Dear Open Door Family,

As I planted flowers and listened to the birds on Monday, I kept thinking what an amazing God we have. This world which is so full of sin and decay still has incredible beauty. Just look at a miniature daffodil or the rich colors of the tulips and you see variety and beauty. God could have created just one color or one kind of tulip or only one kind of flower. Many years ago in Ecuador I visited a man who had collected over 5,000 varieties of orchids. Every one different in shape, size, color and different in the timing of their opening. That is a God of infinite creativity. Spring always makes me stop and say THANK YOU Lord God for the beauty You have freely given us to enjoy.

In his letter the apostle John warns us not to love the world. He is not referring to creation but to a system of belief which purposely leaves God out. Worldliness is the attempt to live life without God, His Word, or His standards. Let's look at these verses together.

1 John 2:15-16 *(NLT) Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. [16] For the WORLD OFFERS only a craving **for** physical pleasure, a craving **for** everything we see, and pride in **our** achievements and possessions. These are **NOT from the Father**, but are from this world.*

As Christians we are NOT supposed to love the world system. We must not allow ourselves to slide even gradually into adopting the values of the world around us. If as Christians we are at home in this system and we enjoy and seek after the things of the world, there are serious questions about our walk with God. The things the world offers do not come from God and will never satisfy our deepest longings. This worldliness "...begins in the heart and is characterized by three attitudes: (1) craving for physical pleasure - preoccupation with gratifying physical desires; (2) craving for everything we see - coveting and accumulating things, bowing to the god of materialism; and (3) pride in our achievements and possessions - obsession with one's status or importance." Life Application Study Bible

In His comments on these verse C J Mahaney said: "A love for the world begins in the soul. It is subtle not always immediately obvious to others, and often undetected by people who are slowly succumbing to its lies. ...The greatest challenge facing American evangelicals is not persecution from the world, but seduction by the world."

PRAYER: Lord, please help me NOT to give in to the seduction of the world. May I love the lost of this world without buying into the system which is set up to rob me of the joy I can have only in You. Please Lord, make me sensitive to the times that the allure of the world is pulling on me and give me the strength to be able to keep growing in my walk with you.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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