eternal plan.

2:17 – “And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”

- Part of the reason love for the world leads to death is that the world is passing away. The force of death is active in the world and everything it produces. So, everything produced by the world is temporary and passing away because of the force of death in the world. (Romans 8:20-22)
- This verse is the conclusion and draws his point to a conclusion.
- “passing away” is the present tense of the Greek verb *paragetai*. Which means it is already happening.
- The man who does the will of God literally “remains” forever. They will never pass away.
 - Five times in the Gospel of John Jesus described himself as doing the will of God:
 - 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 6:39; 6:40
 - Five times Jesus promised that those who eat the bread he gives, keeps his word or hears his voice would remain forever:
 - 6:51; 6:58; 8:51; 10:28; 11:26
- Notice that up until this verse the believers were contrasted with those who believed false doctrines. Before the believer is the one who BELIEVES the word of God, now the believer is the one who DOES the will of God.
- There is an eschatological sense to this verse with the mention of the world passing away. This world IS currently passing away along with all the things that make it attractive
 - In 1 John 1:8 we were already told:
 - “Darkness is passing away”
 - “True light is already shining.”
- This verse sets up John movement to mention the Anti-Christ in the next verses. Just as the light is already shining and the world is already passing away even before Jesus returns to establish his kingdom. Likewise, John is going to be able to say the Anti-Christ is coming, but there are now already many anti-christs here because this process has already started.