

It's a brand new week, but no ordinary week...it's the week of THANKSGIVING! I love this holiday because do we not have so much to be thankful for, friend? It's a different thanksgiving for me and Rip this year because this time last year, multiple trips to TN were taken due to his father's deteriorating health. And it was on December 23rd, at 10:02pm when Rip and I were standing beside his father as he took his last breath. So, even though my precious husband is going to have his 1st Thanksgiving without his father, we are still so thankful for the gift of Harold Rippy and all the lives he touched while journeying on this earth.

I bought a pair of boots off facebook from a woman named Amy who also has a rather hard time during the holidays because her husband at 56 died of cancer around Christmas in 2015. I saw Toby Mac and his family and friends as they were at the graveside of his son. My friend knows she will one day see her son again in heaven. A friend of mine in TN knows she'll celebrate this Christmas with her husband's memories tucked inside every celebratory moment. And of course, there isn't a day that passes that Rip and I aren't always reminded of what is REALLY important in this lifetime - our relationship with Christ and doing what HE has us here to do - because Rip works every day at Hospice Ministries and when you are around people passing away from this earth into a new existence, you are daily reminded and daily *rejuvenated* to live life TO THE FULL IN CHRIST JESUS. Nothing, nothing in this world has an attachment on you and you see all the "stuff" of this world as just that - stuff. Not that we aren't thankful for what God has provided for us to care for - a house, a yard, a vehicle, groceries, clothes, tools, pets, etc. And we are so grateful for *everything* we have been given. There are those times when we are praising the Lord for what He has given us and we have to stop because we truly feel so undeserving!! Thankful that He allows us with careers that take His light into a dark world, and into the world's of people who need the love and forgiveness of Christ's. To get up in the morning to a warm home, food, and vehicles that work. These are no small things to us, but they are all gracious gifts of God's! And it's all ours to manage and to maximize for the glory of God. Nothing is ours to own and do with as we want. Nothing is to own us, and we're not to find our identity in any *thing*. Not at all! What we all have is simply ours to make sure we care for it and use it in advancing the kingdom of God. It's His kingdom that we are to be attached to - not satan's kingdom.

Nothing of this world is to mean more to us than this - being fully possessed by the life of God. If anything 'wordly' gets in the way of that, if anything worldly sparkles its way into our attention to the point that we have to have it, regardless if it's God's will and plans for our life, then we are living worldly lives. And this is where we are going in this bible study lesson. How to live with an eternal heavenly perspective and have no attachment to this world.

I didn't mean to start into this bible study on a negative note, but it's when we step out of this world and turn our eyes UP - setting our minds and hearts on things above and not on earthly things, that we truly begin to see THE life Christ shed His blood for us to live.

**Take a minute and write in the space everything God has entrusted into your care.** Be as specific as you can, and just list what comes to your mind - it can be anyone, anything, any object, any calling, any position of influence, and any item in your home, office, etc. If you run out of room, turn the page over. Then, after seeing all the list of words, will you place your hand over them and just thank God for the RICH treasures He has given you from His own heart?

Last week we looked into the lives of many spiritual heroes of the faith that prayed a three word prayer that not only verbalized the deep longing of their heart, (to be *seen in full* and to be *fully God's obedient servant*), but we also saw the deep intimacy in their relationship with Him as He'd call out their name twice. After I learned that *one* truth about the expression of intimacy that is communicated when God would speak a name twice, I have to be honest and tell you ... now, when I pray to Him, I thoroughly enjoy the freedom and the sweet fellowship of saying His name twice - "Father, Father."

Before we move into our next bible study lesson on, "No attachment to this world," there is one more "Here I am" that we need to look into first because it actually lays the foundation for us.

Before we move into our lesson, if you haven't stopped to pray, confess, and welcome the presence of God into this moment of bible reading, will you now?

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Let's get right into this study, ok?

**Read Revelation 3:20** - Write it out in the space below.

The Lord Jesus had seven letters written to seven churches. He inspired the writing of these seven letters through His beloved disciple, John, while he was imprisoned on the island of Patmos. Verse 20 is in the context of one of those letters - His letter to the church of Laodicea - the lukewarm church. To that body of believers, He has this to say:

"To the angel (divine messenger) of the church in Laodicea write:

"These are the words of the Amen, the trusted and faithful and true Witness, the Beginning and Origin of God's creation:

15 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold (invigorating, refreshing) nor hot (healing, therapeutic); I wish that you were [h]cold or hot. 16 So because you are lukewarm (spiritually useless), and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of My mouth [rejecting you with disgust]. 17 Because you say, "I am rich, and have prospered and grown wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked [without hope and in great need], 18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold that has been heated red hot and refined by fire so that you may become truly rich; and white clothes [representing righteousness] to clothe yourself so that the shame of your nakedness will not be seen; and healing salve to put on your eyes so that you may see. 19 Those whom I [dearly and tenderly] love, I rebuke and discipline [showing them their faults and instructing them]; so be enthusiastic and repent [change your inner self—your old way of thinking, your sinful behavior—seek God's will]. 20 Behold, I stand at the door [of the church] and continually knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him (restore him), and he with Me.

- *Amplified Study Bible*

The very thought of Jesus standing at a door and knocking is sometimes used as an illustration of His offer of salvation to individuals: if you would only “open your heart’s door” and invite Him into your life. But in Revelation 3:20, Jesus is not pleading with an individual to be saved; He’s seeking admittance to a church. An actually physical body of believers.

*It’s alarming to think of Jesus standing outside of the church and knocking, but that’s the position He was in. The Laodicean church had shut the door on the Head of the church and Jesus was left standing in the cold. He was an outsider to the hearts of the entire congregation. The church of Laodicea merited no words of approval from Jesus. The Laodiceans were guilty of self-reliance, self-righteousness, and spiritual indifference. Even worse, the church was unaware of their wretched condition. - John Piper*

What Christ was doing was inviting everyone in the church to experience *intimate* fellowship with Him. However, if one person (if any *one* person) opened the door by repentance and faith, Christ would enter that church through that individual. The picture of Christ outside the Laodicean church seeking entrance strongly implies that there were no believers there at all.

What the church of Laodicea thought they were experiencing and what they thought they were, (rich, prosperous, have grown wealthy and in need of nothing), Jesus said they were actually wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. This shows just how spiritually blind Satan can make us, not only individually, but corporately.

But Paul has told us in Philippians 3:8-9 what truly is of surpassing worth:

**Read Philippians 3:8-9** - *“What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith” (Philippians 3:8–9).*

**What did Paul consider a loss?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Because what had become of surpassing worth to him?** \_\_\_\_\_

**For Christ’s sake, Paul said he lost what?** \_\_\_\_\_

**And what did he consider those things he lost for Christ’s sake?** \_\_\_\_\_

**And he considers it (sees it all as) garbage so that he may gain \_\_\_\_\_ and be found where?** \_\_\_\_\_.

Now, as you read those same verses from the Amplified Study Bible below, circle the words that are speaking to you the most. As you read them, they seem to be underlined or highlighted out of the verses. When you read Scripture in an Amplified Study Bible, it will give you the full Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic theological meaning, helping the reader to better understand the text. So, when you come to these brackets [ ] the words within them are unlocking shades of meaning for personal application and allowing for deeper study. For example: when you read verse 9 that says, “and may be found in Him” you will find a fuller understanding of what Paul was communicating when he said ‘found in Him’ in the [ ]. So what Paul was saying, in a fuller understanding, was ‘and may be found believing and relying on Him.’

- Amplified Study Bible - Philippians 3:8-9 - as you read, underline what stands out to you.

**“But more than that, I count everything as loss compared to the priceless privilege and supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord [and of growing more deeply and thoroughly acquainted with Him—a joy unequaled]. For His sake I have lost everything, and I consider it all garbage, so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him [believing and relying on Him], not having any righteousness of my own derived from [my obedience to] the Law and its rituals, but [possessing] that [genuine righteousness] which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.”**

In the space, write the word(s) or word phrase(s) that you underlined in the above verses.

Before going any further, take a quiet moment to look at those word(s) and word phrase(s) and let them soak into your spirit. Say them out loud if you’d like to hear those very words.

So, now let’s move on and look closer to our next lesson - we’ve labeled that divider tab in our binder, “No Attachment.” Paul has given us a solid foundation as to WHY we are to have no attachment to this world and the things of this world - to experience the privilege and supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus more deeply, intimately. That reason alone is enough to encourage us to see this world and the things of this world as sheer garbage, as our ‘doesn’t mince words apostle’ puts it!

But it’s not always that easy, is it? We live in a world that is saturated with the stronghold of seduction. What I mean by that is - the world (and the ruler of it) is so active in seducing people to find the things of this world so attractive and necessary. But what things? Does Scripture tell us of specific things?

Let's look at a few verses to see what we find -

**Read 1 John 2:15-17** slowly - even though you may have read this a hundred times or you may even have some of these verses memorized. But resist reading them like you're already familiar with them. Read each verse as though it is your first time.

There are three areas of our life mentioned here and all three deal with living with an earthly perspective instead of a heavenly perspective. But let me go ahead in inject something here ... when living with a heavenly perspective is truly how you wake up, how you go about your day, how you talk, listen, walk and how you end your day, then these three areas of your life become marked with more spiritual victories than defeats. Living with a heavenly perspective is to daily prioritize the eternal - the kingdom of God!

Nothing compares to living in this world with no attachment to any part of it! When no item, no thing, nothing material, nothing relational, and nothing circumstantial has the slightest hold on your personal identity or on your desires, then and only then are you living with a genuine heavenly perspective.

But to live with *no attachment* to this world means Satan has not succeeded in getting your thoughts fixated on what feeds your ego, on what feeds the flesh. Which that is what 1 John 2:15-17 is targeting - how Satan knows what to do to get you to conform ever so slightly to this world. Remember, he is not only intelligent about your weaknesses and places of vulnerability, he is also so subtle that most of the time, his tactics are imperceivable in his battle attacks against us.

**We face these battles in three areas: the flesh, the devil, and the world.**

**1. Let's consider the flesh - Read Mat.4:3-4** – *When the tempter came to Him, he said, “And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But Jesus replied, “It is written and forever remains written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.’*

Jesus declared that there was more to life than satisfying the lusts (fixated wants) of the flesh.

To better understand the lust of the flesh, let's look to **Gal.5:19-21** –

*“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

**Let's break this down and really see what these 'works of the flesh' are:**

**Adultery** – Sexual unfaithfulness to husband or wife. It is also looking on a man or a woman to lust after him or her. Imagining and lusting within the heart is the very same as committing the act.

**Fornication** – A broad act including all forms of immoral and sexual acts, any and every type of sexual perversion.

**Uncleanness** – Moral impurity; as well as doing things that pollute and defile the life.

**Lasciviousness** – Filthiness, open and shameless indecency. It means unrestrained evil thoughts and behavior.

**Idolatry** – The worship of idols, whether mental or made by man's hands; the giving of one's primary devotion (time and energy) to something other than God. Idolatry can take on many forms.

**Witchcraft** – “Pharmakeia, from which we get our word pharmacy.” Sorcery; the use or administering of drugs. In the present context it would include all forms of seeking the control of one's fate including astrology, séances, fortune telling, crystals, or any form of witchcraft.

**Hatred** – Enmity, hostility, animosity. It is the hatred that lingers and is held for a long time; a hatred that is deep within.

**Variance** – Strife, discord, contention, fighting, quarreling, dissension. It means that a man strives against another person in order to get something. He deceives, doing whatever has to be done to get what he is after.

**Emulations** – Wanting and desiring to have what someone else has. It may be material things, recognition, honor, or position.

**Wrath** – Indignation; a violent, explosive temper; anger; quick and explosive reactions that arise from stirred and boiling emotions, but quickly fade. It is not anger that lasts.

**Strife** – Conflict, to struggle, fight, contention, or dissension.

**Seditious** – Division, rebellion, standing against others, .

**Heresies** – Rejecting the fundamental beliefs of Christ, the Bible, and the church; believing some teaching other than the truth.

**Envyings** – This word goes beyond jealousy. It is the spirit that wants not only the things that others have, but begrudges the fact that they have them. It wants to see loss and suffering through that loss.

**Murders** – To kill, to take the life of another person. We say that we could never do that, but consider what Jesus said. Mat.5:21-22a –“You have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not murder,’ and ‘Whoever murders shall be guilty before the court.’ 22 But I say to you that everyone who continues to be angry with his brother or harbors malice against him shall be guilty

before the court; and whoever speaks [contemptuously and insultingly] to his brother, shall be guilty before the supreme court.”

**Drunkenness** – Intoxication; Taking strong drink or drugs to affect one's senses for lust or pleasure. Prov.20:1 – Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Hab.2:15

**Revellings** – Indulgence and pleasure; indulging in feeding the lusts of the flesh.

*\*this list is from online resources - [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org) and [biblehub.org](http://biblehub.org)*

As you read over that list, what’s coming to your mind? There is no right or wrong answer, so whatever the Spirit is surfacing in your mind and heart, write it in the space below in prayer.

## **2. Let’s look at the flesh of the eyes** - The phrase “lust of the eyes” is found in **1 John 2:15-17**.

When I was focusing in on God during January, February, March of this year in simply wanting greater intimacy with Him, yes, but I also wanted to live life with an eternal and heavenly perspective. This is one of those truths in Scripture that the Holy Spirit allowed me to experience in very personal ways. And during that time, I found these words on [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org):

Simply put, the lust of the eyes is the desire to possess what we see or to have those things which have visual appeal. This coveting of money, possessions, or other physical things is not from God, but from the world around us. John emphasizes that these physical things do not last; they will pass away. In contrast, the child of God is guaranteed eternity.

The Ten Commandments addressed the lust of the eyes in its prohibition against coveting. Exodus 20:17 commands, “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.” Coveting can include a desire to have people, possessions, or status.

Satan uses the lust of the eyes as one avenue of temptation. Part of the reason Eve listened to the serpent in the Garden was that she looked at the forbidden fruit and saw that it was “pleasing to the eye” (Genesis 3:6). Satan used a visual image to help entrap her. Satan tried a similar tactic on Jesus. One of his temptations in the wilderness was an attempt to make Jesus covet earthly power. Satan used a visual: he “showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor” (Matthew 4:8). He then promised to give them to Jesus—for a price. Of course, Jesus did not succumb to the lust of the eyes, and Satan was defeated (verses 10 and 11).

We must follow Jesus' example and, in the power of the Holy Spirit, resist the lust of the eyes. The world is full of "eye candy," glamor, and gaudiness. Materialism beckons with its promise of happiness and fulfillment. A media-saturated society bombards us with advertising campaigns that might as well say, "Covet this!"

All that glitters is not gold, and the child of God knows that fame, fortune, and finery quickly fade (Proverbs 23:5). Our focus is not the newest product or latest fashion. Our goal is not to keep up with the Joneses or to surround ourselves with the trappings of glittering magnificence. Instead, our goal is "to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings" (Philippians 3:10). Our eyes are set on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2). Our view is to eternity.

*The opposite of loving the world is not only loving the Father, but also doing the will of the Father. And that connection is not hard to understand. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). John said in 1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." So loving the Father and doing the will of God are not really separate things. If you love God, you will love what He wills. It is empty talk to say I love God but I don't love what God loves. So John is saying, "If you love the world, you will perish with the world, but if you don't love the world but love God, you will do his will and live with him forever." In summary, the commandment is, "Don't love the world or the things in the world." The first incentive is that if you love the world, you don't love God. The second incentive is that if you love the world, you will perish with the world. And the third incentive is that if you love God instead of the world, you will live with God forever. - John Piper*

**And so what is the last work of the flesh we see in Scripture called the 'pride of life?'**

**3. Let's look at the pride of life** - The pride of life can be defined as anything that is "of the world," meaning anything that leads to arrogance, ostentation, pride in self, presumption, and boasting. John makes it clear that anything that produces the pride of life comes from a love of the world and "if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

But the whole concept of the pride of life, especially as it is linked with the "lust of the eyes" and the "lust of the flesh," appears in two more passages of Scripture—the temptation of Eve in the **Garden** and the temptation of Christ in the **wilderness** (Matthew 4:8-10). I want to point out that Satan's methods were practiced in both the perfect and holy place God created called the Garden, and he came to tempt Jesus while in the wilderness. What is a *wilderness*? It is completely opposite of a beautiful lush garden - it is an uncultivated, uninhabited, and inhospitable region that has been neglected or abandoned.

**Let's stop for just a moment and read Matthew 4:8-10. Underline any words or word phrases that stand out to you and write them below.**

The pride of life can be defined as anything that is “of the \_\_\_\_\_.” Did you write the word ‘world’ in the blank? Then you wrote the correct word. We are to have no attachment to the things or the ideas of this world.

The first example of the temptation of the pride of life occurs in the Garden of Eden, where Eve was tempted by Satan to eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in disobeying God. Eve saw the fruit to be “good for food,” “*pleasing to the eye,*” and “*desirable for gaining wisdom*” (Genesis 3:6).

We call this coveting. She saw and she desired what wasn’t hers to have - she coveted. Nothing about coveting is living with a heavenly perspective, but a worldly one.

She coveted in three ways:

**First, it was appealing to her appetite.** This John refers to as the “lust of the flesh,” - a desire for that which satisfies *any* of the physical wants we may have. The fruit was also pleasing or delightful to the eye - what we see and desire to own or possess - here is the “lust of the eyes.” Finally, Eve somehow perceived that the fruit would make her wise, giving her a wisdom beyond her own.

Satan tried these same three temptations on Christ during His 40 days in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). He tempted Jesus with the lust of the flesh, bread for His hunger (vv. 2-3), the lust of the eyes, “all the kingdoms of the world with their splendor” (vv. 8-9), and the pride of life, daring Him to cast Himself from the roof of the Temple in order to prove that He was the Messiah by a display of power that was not in the will of God or His plan for the redemption of mankind (vv. 5-6). But Jesus, though He was “tempted in every way, just as we are” (Hebrews 4:15), resisted the devil and used the Word of God to ensure victory over him.

Christians have always been, and will always be, lured by the same three temptations Eve and Jesus experienced. Satan doesn’t change his methods; he doesn’t have to because they continue to be successful:

1. **He tempts us with the lust of the flesh** — “sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these” (Galatians 5:19-21).
2. **He tempts us with the lust of the eyes** — the endless accumulation of “stuff” and the insatiable desire for more, better, and newer possessions, which ensnares us and hardens our hearts to the things of God.

But perhaps his most evil temptation is the pride of life, the very sin that resulted in Satan’s expulsion from heaven. He desired to be God, not to be a servant of God (Isaiah 14:12-15). It is the root cause of strife as it exalts the self in direct contradiction to Jesus’ statement that those who would follow Him must take up their cross (an instrument of death) and deny themselves.

The pride of life stands in our way if we truly seek to be servants of God. It is the arrogance that separates us from others and limits our effectiveness in the kingdom. The pride of life “comes not from the Father, but from the world.”

This one study is one that is so important for our lives as we seek greater intimacy with God. Let's pray and ask the Father to reveal in us, to us, anything that needs to be confessed and repented of that is either reflecting a lust of the flesh, a lust of the eyes, or the pride of life in us. But I want to encourage you in something -your Heavenly Father loves you so deeply that as He opens your eyes to see any sin or any offensive way in you, He is quick to rub the healing balm of His grace and compassion on your soul. He is not harsh, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, and He is not accusatory. (That is who Satan is - the great accuser). Now, your Father is for you, not against you. He surfaces sin our life with mercy and never without it. He can't work IN you opposite of His own nature which is compassion. So as He delivers the hot coal from His altar to any area of your life and mine for cleansing, He does so with all the warmth of deliverance and forgiveness and the strength of His holiness we need in order to experience His intimacy. You see, to convict us of sin is His one of His specialities in bestowing His love! Remember, He disciplines those He loves, and that discipline is not harsh or record-keeping. His love is unconditionally correct in how He cares for you and for me because all that matters to Him as we live in this world and not of it is this - that we keep our eyes on Him so we can live with a heavenly perspective.

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