



Mess. 05: If Anyone Loves the World, the Love of the Father is Not in Him.

Scripture Reading: 1 John 2:12-17

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Word ministered by Brother **Pedro Dong** and transmitted by the Life for All Institute, directly from the Pérola Auditorium, Estância Árvore da Vida, Sumaré-SP, on **08/31/2024**.

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1 John 2:12-14

1. John writes his first letter with great affection and care. He uses the word “little children” as an elderly father who lovingly treats his spiritual children (1 John 2:1). However, from 2:12 onwards, he classifies the recipients into three groups: **little children, young men, and fathers**, according to spiritual growth and maturity, not according to physical age.

Luke 24:46-47; Acts 5:30-32

2. First, John speaks to the little children, those who are in the first spiritual stage, who have just learned about salvation and are beginning to live the Christian life. **At this stage, it is extremely important to know about the forgiveness of sins, the initial element of the gospel of God.** What is required of man is repentance for the forgiveness of sins. We must have clarity and assurance that we can receive forgiveness of sins by believing in Him (Acts 10:42-43; 13:38). Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3), and His blood accomplished eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12, 28).

3. Talking about forgiveness and the remission of sins seems simple and superficial. We know that if we sin, we can confess them (1 John 1:9). However, this can lead us to think that being forgiven is easy, and we may not value the precious blood of the Lord very much and thus not be zealous about not sinning. **But in order for God to receive a sinner, Christ had to do a great work.**

4. In the last message we spoke about the mercy seat, the cover of the ark of the covenant, in which was the testimony, that is, the two tablets of the Law (Lev 16:11-15, 23:26-28; Ex 30:34-38). They represent who God is and what His nature is. In order to be received by God, man must meet the demands of this testimony. God is righteous and full of glory, and sinful man cannot meet His demands nor have fellowship with Him. Therefore, in the Old Testament it was necessary for Aaron, as high priest, to make atonement for his own sins and those of the people.

5. Aaron had to kill a bull and use its blood to enter the Holy of Holies, along with two handfuls of crushed fragrant incense and a censer. Inside, over the mercy seat, the cover of the ark, were two cherubim who watched over the glory and testimony of God. Any man who entered the Holy of Holies and did not meet the requirements of God's holiness and righteousness would be terminated.

6. In the Old Testament, only Moses had free access to meet with God between the cherubim on the cover of the ark. For others, it would have been impossible. They needed a high priest, who

could only enter with the blood and the censer so that the smoke of the incense would cover the mercy seat, and the cherubim would not see him. Thus, he could enter and sprinkle the blood as a propitiation for sins. However, in His wisdom, which is Christ, God designed everything. The smoke of the incense represented the death and resurrection of Christ. **Thank God, today we sinners can have access to God.**

7. It is basic to know about the forgiveness of sins. When man disobeyed God and ate from the tree that God had told them not to eat from, sin and death entered the world, and death spread to all men because all sinned (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12). After the fall, man was expelled from the garden, and God placed cherubim (the glory of God) with a flaming sword (the righteousness and the holiness of God), who did not allow anyone who was not approved by the righteousness and holiness of God to have access to the tree of life (Gen. 3:24). As sinners, we lost access to God, who is life. However, through Christ's redemption, we have regained it. We need not fear being struck down by the cherubim, because Christ died for us (Heb. 4:15).

Rom 7:14-20

8. We must not think that, after we are saved, the sinful nature has been eradicated from us. No. Sin still lives in our flesh. **There is no point in trying to perfect it or having hope in it – the flesh needs to be crucified with Christ, because nothing good dwells in it.** What frees us from the law of sin and death is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1-2). Those who are in Christ Jesus are in another realm, the heavenly one.

9. After the fall, man became connected with the devil, the father of lies (John 8:44). Man became part of the empire of darkness and became involved in sin and death. He has no strength to free himself from the law of sin and death, because it acts like gravity and makes the fall inevitable. Thank God, one day we received the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and He gave us His Spirit, who dwells in our spirit and whose law is stronger. The law of sin and death pulls us down, but the law of the Spirit and of life is like a rocket that overcomes the law of sin and death and takes us to the heavenly sphere. **The only way to overcome sin is to live in the spirit.**

Rom 6:6; 8:3-8

10. We must no longer live according to the flesh and the old man, because Christ has already nailed them to the cross. This fact only occurs in those who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. What controls the human being is the mind, which defines where we live: in the flesh or in the spirit. The result of placing the mind on the flesh is death; the result of placing it on the spirit is life and peace. We place our mind on the word of God by practicing transcription, immersion, sleeping with God, and waking up with God. In this way, we place our mind on the spirit and are no longer slaves to sin.

1 John 1:9

11. If we sin, we must confess our sins to God, who is faithful and just to forgive us and to purify us from all unrighteousness, so that our fellowship with God and our brothers and sisters may not be interrupted. No longer living in sin is not just a moral issue; rather, the greatest harm is being cut off from the fellowship of life. **Children need to know well the importance of the forgiveness of sins in order to always remain in the fellowship of the Body and in the circulation of life.**

1 John 2:13

12. **The second group are the fathers.** They represent the most mature in the church, those who are in an advanced stage of maturity. They are the ones who truly take on the responsibility of feeding the sheep with the Word and shepherding the flock of God, not as lording it over those entrusted to them; rather, they are examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:2-5).

13. The most mature are not necessarily those who are older in age or have more biblical knowledge. **Rather, they are those who show responsibility for God's flock, who care for it, and who shepherd and feed it.** They are not there out of greed, they do not act out of constraint, but they are mature in the divine life, they are full of it and are driven by it to care for the flock with

love. Those who want to dominate are not the most mature but are instead in the sphere of the world. We must be in the sphere of the kingdom of heaven.

14. Being dominant is the opposite of being a model. A model is a reference for the flock. Parents need to be a reference for the entire church. We need mature people who are a model for others, so that they have a pattern to follow. **Fathers provide stability for the house of God.** To do this, they cannot be unstable and indecisive, but reliable and solid, because they have known Him who is from the beginning. (The verb *to know* in Greek is in the perfect tense, which is used to indicate an action **completed in the past**, but with **effects or continued relevance in the present**. Thus, it can be said that parents have known God in an absolute sense.)

John 1:1-2

15. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He, as the Word, was in the beginning with God. **Fathers, first of all, know that God is from the beginning, and with Him there is no variation or shadow of turning (James 1:17-18).** Those who truly know God have a solid foundation and do not waver, because God does not change and has no shadow of turning. The main characteristic of parents is firmness, and this is reflected in the firmness of the church's leadership. If the leaders of a church are hesitant, the brothers and sisters will feel insecure, without a pattern to guide them. With mature people in leadership, we feel secure. Through the life of what has existed since the beginning, the mature person begins to have the same characteristics as God.

1 Cor 2:4

16. Fathers know that it is the power of the word that accomplishes the work of God. Christ is the Word of life, the very eternal life that was with the Father and was made manifest to us. The apostle John announced the Word of life, which is Christ as eternal life, and introduced those who heard it and believed in it into the fellowship of life with God and with the church (1 John 1:1-3). **This results in a solid ballast for the church to navigate the world, like a ship with a safe course, and not like a boat adrift.**

1 John 2:13-14

17. In addition to the little children and fathers, in the Church we also have **the young men to fight against the Evil One.** Young men are those youth who have already left the initial stage of Christian life, on whom the Lord can count in the fight for the kingdom of heaven, which is the kingdom of God in life. **To fight against the evil one, we need to know who our enemy is, where he is and what his weapons are.**

1 John 2:15-17

18. The world is the weapon that the evil one has to try to defeat us, to fight against the will of God. God does not take us out of the world, because we need to live in it to rescue others. The world (*Kosmos*) is an organized system with a hierarchy and power structure, to dominate humanity, a world system that dominates the politics, economy, religion, and culture of all peoples and nations since the fall of man opened the door for the evil one to enter. That is why today we need the youth.

Gen 1:1

19. In His creation, God first created the heavens and the angels before He created the Earth (Gen. 1:1). He did so with great wisdom and prudence, with Christ as Wisdom and Designer (Prov. 8:12, 22-30), in good order to be inhabited (Job 38:4-7).

Isaiah 45:18

20. But at some point, in the past, an angel rebelled against God's authority. He was joined in this rebellion by angels and pre-Adamic creatures, which brought God's judgment on Satan and his followers. Thus, after God's judgment on the first creation, the Earth became formless and void (Gen. 1:2). **But the Spirit of God hovered over the waters to bring life back to the Earth.**

21. God did not give up on His eternal purpose that He established in Christ Jesus (Eph 3:11). He decided to restore His creation in six days (Gen 1:2–2:3). In this new chapter of creation, God created man in His image, according to His likeness, so that he might dominate the earth (v. 26). In other words, God wants to establish His kingdom through His life when it governs man. For this reason, God placed the tree of life in the middle of the garden (Gen 2:9) so that man might receive Him as life. In this way, God would begin to govern man through life, and man would govern the entire earth.

22. Satan was not part of this new sphere of creation. Disguised as a serpent, the devil deceived Eve into eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which God had told her not to eat from, and she gave it to her husband, who also ate (Gen. 2:17). Thus, through the disobedience of one man, the many were made sinners (Rom. 5:19). For through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin; and death spread to all men, because all have sinned (Rom. 5:12).

23. It is important to note that Satan was not part of the sphere of creation that God restored. But man's disobedience opened the door for Satan, and with him sin and death. This was the second cataclysm in the universe created by God (the first was Satan's rebellion). With sin, Satan began to reign in this world through death (Rom 5:14), which is why he was called by the Lord Jesus the prince of this world (John 12:31-32; 14:30; 16:11) and today he reigns over the world through his principalities and powers, the rulers of this dark world, the spiritual forces of evil (Eph 6:12). The world lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19). This is the domain of darkness from which God has freed us to enter His kingdom (Col 1:13).

24. There is a contradiction: we are of God, and the world belongs to the evil one. The world is dead, because death reigns in it. Satan reigns in the world and does whatever he wants in it. **But we are of God, and what reigns in us is life. Through Christ, grace came to all men for justification that gives life; so through the church, we who have received the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in life (Romans 5:17-18).** The forgiveness of sins is for justification. God justifies us because He wants to give us life and reign in us, and reign in the universe through us through life.

25. Jesus told His disciples that in the world, rulers rule over the people and those who are great exercise authority over them. But it is not so in the church, in the kingdom of heaven, for whoever wants to be great must be a servant of all (Matthew 20:25-28). We are under the supply of life; we have received eternal life through the word of life and we have been introduced by the apostles into the fellowship of life. God reigns in the church today through the circulation of life. **Wherever there is the church as the reality of the kingdom of heaven on earth, there is one reign in life because this one word circulates, and this makes us totally one.**

26. Throughout history, the church has been contaminated by the world's system of hierarchy. The struggle for power, prestige, and dominance has plunged the church into deep degradation for 19 centuries. Satan is cunning and uses the world as an instrument to do his will.

27. The culture of the world has also distracted man from God's government and His Word, which provides light to give direction and power to carry out God's work. The concept of democracy within Greek culture caused the Corinthians to choose the preacher they liked best (1 Cor. 1:11-13; 3:1-5).

28. The Jewish religion, which is also part of the systematized world, influenced the Galatians to return to the practice of the law, accepting another gospel and backsliding. When God gave the law to the Jewish people, there was no intention of creating a religion, but rather to keep it until Christ came. Christ gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from this evil world, according to the will of our God and Father (Gal 1:4-9). The world still exercises power over God's children through riches. **Jesus made it clear that we cannot serve two masters: God and riches** (Matt 6:24). In this verse, the Hebrew word for riches is "*mammon*"; it is wealth personified.

29. The first church, born on the day of Pentecost, had no worldly influence; it persevered in the apostles' teaching, and in it, fellowship in the Word established the government of God (Acts 2:42). Fellowship in the Word also promoted the fellowship of life, which is the circulation of divine life among the members of the Body of Christ, and thus the church grew (vv. 46-47). **If we maintain the circulation of life, the number of people will certainly grow.** We believe that this is possible. Teenagers have done supernatural things. Through "Come and See," it is possible to bring dozens of people. **And with the help of the captains and Supply and Logistic Stewards, we can quickly multiply. The Lord is blessing us. The Supply and Logistic Stewards need to care for new people through family groups.**

30. Money had no power over the Christians of the early church, for they sold their properties and laid the proceeds at the feet of the apostles (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35). **With this context, we can now understand what it means: Do not love the world or the things in the world.** The world is a weapon of Satan to confuse the church and corrupt the hearts of men. This is very serious—if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him (1 John 2:15). Our hearts are either occupied by God or by the world; there is no way to love God and love the world.

31. Satan uses everything in the world to occupy our hearts. The lust of the flesh refers to sensuality, carnal desires (Rom 1:24), and the works of the flesh, such as sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery (Gal 5:19; Col 3:5, KJV). The lust of the eyes refers to the desires of the soul, such as vainglory, vanity, prestige, and power, from which envy, rivalry, hatred, malice, and slander originate. The pride of life refers to the display of riches, arrogance, contempt for others, superiority, and pride. None of these come from the Father; they come from the world.

1 John 2:17

32. The world passes away, and so does its lust, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. The world is in opposition to the Father, everything in the world is against the Father's will. It wants to distract us and turn us away from God's will. **Whoever loves God and does His will abides forever.**

33. With all this exposed, we see the subtlety of God's enemy to defeat the children of the kingdom: the world and its lusts. The world exercises great power over the church because it is still in the world, subject to the rules of society in areas such as education, the job market and the need for financial resources. Jesus did not pray to the Father to take us out of the world, but to keep us from evil (John 17:14-16). We still have to live in the world in order to build the church, go out into the streets to rescue people, and preach the gospel of the kingdom.

John 17:17

34. The path to victory is for the Lord to sanctify us in the truth through the Word of God. In the world, there is only appearance. It is like a soap bubble; from a distance it looks beautiful, but when we get closer, it disappears. Only God has reality!

Rom 8:18-23

35. The fall of man opened the door for sin and death to enter the world (Romans 5:12), and the world began to suffer the slavery of corruption. All creation suffers under this oppression. But the manifestation of the glory of the children of God, when the church reaches full sonship, will redeem creation from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **Let us free this world from corruption of which we are guilty. One day we will be completely freed, when we are transferred to the manifestation of the heavenly kingdom. Therefore, it is worth overcoming the world today. Youth, you are strong because you have overcome the world by the word!**