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THE INFILTRATION OF THE COSMOS INTO CHRISTIANITY

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF 1 JOHN
NUMBER 11
1 JOHN 2:16-19

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1 JOHN 2:16-19 "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

In our last study we saw that Satan is the ruler of this world and worldliness is a mental attitude which excluded God and divine viewpoint. Any believer with scar tissue on the soul has the mental attitude of worldliness. Paul expressed this same idea in Romans 12:2.

The renewing of the mind is necessary if we are going to get away from worldliness. Scar tissue and the edification complex cannot exist in the soul at the same time, it is either one or the other.

1 JOHN 2:16 "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Back in verse 15 John referred to "the things of the world." If a believer loves "the things of the world" then he cannot love God with true devotion. What are these "things of the world?" This verse 16 will explain that and will answer that question. John here lists three categories of worldly things.

1st--The lust of the flesh

The word for "lust" is epithumia and it means a strong overpowering desire. Flesh here refers to the old sin nature. The old sin nature is a part of the soul, and this is a way we sin in the soul. Ezekiel speaks of the soul sinning. Ezekiel 18:4 and Jeremiah 17:9. When the old sin nature controls the soul, the soul is said to be fleshly. A carnal Christian is one who is controlled by the old sin nature. There is the area of weakness in the old sin nature which produces personal sin. This is taught in Hebrews 12:1. Mental attitude sins are worldliness and pride. This was the first sin of Satan as it is expressed in the five "I wills" of Isaiah 14. But when you have pride you always have other mental attitude sins. PRIDE NEVER STANDS ALONE. From pride comes bitterness. Bitterness is nothing but frustrated pride. Vindictiveness is antagonistic pride. Implacability is stabilized pride. Guilt arises out of pride. Jealousy is the fruit of pride. We read "The Devil was a murderer from the beginning." The reason he was a murderer was his pride. There is also an area of strength in the old sin nature, and from this area we do all of our human good. Isaiah 64:6 and Romans 8:8 bring out this idea. There is also the lust patterns of the old sin nature. The lust pattern of the old sin nature is in view here in 1 John 2:16. Approbation lust and pride are twins and they always stick together. Power lust, ego lust, approbation lust, and materialism lust all come from pride and it all adds up to worldliness.

2nd--The lust of the eyes

The greek word for eyes is ophthalmos (dual, not plural.) But here the word is in the plural and the reason it is in the plural is that the soul has self-consciousness, mentality, volition, conscience and emotion, and in all the facets man is caused not to see God from the standpoint of doctrinal truth. He is partially blinded. He sees things from Satan's standpoint. Worldliness is satanic doctrine. Darkness hath blinded his eyes, and the word for "darkness" is tuphaloo and this means scar tissue on the soul.

3rd--The pride of life

This now is the climax. The lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes are used as a foundation to produce the pride of life. The word for pride is alazoneia, and it means arrogance, self-centeredness. The word for "life" is bios, the word from which we get biology. Bios means the pattern of life. Their whole life is filled with pride and they don't know it. They think they are humble. They often try to distort pride by using grace but they don't fool God. Satan is a genius and he can take pride and make it look like humility, and often does. The way you can tell this is by the mental attitude sins in the life. The lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes leads to pride every time. All of the mental attitude sins are related to pride. So this really says, "The pride of the pattern of life." The source for all pride is the old sin nature. Pride is Satan's brainwashing system to form a complex in your soul, from which comes bitterness, jealousy, pity, envy, hatred and every mental attitude sin you can name. The pride of life is a pseudo edification complex to counteract the true edification complex you build in your soul from Bible Doctrine. Therefore you see why Paul said in Romans 12:2, "Stop loving the world and the things in the world." This is the Devil's tool to keep believers from making spiritual advancement.

Recovery Is Necessary

Before any believer can advance in spiritual growth there must always be rebound after sin has been committed. Rebound makes it possible to be filled with the Holy Spirit again. The Holy Spirit on the inside of the believer battles pride. Galatians 5:16 tells us of this inner struggle. But the Holy Spirit will not combat the pride of life unless the Holy Spirit controls the life. Rebound will not correct the situation, for rebound only makes it possible for the Holy Spirit to fill you so you can become positive toward doctrine again. The intensity of the inhale of doctrine will determine the extent of your spiritual victory. As doctrine flows into the soul, pride flows out. It is just like turning on a light. You turn on the light and the darkness has to flee. The mature believer with an edification complex in the soul is far better equipped to handle sin than the believer with no doctrinal structure in the life. I am not here advocating that you go out and sin deliberately just so God can forgive you. I am not saying this. If you are a mature believer, you will then know how to handle sin when it comes. You know how to rebound and you know how to keep scar tissue from building up in the soul.

Where Does This Pride Of Life Originate?

We have the answer from this passage. John says, "Not out from the source of the Father." But rather he says it is "Out from the source

of the world." We have this little preposition ek and this means "Out from the source of." The kosmos is the Devil's domain and here he operates with power.

1 JOHN 2:17 "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." From this passage we see that the Devil's world will pass away. This word pass away is the present, passive, indicative of parago. This is a reference to the destruction of the world at the end of the Millennium and this is the last event on the agenda of the Angelic Conflict. This refers to the final defeat of Satan, and his being cast into the Lake of Fire forever. This event is described in 2 Peter 3:7-12, Hebrews 12:26-29 and Rev. 21:1. The whole satanic system will be destroyed. It is a temporary system, but God allows it to exist until the whole Angelic Conflict is completed. Before Satan's system is defeated, the kosmos will pass through several stages.

1. The Church Age is the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict. Every believer is the target. Christ once was the target, but once Christ ascended and sat down at God's right hand side, then every believer became the target and the conflict intensified.
2. When the church is taken out of the world, then Satan will focus his attention on the Jews. They will be the main target during the Tribulation.
3. In the middle of the Tribulation, Satan will be forced out of heaven and will be forced to live on the earth during the last half of the Tribulation. In Scripture this period is referred to "The great Tribulation."
4. At the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, Satan will be cast into prison for 1,000 years.

REVELATION 20:1-3 "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

At this time all demons will be taken off the earth and there will be 1,000 years of perfect environment. There will be no war, no poverty, Satan will be gone and there will be no religion on the earth.

5. At the end of the Millennium Satan will be released for a season. He will return to the earth and lead the last revolt against God. When Satan is on the loose, there is always a revolt against God.
6. At the end of this Satanic revolt, the physical world will be destroyed and God's eternal kingdom will be set up.

The world is temporary until all of these stages have been completed.

A Contrast In This Verse

On the other hand we have those who will do the will of God and the word for do here is poieo and is an aorist, active, participle. The word for will of God is thelema and it means the purpose and design God had for the universe from eternity past. Doing the will of God always begins with faith in Jesus Christ.

1 JOHN 2:18 "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." The words "little children" come from paidon and this refers to believers who won't learn the easy way but they have to learn through discipline. We have many believers like this today, those who won't learn through doctrine but have to learn the hard way of discipline.

We have some technical language in this verse and we need to know exactly what it means. "The last hour" doesn't refer to the end of time but rather it refers to the last dispensation, the Church Age. We are in it now. This is the last great dispensation which must be concluded before these startling things take place. When the Church Age is ended and the Tribulation begins, then the anti-Christ will come. During the Church Age there will be many anti-Christ. We have seen many of them come and go during the Church Age thus far. But in the Tribulation there will be one anti-Christ and he will be the Dictator of the Revived Roman Empire as we have studied from Daniel and Revelation. The words in this verse "Ye have heard" is an aorist, active, indicative of akouo.

THE BIBLE'S DESCRIPTION OF THE ANTI-CHRIST OF THE TRIBULATION

1. He is the man of sin, the son of perdition of 2 Thessalonians 2:3.
2. He is the beast out of the sea of Revelation 13:1-10.
3. He is the beast of Revelation 17:8-13.
4. He is the little horn of Daniel 7, 8 and 9.
5. He is the abomination of desolation Jesus spoke about in Matt. 24:15.
6. He is the prince that shall come in Daniel 9:26-27.
7. He is the Prince of Tyrus in Ezekiel 28:1-10.
8. He is the feet of the image in Daniel 2:31-45.

Now I am aware of the fact that there are those who scoff at this kind of Bible teaching, but I have given you the exact words of Scripture to describe the anti-Christ. Those who scoff at this teaching don't give you any explanation of all these passages I have listed here. This passage says "He shall come" and this is what we call a futuristic present, which means it is a future event so certain to happen that it is placed in the present tense. It is in the middle voice because the anti-Christ will come for his own benefit. It is in the indicative mood, showing the reality of the coming of this event. In the Tribulation, the anti-Christ will be the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire.

Many Anti-Christ During The Church Age

This passage goes on to say that even now, referring to the Church Age, that there will be many anti-Christ. We have seen them come and go through history, such as Adolph Hitler of our time. Even a believer can be anti-Christ if he ignores and neglects doctrine and allows scar tissue to form on the soul. The word in this verse "whereby" really means "by which circumstances" we know it is the last time. The last eventful season refers to the Church Age.

1 JOHN 2:19 "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

This verse tells us of the defeat of the kosmos. In his last great church at Ephesus the aged pastor John had some people to break away from the church because they had accepted kosmos doctrine. The "they" in this verse refers to those who had fallen under "the pride of life." They had scar tissue on the soul and couldn't take strong doctrine. Doctrine always divides the crowd. They "went out" comes from the word exerchomai and this means they were driven out. The real meaning here is they were driven out so they might be exposed. The "that" here introduces a purpose clause and it means they were driven out so it could be shown that they didn't belong in the church.

A Constant Problem

This is the greatest problem of the modern church. The world is always trying to get into the church. The church in every generation will face this problem. Problem number one in the American church today is that the world infiltrates the church at every point. The only way to keep the world out of the church is for doctrine to be taught and preached all the time.