

Do Not Love the World

By Daniel Yordy

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"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. For all that *is* in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." 1 John 2: 15-17

"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." Galatians 6:14

The world is incredibly powerful in the lives of all. The world is far more powerful, personally, in the lives of believers than most understand.

The cross has removed all connection between the believer and the world; but most Christians live in ignorance of this absolute reality. The light must turn on. The danger for a believer who loves the world is not condemnation, but rather, the choice to fight the light, that is to war against the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to preserve the world and their identity with it.

What is the world?

The world is the system of relationships and interactions between selfs living for self. The world is the corporate body of Adam. The world is all those ways and means by which those living by their flesh in this world manipulate and control one another, honor and compromise one another, and live in relationship with one another.

The world is that set of arbitrary rules by which people place themselves in relationships with, over, or under other people. The world is rooted entirely in the imagination of the mind. It is 100% a confidence game, that is, a con. The world is the practice of mask wearing by which people attempt to pretend they are what they think other people expect them to be. Or by which cunning people pretend to be something other than what they are for self gain.

The world is not the earth. The earth is the Lord's and all the fullness of it.

And the world is not individual people. When John said in his gospel that God so loved the world, he was not speaking of a love of God towards the system of manipulation and self-exaltation by which the people of the world relate together. He was using a different definition of the world "world" than the other times he used that word. In that case, in John 3, he meant that God so loves the individual people in the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

Most everywhere else John uses the word "world," he means the system of false relationships that God hates.

In understanding the New Testament commandment to us not to love the world, I want to focus on the most important element found in "loving the world," the pride of life. The lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh are dealt with in us by the exaltation of Christ our life and by enveloping our consciousness in the blood of Jesus. The very nature of Christ arising in our hearts causes that which is not of Him to simply dry up and blow away.

But the pride of life has the power to harden the hearts of believers against Christ. It is the primary thing that causes people to trample down the seed of life inside them or even abort it, at least as far as their present life in this world is concerned. The pride of life is what causes Christians to betray

and kill other Christians, a passion and occurrence far more prevalent and widespread than most Christians will admit.

The pride of life is the necessary foundation of all war and killing. Cain killed his brother Abel because he was seized by the pride of his own life, his own choices, and his own identity rising up in his heart.

The pride of life works on every person in this way. Every one of us gains our identity of ourselves, who and what we think we are from outside of ourselves. As humans we are simply vessels. A rock is a rock. It is what it is. People may stumble over it, something heavier may crush it, but it gains no sense of self from any of that, it is just a rock. Humans are vessels. We were created to contain another and to gain our identity from the infilling of another. We were created to contain God. We were formed psychologically to gain our identity only as expressions of Him.

By seeking a self-identity, mankind lost its only true identity. The result is a powerful urge inside of everyone to seek an identity from some source. There are two choices only for every individual born of Adam from which to draw an identity, Christ or the world. We draw our identity from Christ only through full acceptance of the finality of the cross and our personal union with Jesus. Relating to others through a Christ identity is called love. It is the normal operation by which individual members of the body of Christ relate with one another.

But all non-Christians draw their identity entirely from the world. And most Christians do the same. Most Christians see themselves separate in some way from Christ. Therefore, they must identify themselves by their group. Thus, I am a Baptist, or I am a Catholic, and so on.

This is a powerful urge, even among those who are truly seeking the Lord. I certainly identified myself with the fellowship I was part of for many years that we called "the endtime move of God." There was a sense of self and identity that I enjoyed by being "under the covering," part of the cutting edge of what God was doing in the earth. When we left the move, I was stunned to see in me the falling apart of so much identity that I had taken for granted, that I had a place in God because I had a place in the move. I had no idea how much "the move" and being "under the covering" had replaced Christ in me.

Drawing one's identity from any cause or association or group on this planet is the pride of life, it is the "world" God commands us not to love.

In whatever area and to whatever degree that we draw our identity, our definition of ourselves, from the world, in that area and to that degree we do not draw our identity, our definition of ourselves from Christ.

It is one or the other, an equation that, in the end, must become all of one and nothing of the other. "No man can serve two masters."

We know that this is a deep concern of the Lord Jesus for His people throughout the church age, and especially now, in our day. "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth." Revelation 3:15-16

I cannot comprehend anyone who has a way of thinking that allows them to dismiss this concern of Jesus as irrelevant to themselves.

Certainly, people get their identities from the church they are a part of, or the country club they frequent, their place of employment, or the school they attend. Even in the Christian school, we practiced "school spirit," an effort to cause children to draw their identity from the "school" they were part of. People gain an identity by being part of some cause, some crusade, some effort to "save the world."

But let me focus in specifically on how we draw our identity from anywhere outside of Christ inside of us. It all boils down to one overpowering emotional and psychological concern. Because we interact with other people, what we think they think about us impacts our hearts and minds more powerfully than we understand. When I am around other people, especially people who have some role of authority over me, I am gripped by what I think they think about me. This grip does not have to come from what they actually think about me, often they don't think what I think they think at all. Rather, it is the story I concoct in my own mind about what I assume other people think about me and how I think they will react if I do this or if I do that.

And so very often, I put on a mask, I wear the image that I think they expect from me - especially those who have the power to do me harm, such as an employer, etc.

Inside this false identity that we still wear are two powerful emotions. These two emotions are completely intertwined and inter-related. You never have one without the other. The first emotion is shame. Its counterpart is pride. The trees and fig leaves that Adam and Eve wove around themselves came entirely from this false identity, shame manifesting as pride.

But here is something we must reckon with. The greatest force of identity in this world is "love of country." Every other form of identity pales in comparison with this largest element in the pride of life. "Love of country" is the greatest fig leaf, the greatest false identity, the greatest anti-Christ that exists for us to hide our shame behind.

Love of country has nothing to do with love of people or love of the earth and the land. Both the "civil war" and the "revolution" in America proved that people can "love their country" while hating half the people in it. Love of country gives people the excuse they need to kill their neighbor and burn down his home. It is exactly how Cain justified the murder of Abel to his own mind.

Leo Tolstoy wrote his masterpiece, *War and Peace*, largely in order to present before the world and before God's people one of the most terrible questions of history. It is the exact same question put before the human race by God just after the fall of man. Why did Cain kill Abel? Am I my brother's keeper (and not his killer)?

Tolstoy wrote *War and Peace* to showcase how a time of human insanity, the Napoleonic invasion of Russia in 1812 impacted the lives of ordinary people in the path of destruction. Here is the question that he placed before the human race.

"On the twelfth of June, 1812, the forces of Western Europe crossed the Russian frontier and war began, that is, an event took place opposed to human reason and to human nature. Millions of men perpetrated against one another such innumerable crimes, frauds, treacheries, thefts, forgeries, issues of false money, burglaries, incendiarisms, and murders as in whole centuries are not recorded in the annals of all the law courts of the world, but which those who committed them did not at the time regard as being crimes. What produced this extraordinary event?"

Through the story, Tolstoy presents a convincing argument that this crime was not caused by any one man or any few series of events; rather, it was the accumulated personal decision of every individual involved. He goes on to say: "To us it is incomprehensible that millions of Christian men killed and tortured each other either because Napoleon was ambitious or Alexander was firm, or because . . . We cannot grasp what connection such circumstances have with the actual fact of slaughter and violence: why because the Duke was wronged, thousands of men from the other side of Europe killed and ruined the people of Smolensk and Moscow and were killed by them."

The god of this world has a simple trick by which he persuades humans to murder one another, all he has to do is get them to wave their little flag and they are instantly ready to rush out and commit horrendous criminal acts against their brother, or to give their full prayers and support to those who do commit those acts in their name.

When I see someone wave an American flag, I see next a little Iraqi girl burned to death in her bed. The one who waves the flag is the one who pours fuel over the little girl and lights the match - all to celebrate "American freedom." The one who waves the flag may deny such responsibility, but such a denial will not stand before the truth.

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

Yes, Cain, you are - but you murdered your brother because he offended you.

Every crime is a crime when an individual commits the crime, but the moment a "country" commits the crime, it is now a virtue and everyone thanks God for it. This is always how group identity works.

I saw the same thing happening inside Christian community. What would always be seen as "selfishness" when practiced by an individual, now becomes a godly virtue when practiced together by the group. Group identity absolves an individual of any personal responsibility for selfish acts practiced by the group. Since the group is "holy," then the acts must, in fact, be "good" and not selfish.

Just in my lifetime, the United States of America has burned millions people to death in their homes (more than the alleged number of the Holocaust). Regardless of how it is phrased, anyone who waves the American flag will call this slaughter ultimately "good." And they will fight you with all vehemence of "righteousness" if you call it evil or if you call the perpetrators war criminals.

They will beat you with their Bibles and even kill you if you call America evil.

There is one reason only why the church of Christ in America is not being persecuted, why the church is "free" to carry on without hindrance. And that reason is the full identity of the church with the world. "God in America, America in God" is the desperate cry of almost every Christian in the country.

Why?

What does anyone gain by the surface, thoughtless sentiment of loving their own personal identification with a particular group in this world?

Loving the identification with the group, whatever that group might be, but especially that group called a "country" or "nation," is the highest form of self loving self that there is in this world. There is not one ounce of honesty or of Christ in any of it.

Christ does not know boundaries. The earth does not know boundaries. The United States of America is a figment of people's imaginations that is maintained by violence and by self-delusion. It is the opposite of Christ. It is an identification of self drawn from the vanity and emptiness of this world. It is flesh. It is passing away.

There is no call for the Spirit of God to blow through "America." He will never do such a thing. He will only move through hearts that are yielded to Him and He does so with no regard for any worldly grouping whatsoever.

To kill an Afghani is to kill the Lord Jesus Christ. To treat any human being with anything less than the dignity with which one would treat the Lord Jesus is to treat the Lord Jesus Himself with contempt. To separate one's self from any human on earth on the basis of "country" is to separate one's self from Christ. We cannot have both the world and Christ. We cannot know both the life of this present age and the life of the age to come. It is one or the other.

The entrance of the life of the age to come into this present age is a cataclysm. It is an earth-shattering and nation-toppling event. It is the Apocalypse.

Every part of the darkness gathers itself together to wage war against the Lamb. In the present time, the United States of America leads that darkness.

I see evidence, almost every day, that the evil powers, both human and demonic, that rule this world, are using the church of Jesus Christ in America as one of their primary avenues to full victory and power simply by teaching them to wave their flags. This is not a "philosophy." I see the direct connection between "God bless America" and the triumph of evil in this world on a regular, evidential basis.

Why would we think it would be any different? Why would anyone think that the Christian exaltation of one of the kingdoms of this world, the most powerful and overbearing in all history, would be anything other than anti-Christ?

That's what all the stories teach us. The anti-hero, reaching for what is "good," in order to protect himself from what is "evil," ends up destroying the "good" by his own hand and becoming the very evil he imagined he was shielding against.

That is what the Christian church in America is about to do. We will watch it with our own eyes.

I am convinced that the final *Star Wars* movie is a testimony of God against the United States of America. In that story, the anti-hero is afraid of losing the one he loves most, his wife (think freedom). Because of that fear he turns to evil (think the military) to save her. But in the moment of trial, he himself, because of his own anger, kills that which he loves by the power he created to "save" her. Arising out of the ashes of his anger, he becomes the next devil figure.

Poor, deluded American, do you not know that the only threat to your freedom has ever been your own government and its powers of violence. In the hour of your crisis, your own sons and daughters who have joined the US military will turn their guns against you at the command of that same Beast.

Here is another interesting real-life way in which this story element can be seen. We know that the Jewish Encyclopedia states that most modern Jews are not descended from Jacob or the Israel of the Bible at all; they are, rather, the descendants of a Turkic tribe from the steppes of Russia who converted to Judaism centuries ago. At the same time, there is good reason to believe that most of the Palestinians are descended from Jacob and from the Israel of Jesus day. In fact, a large chunk of the Palestinians are Christians, descended directly from those Jews of Jesus' day who DID accept their Messiah. Sure they speak Arabic, big deal. I am of German descent, yet I speak English! And here we watch the American church, just like the stories portray, in a frenzied and mindless state, frantically assisting those who call themselves Jews but are not to destroy those who are actually descended from Jacob - the Palestinians, all in the name of God bless Abraham.

Wow!

(But we know that God does not regard natural descent either way - all are welcome to come to Him through Jesus.) And we also know that God turns the way of the wicked upside down. Yes, this is the kind of thing God would most certainly allow to rise in the earth as an antithesis, a backdrop for the holy revelation of Himself.

Elijah fled for his life because he spoke against the evil of the government of Israel.

Isaiah was sawed in half (by Jewish history) because he spoke against the evil of the government of Israel.

Jeremiah was thrown into the pit because he spoke against the evil of the government of Israel and because he spoke against the temple of God.

Zechariah was stoned before the altar because he spoke against the evil of the government of Israel.

John the Baptist was beheaded because he spoke against the evil of the government of Israel.

Jesus was crucified because he spoke against the evil of the government of Israel. More than that, Jesus called the Jews themselves liars and children of the evil one. He called the leaders of the church in His day open graves filled with rot. He spoke directly against the self-righteous pretending of the leaders of Israel. That is why they crucified Him.

And He told you and me that the people of this world would hate us for the same reasons. Jesus said to us that they, those who think of themselves as the people of God, will kill us thinking they are serving God.

The dearest Christian saint turns into a murderer when you speak against the evil of their flag.

What is a flag?

A flag is that wonderful trick devised by Satan by which he fills men's hearts with sufficient hatred so that they are able to overwhelm the natural revulsion against chopping apart or burning a living, breathing, fellow human being. Once that natural hesitance is removed by the flag, there is no evil they are not ready to commit in its name.

That is the only purpose it serves - and its why people so love their flags. Another critical book for America today is *War Is the Force that Gives Us Meaning* by Chris Hedges. Find his articles and read them. They are the testimony of God against this nation.

I just read this paragraph that I would like to include here.

"In his book *People of the Lie*, M. Scott Peck wrote that evil is not merely wrong-doing. Although most of us are not capable of murder, all of us do occasionally behave badly. It's human to make mistakes, to lash out in pain, anger or frustration. This happens all the time in ordinary human relationships. But according to Peck what distinguishes evil people from ordinary flawed human beings, is the denial of responsibility. Even when their deeds are exposed and even when confronted with the immense suffering they are causing their victims, people capable of evil never admit that they are wrong and refuse to take responsibility for their actions." Avigail Abarbanel

The writer is an Israeli Jew writing about the nation and people of Israel in their treatment of the Palestinians in their midst; she could be writing about the people of America just as well. "Even when their deeds are exposed and even when confronted with the immense suffering they are causing their victims, people capable of evil never admit that they are wrong and refuse to take responsibility for their actions." These words directly apply to many "American" Christians I know.

The revelation of Jesus Christ is the exposure of all that is evil in this world. The exposure of evil is the direct result of the appearance of the Lord Jesus in our midst. The exposure of evil is the direct result of the overwhelming love of God moving through us to redeem His creation. Yet, just as when Jesus appeared the first time, the manifest love of God moving through Him was rejected and called "demonic" by those to whom He had come.

It cannot be any different today. Jesus said it couldn't be any different.

"Love of country" is really nothing more than an irrelevant and meaningless human emotion. All believers are severed from it by the cross and so it actually and truly means absolutely nothing. Yet the power of evil is its ability to cause us to believe things that are not true and to give our lives defending that which is central to this fallen world and to the systems of relationships created by men from which they falsely draw their personal identity.

To cease waving the flag cannot impair in any way one's union with God and one's love for other people. To wave the flag can cause one to murder the Lord Jesus Christ by supporting the murder of one of the least of these His brethren.

Now, before I go one step further, I want to put a parenthesis in here. I just read an article sent to me in which a brother was speaking against Christians who happen to read a different set of verses than what he reads. He spoke out of that so-familiar sense of religious superiority, and I was left with the sense that there was only condemnation for those who don't come under his view of things. To him the "cross" was a club with which to beat down fellow believers, and in doing so, exclude many other things God says in the New Testament.

Because I am human, that kind of thinking undoubtedly works its way into my writing. I try hard to keep it out. I hate it. I hate reading that kind of stuff and the last thing I want to do is lay that religious perspective on you. No one can lay a charge against those who trust in Jesus; I don't care how self-righteous they see themselves to be.

And so I make all the dealings of God personal to me. I try not to direct them "at" you. If that ever comes through, please forgive me. God leads by the tenderness of example only, and He draws all with great compassion into the Lord Jesus Christ.

And this is the dilemma I have struggled with for the last few years. I know that the self-exaltation of the "American" Christian is overwhelming. Everything said in "America" is about "America." I just received another article that was all about God saving "America" and filling "America" with the breath of His Spirit. I have a close friend in Canada who has lived among Americans in Canada for many years and he still gets this stuff thrown at him, that he, a Canadian, is inferior to the superior "Americans." A little of "our goodness" may trickle out to others, but it's all about God blessing "America" after all.

God does not know boundaries and He does not recognize modern political nations, neither does His Spirit nor His Church. The modern nation is less than 500 years old; it has arisen slowly at this end of the age. It is central to the nature of the beast in our day. In fact this slow rise of the modern nation and modern political government IS the Beast rising out of the sea that John saw.

So what do you do with this great contradiction in God's word? On the one hand He says that no charge can be laid against those who trust in Jesus. On the other hand He says that if you love this world, His love cannot be in you.

I hear my fellow believers blaspheme God as they exalt this bloody beast called "America." (The pledge of allegiance itself is blasphemous - indivisible - try "unsinkable Titanic" - the very proclamation of "indivisible" by the pride of life requires the destruction of this false and fleshy union.) I watch them bring evil and violent men before the children and say, "You can be a soldier, too," sending some without thought into the most evil and murderous cult in the world, the military, where everything holy that has ever been planted in them will be ripped out and they will be trained to kill men, women, and children without conscience or remorse.

Then, these same precious brethren turn, and in the next breath worship God. And the Spirit of God moves upon them and through them in tenderness and in love.

How can this be?

For the same reason that the Holy Spirit continues to move in tenderness and love upon you and upon me.

The blood of Jesus.

Do we then throw out this word that God speaks? "Do not love the world . . . if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Many do. Many do.

On the other hand, many would take this word in 1 John and use it to condemn their brethren, throwing out the other word God speaks - "If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died . . ." Romans 8:31-34

Is this confusing? You bet it is. I cannot find an answer to this contradiction of God in His word, though I have sought an answer for years. I cannot drop either word God speaks.

But the purpose of this article is not to condemn anyone. My purpose is to unveil, the little bit that I can, the life of the age to come, revealed now in us.

We can see this truth portrayed in stories over and over. It is a universal understanding. When a people are in bondage or in slavery to something false, the hero comes to set them free. Only, they resist the hero because they prefer their slavery. In the end, it is the very people whom the hero came to free who put their savior to death.

But in God's story, the Hero rises out of death and brings salvation anyway by the power of His mighty love.

First Christians, and then all mankind, who are enslaved by the life of this present age, whether Christianized or not, will see the glorious liberty of the sons of God as a threat against them personally. For instance, "American" Christians have no idea how meaningless their exaltation of "America" really is, a cheap and shallow emotion that leaves no trace of anything when it vanishes. Yet they hold to it as their very life, and the more you try to free them from its falseness and uselessness, the more they throw it back at you as if it is life itself.

Am I, maybe, making too big a deal out of nothing? I would that I were. But I see the evidence continually, that the beast and the dragon use this exaltation of "America" in the mouths of ignorant and foolish Christians by which to build their momentary triumph of death and slavery throughout the earth.

Innocent people are dying in flames of agony right now, fire falling from heaven upon the earth in the sight of men, directly because "American" Christians blindly shout, "God bless America." Incredibly, the American view of "freedom" is our great ability to kill people we don't like. It is the justification that Cain uses to kill his brother.

But, there I go again. I will not hide how this whole thing aggravates me so. But this article is about the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is revealed into this world as it is. He comes as LOVE and as SAVIOR. He comes through you and through me. All that He is we are. To set people free, you must strike their chains. But they will defend their chains, and we must be prepared for that.

To love, to strike the chains without self-righteousness or condemnation of others, to receive the blows that must come back against us with the open arms of forgiveness, and to love until all chains are gone and the glorious liberty of the sons of God fills all the earth.

This is our calling. This is the life of the age to come.

Blessings, Daniel Yordy