

Homily 2 1 John 2:12-17

by St. Augustine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of hearing Scripture, knowing Christ's suffering and resurrection, and loving God and His commandments, while warning against the dangers of loving the world or the things in it.

Scripture: Matthew 4:1, Luke 10:20, Luke 24:13, John 8:58, Acts 2:41, Romans 1:25, Romans 4:25, 1 Corinthians 8:1, Ephesians 3:17, 1 John 2:12

Topics: "Worldly Temptation", "Gods Love"

Description

St. Augustine preaches about the importance of not loving the world and its temptations, emphasizing the need to focus on God and His eternal love. He highlights the three temptations faced by Jesus - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - and how Jesus overcame them by relying on the Word of God. Augustine urges believers to resist the worldly desires and instead, embrace the will of God to abide forever in His love and grace.

Transcript

I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven through His name. I write unto you, fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, children, because you have known the Father. I write unto you, fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever (even as God also abides for ever).

1. All things that are read from the Holy Scriptures in order to our instruction and salvation, it behooves us to hear with earnest heed. Yet most of all must those things be commended to our memory, which are of most force against heretics; whose insidious designs cease not to circumvent all that are weaker and more negligent. Remember that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ both died for us, and rose again; died, to wit, for our offenses, rose again for our justification. Romans 4:25 Even as you have just heard concerning the two disciples whom He met with in the way, how their eyes were holden that they should not know Him: Luke 24:13-28 and He found them despairing of the redemption that was in Christ, and deeming that now He had suffered and was dead as a man, not accounting that as Son of God He ever lives; and deeming

too that He was so dead in the flesh as not to come to life again, but just as one of the prophets: as those of you who were attentive have just now heard their own words.

Then He opened to them the Scriptures, beginning at Moses, and going through all the prophets, showing them that all He had suffered had been foretold, lest they should be more staggered if the Lord should rise again, and the more fail to believe Him, if these things had not been told before concerning Him. For the firmness of faith is in this, that all things which came to pass in Christ were foretold. The disciples, then, knew Him not, save in the breaking of bread. And truly he that eats and drinks not judgment to himself in the breaking of bread does know Christ. 1 Corinthians 11:29 Afterward also those eleven thought they saw a spirit.

He gave Himself to be handled by them, who also gave Himself to be crucified; to be crucified by enemies, to be handled by friends: yet the Physician of all, both of the ungodliness of those, and of the unbelief of these. For you heard when the Acts of the Apostles were read, how many thousands of Christ's slayers believed. Acts 2:41 If those believed afterwards who had killed, should not those believe who for a little while doubted? And yet even in regard of them, (a thing which you ought especially to observe, and to commit to your memory, because that which shall make us strong against insidious errors, God has been pleased to put in the Scriptures, against which no man dares to speak, who in any sort wishes to seem a Christian), when He had given Himself to be handled by them, that did not suffice Him, but He would also confirm by means of the Scriptures the heart of them that believe: for He looked forward to us who should be afterwards; seeing that in Him we have nothing that we can handle, but have that which we may read.

For if those believed only because they held and handled, what shall we do? Now, Christ is ascended into heaven; He is not to come save at the end, to judge the quick and the dead. Whereby shall we believe, but by that whereby it was His will that even those who handled Him should be confirmed? For He opened to them the Scriptures and showed them that it behooved Christ to suffer, and that all things should be fulfilled which were written of Him in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms.

He embraced in His discourse the whole ancient text of the Scriptures. All that there is of those former Scriptures tells of Christ; but only if it find ears. He also opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. Whence we also must pray for this, that He would open our understanding.

2. But what did the Lord show written of Him in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms? What did He show? Let Himself say. The evangelist has put this briefly, that we might know what in all that great compass of the Scriptures we ought to believe and to understand. Certainly there are many pages, and many books; the contents of them all is this which the Lord briefly spoke to His disciples. What is this? That it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day.

You have it now concerning the Bridegroom, that it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again: the Bridegroom has been set forth to us. Concerning the Bride, let us see what He says; that you, when you know the Bridegroom and the Bride, may not without reason come to the marriage. For every celebration is a celebration of marriage: the Church's nuptials are celebrated. The King's Son is about to marry a wife, and that King's Son is Himself a King: and the guests frequenting the marriage are themselves the Bride.

Not, as in a carnal marriage, some are guests, and another is she that is married; in the Church they that come as guests, if they come to good purpose, become the Bride. For all the Church is Christ's Bride, of which the beginning and first fruits is the flesh of Christ: there was the Bride joined to the Bridegroom in the flesh. With good reason when He would betoken that same flesh, He broke bread, and with good

reason in the breaking of bread, the eyes of the disciples were opened, and they knew Him.

Well then, what did the Lord say was written of Him in the Law and Prophets and Psalms? That it behooved Christ to suffer. Had He not added, and to rise again, well might those mourn whose eyes were holden; but to rise again is also foretold. And wherefore this? Why did it behoove Christ to suffer and to rise again? Because of that Psalm which we especially commended to your attention on the fourth day, the first station, of last week. Why did it behoove Christ to suffer and to rise again?

For this reason: All the ends of the earth shall be reminded and converted unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him. For that you may know that it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise again; in this place also what has He added, that after setting forth the Bridegroom He might also set forth the Bride? And that there be preached, says He, in His name, repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You have heard, brethren; hold it fast.

Let no man doubt concerning the Church, that it is throughout all nations: let no man doubt that it began at Jerusalem, and has filled all nations. We know the field where the Vine is planted: but when it is grown we know it not, because it has taken up the whole. Whence did it begin? At Jerusalem. Whither has it come? To all nations. A few remain: it shall possess all. In the mean time, while it is taking possession of all, it has seemed good to the Husbandman to cut off some unprofitable branches, and they have made heresies and schisms.

Let not the branches that are cut off induce you to be cut off: rather exhort them that are cut off that they be grafted in again. It is manifest that Christ has suffered, is risen again, and is ascended into heaven: made manifest also is the Church, because there is preached in His name repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations. Whence did it begin? Beginning at Jerusalem. The man hears this; foolish and vain, and (how, shall I express it?) worse than blind! so great a mountain, and he does not see it; a candle set upon a candlestick, and he shuts his eyes against it!

3. When we say to them, If you be Catholic Christians, communicate with that Church from which the Gospel is spread abroad over the whole earth: communicate with that Jerusalem: when this we say to them, they make answer to us, we do not communicate with that city where our King was slain, where our Lord was slain: as though they hate the city where our Lord was slain. The Jews slew Him whom they found on earth, these scorn Him that sits in heaven! Which are the worse; those who despised Him because they thought Him man, or those who scorn the sacraments of Him whom now they confess to be God?

But they hate, forsooth, the city in which their Lord was slain! Pious men, and merciful! They much grieve that Christ was slain, and in men they slay Christ! But He loved that city, and pitied it: from it He bade the preaching of Him begin, beginning at Jerusalem. He made there the beginning of the preaching of His name: and you shrink back with horror from having communion with that city! No marvel that being cut off you hate the root. What said He to His disciples? Sit still in the city, because I send my promise upon you.

Behold what the city is that they hate! Haply they would love it, if Christ's murderers dwelt in it. For it is manifest that all Christ's murderers, i.e., the Jews, are expelled from that city. That which had in it them that were fierce against Christ, has now them that adore Christ. Therefore do these men hate it, because Christians are in it. There was it His will that His disciples should tarry, and there that He should send to them the Holy Ghost. Where had the Church its commencement, but where the Holy Ghost came from heaven, and filled the hundred and twenty sitting in one place?

That number twelve was made tenfold. They sat, an hundred and twenty persons, and the Holy Ghost came, and filled the whole place, and there came a sound, as it were the rushing of a mighty wind, and there were cloven tongues like as of fire. You have heard the Acts of the Apostles: this was the lesson read today: They began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And all who were on the spot, Jews who had come from various nations, recognised each his own tongue, and marvelled that those unlearned and ignorant men had on the sudden learned not one or two tongues, but the tongues of all nations whatsoever.

There, then, where all tongues sounded, there was it betokened that all tongues should believe. But these men, who much love Christ, and therefore refuse to communicate with the city which killed Christ, so honor Christ as to affirm that He is left to two tongues, the Latin and the Punic, i.e. African. Christ possess only two tongues! For there are but these two tongues on the side of Donatus, more they have not. Let us awake, my brethren, let us rather see the gift of the Spirit of God, and let us believe the things spoken before concerning Him, and let us see fulfilled the things spoken before in the Psalm: There are neither speeches nor discourses, but their voices are heard among them.

And lest haply the case be so that the tongues themselves came to one place, and not rather that the gift of Christ came to all tongues, hear what follows: Into all the earth is their sound gone out, and unto the ends of the world their words. Wherefore this? Because in the sun has He set His tabernacle, i.e., in the open light. His tabernacle, His flesh: His tabernacle, His Church: in the sun it is set; not in the night, but in the day. But why do those not acknowledge it? Return to the lesson at the place where it ended yesterday, and see why they do not acknowledge it: He that hates his brother, walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

For us then, let us see what follows, and not be in darkness. How shall we not be in darkness? If we love the brethren. How is it proved that we love the brotherhood? By this, that we do not rend unity, that we hold fast charity.

4. I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you through His name. 1 John 2:12 Therefore, little children, because in forgiveness of sins you have your birth. But through whose name are sins forgiven? Through Augustine's? No, therefore neither through the name of Donatus. Be it your concern to see who is Augustine, or who Donatus: no, not through the name of Paul, not through the name of Peter. For to them that divided unto themselves the Church, and out of unity essayed to make parties, the mother charity in the apostle travailing in birth with her little ones, exposes her own bowels, with words does as it were rend her breasts, bewails her children whom she sees borne out dead, recalls unto the one Name them that would needs make them many names, repels them from the love of her that Christ may be loved, and says, Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 1 Corinthians 1:13 What says he? I would not that you be mine, that so you may be with me: be with me; all we are His who died for us, who was crucified for us: whence here also it is said, Your sins are forgiven you through His name, not through the name of any man.

5. I write unto you, fathers. 1 John 2:13 Why first sons? Because your sins are forgiven you through His name, and you are regenerated into a new life, therefore sons. Why fathers? Because you have known Him that is from the beginning: for the beginning has relation unto fatherhood. Christ new in flesh, but ancient in Godhead. How ancient think we? How many years old? Think we, of greater age than His mother? Assuredly of greater age than His mother, for all things were made by Him. John 1:3 If all things, then did the Ancient make the very mother of whom the New should be born. Was He, think we, before His

mother only? Yea, and before His mother's ancestors is His antiquity. The ancestor of His mother was Abraham; and the Lord says, Before Abraham I am. John 8:58 Before Abraham, say we? The heaven and earth, ere man was, were made. Before these was the Lord, nay rather also is. For right well He says, not, Before Abraham I was, but, Before Abraham I Am . For that of which one says, was, is not; and that of which one says, will be, is not yet: He knows not other than to be. As God, He knows to be: was, and will be, He knows not. It is one day there, but a day that is for ever and ever. That day yesterday and tomorrow do not set in the midst between them: for when the 'yesterday' is ended, the 'today' begins, to be finished by the coming 'tomorrow.' That one day there is a day without darkness, without night, without spaces, without measure, without hours. Call it what you will: if you will, it is a day; if you will, a year; if you will, years. For it is said of this same, And your years shall not fail. But when is it called a day? When it is said to the Lord, Today have I begotten You. From the eternal Father begotten, from eternity begotten, in eternity begotten: with no beginning, no bound, no space of breadth; because He is what is, because Himself is He that Is. This His name He told to Moses: You shall say unto them, He that Is has sent me unto you. Exodus 3:14 Why speak then of before Abraham? Why, before Noe? Why, before Adam? Hear the Scripture: Before the day-star have I begotten You. In fine, before heaven and earth. Wherefore? Because all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made. John 1:3 By this you know the fathers: for they become fathers by acknowledging That which is from the beginning.

6. I write unto you, young men. There are sons, are fathers, are young men: sons, because begotten; fathers, because they acknowledge the Beginning; why young men? Because you have overcome the wicked one. In the sons, birth: in the fathers, antiquity: in the young men, strength. If the wicked one is overcome by the young men, he fights with us. Fights, but not conquers. Wherefore? Because we are strong, or because He is strong in us who in the hands of the persecutors was found weak? He has made us strong, who resisted not His persecutors. For He was crucified of weakness, but He lives by the power of God. 2 Corinthians 13:4

7. I write unto you, children. 1 John ii.13 Whence children? Because you have known the Father. I write unto you fathers: he enforces this, and repeats, Because you have known Him that is from the beginning. Remember that you are fathers: if you forget Him that is from the beginning, you have lost your fatherhood. I write unto you, young men. Again and again consider that you are young men: fight, that you may overcome: overcome, that you may be crowned: be lowly, that you fall not in the fight. I write unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.

8. All these things, my brethren,-- because we have known That which is from the beginning, because we are strong, because we have known the Father,-- do all these, while they in a manner commend knowledge, not commend charity? If we have known, let us love: for knowledge without charity saves not. Knowledge puffs up, charity edifies. 1 Corinthians 8:1 If you have a mind to confess and not love, you begin to be like the demons. The demons confessed the Son of God, and said, What have we to do with You? Matthew 8:29 and were repulsed. Confess and embrace. For those feared for their iniquities; love ye Him that forgives your iniquities. But how can we love God, if we love the world? He prepares us therefore to be inhabited by charity. There are two loves: of the world, and of God: if the love of the world inhabit, there is no way for the love of God to enter in: let the love of the world make way, and the love of God inhabit; let the better have place. You loved the world: love not the world: when you have emptied your heart of earthly love, you shall drink in love Divine: and thenceforth begins charity to inhabit you, from which can nothing of evil proceed. Hear therefore his words, how he goes to work in the manner of one

that makes a clearance. He comes upon the hearts of men as a field that he would occupy: but in what state does he find it? If he finds a wood, he roots it up; if he finds the field cleared, he plants it. He would plant a tree there, charity. And what is the wood he would root up? Love of the world. Hear him, the rooter up of the wood! Love not the world, (for this comes next,) neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15

9. You have heard that if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Let not any say in his heart that this is false, brethren: God says it; by the Apostle the Holy Ghost has spoken; nothing more true: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Would you have the Father's love, that you may be joint-heir with the Son? Love not the world. Shut out the evil love of the world, that you may be filled with the love of God. You are a vessel; but as yet you are full. Pour out what you have, that you may receive what you have not. Certainly, our brethren are now born again of water and of the Spirit: we also some years ago were born again of water and of the Spirit. Good is it for us that we love not the world, lest the sacraments remain in us unto damnation, not as means of strengthening unto salvation. That which strengthens unto salvation is, to have the root of charity, to have the power of godliness, not the form only. 2 Timothy 3:5 Good is the form, holy the form: but what avails the form, if it hold not the root? The branch that is cut off, is it not cast into the fire? Have the form, but in the root. But in what way are you rooted so that you be not rooted up? By holding charity, as says the Apostle Paul, rooted and grounded in charity. Ephesians 3:17 How shall charity be rooted there, amid the overgrown wilderness of the love of the world? Make clear riddance of the woods. A mighty seed you are about to put in: let there not be that in the field which shall choke the seed. These are the uprooting words which he has said: Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15

10. For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, 1 John 2:16-17 three things he has said, which are not of the Father, but are of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever, even as He abides for ever. Why am I not to love what God made? What will you? Whether will you love the things of time, and pass away with time; or not love the world, and live to eternity with God? The river of temporal things hurries one along: but like a tree sprung up beside the river is our Lord Jesus Christ. He assumed flesh, died, rose again, ascended into heaven. It was His will to plant Himself, in a manner, beside the river of the things of time. Are you rushing down the stream to the headlong deep? Hold fast the tree. Is love of the world whirling you on? Hold fast Christ. For you He became temporal, that you might become eternal; because He also in such sort became temporal, that He remained still eternal. Something was added to Him from time, not anything went from His eternity. But you were born temporal, and by sin wast made temporal: you were made temporal by sin, He was made temporal by mercy in remitting sins. How great the difference, when two are in a prison, between the criminal and him that visits him! For upon a time a person comes to his friend and enters in to visit him, and both seem to be in prison; but they differ by a wide distinction. The one, his cause presses down: the other, humanity has brought there. So in this our mortal state, we were held fast by our guiltiness, He in mercy came down: He entered in unto the captive, a Redeemer not an oppressor. The Lord for us shed His blood, redeemed us, changed our hope. As yet we bear the mortality of the flesh, and take the future immortality upon trust: and on the sea we are tossed by the waves, but we have the anchor of hope already fixed upon the land.

11. But let us not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. For the things that are in the world, are the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These three are they: lest haply any man say, The things that are in the world, God made: i.e. heaven and earth, the sea: the sun,

the moon, the stars, all the garniture of the heavens. What is the garniture of the sea? All creeping things. What of the earth? animals, trees, flying creatures.

These are 'in the world,' God made them. Why then am I not to love what God has made? Let the Spirit of God be in you, that you may see that all these things are good: but woe to you if you love the things made, and forsake the Maker of them! Fair are they to you: but how much fairer He that formed them! Mark well, beloved. For by similitudes you may be instructed: lest Satan steal upon you, saying what he is wont to say, Take your enjoyment in the creature of God; wherefore made He those things but for your enjoyment?

And men drink themselves drunken, and perish, and forget their own Creator: while not temperately but lustfully they use the things created, the Creator is despised. Of such says the apostle: They worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. Romans 1:25 God does not forbid you to love these things, howbeit, not to set your affections upon them for blessedness, but to approve and praise them to this end, that you may love your Creator. In the same manner, my brethren, as if a bridegroom should make a ring for his bride, and she having received the ring, should love it more than she loves the bridegroom who made the ring for her: would not her soul be found guilty of adultery in the very gift of the bridegroom, albeit she did but love what the bridegroom gave her?

By all means let her love what the bridegroom gave: yet should she say, This ring is enough for me, I do not wish to see his face now: what sort of woman would she be? Who would not detest such folly? Who not pronounce her guilty of an adulterous mind? You love gold in place of the man, lovest a ring in place of the bridegroom: if this be in you, that you love a ring in place of your bridegroom, and hast no wish to see your bridegroom; that he has given you an earnest, serves not to pledge you to him, but to turn away your heart from him!

For this the bridegroom gives earnest, that in his earnest he may himself be loved. Well then, God gave you all these things: love Him that made them. There is more that He would fain give you, that is, His very Self that made these things. But if you love these-- what though God made them-- and neglect the Creator and love the world; shall not your love be accounted adulterous? 12. For the world is the appellation given not only to this fabric which God made heaven and earth, the sea, things visible and invisible: but the inhabitants of the world are called the world, just as we call a house both the walls and them that inhabit therein.

And sometimes we praise a house, and find fault with the inhabitants. For we say, A good house; because it is marbled and beautifully ceiled: and in another sense we say, A good house: no man there suffers wrong, no acts of plunder, no acts of oppression, are done there. Now we praise not the building, but those who dwell within the building: yet we call it house, both this and that. For all lovers of the world, because by love they inhabit the world, just as those inhabit heaven, whose heart is on high while in the flesh they walk on earth: I say then, all lovers of the world are called the world.

The same have only these three things, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, vain glory of life. For they lust to eat, drink, cohabit: to use these pleasures. Not surely, that there is no allowed measure in these things, or that when it is said, Love not these things, it means that you are not to eat, or not to drink, or not to beget children? This is not the thing said. Only, let there be measure, because of the Creator, that these things may not bind you by your loving of them: lest you love that for enjoyment, which you ought to have for use.

But you are not put to the proof except when two things are propounded to you, this or that: Will you righteousness or gains? I have not wherewithal to live, have not wherewithal to eat, have not wherewithal to drink. But what if you can not have these but by iniquity? Is it not better to love that which you lose not, than to lose yourself by iniquity? You see the gain of gold, the loss of faith you see not. This then, says he to us, is the lust of the flesh, i.e. the lusting after those things which pertain to the flesh, such as food, and carnal cohabitation, and all other such like.

13. And the lust of the eyes: by the lust of the eyes, he means all curiosity. Now how wide is the scope of curiosity! This it is that works in spectacles, in theatres, in sacraments of the devil, in magical arts, in dealings with darkness: none other than curiosity. Sometimes it tempts even the servants of God, so that they wish as it were to work a miracle, to tempt God whether He will hear their prayers in working of miracles; it is curiosity: this is lust of the eyes; it is not of the Father. If God has given the power, do the miracle, for He has put it in your way to do it: for think not that those who have not done miracles shall not pertain to the kingdom of God. When the apostles were rejoicing that the demons were subject to them, what said the Lord to them? Rejoice not in this, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven. Luke 10:20 In that would He have the apostles to rejoice, wherein you also rejoice. Woe to you truly if your name be not written in heaven! Is it woe to you if you raise not the dead? Is it woe to you if you walk not on the sea? Is it woe to you if you cast not out demons? If you have received power to do them, use it humbly, not proudly. For even of certain false prophets the Lord has said that they shall do signs and prodigies. Matthew 24:24 Therefore let there be no ambition of the world: *Ambitio sæculi*, is Pride. The man wishes to make much of himself in his honors: he thinks himself great, whether because of riches, or because of some power.

14. These three there are, and you can find nothing whereby human cupidity can be tempted, but either by the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life. By these three was the Lord tempted of the devil. Matthew 4:1-10 By the lust of the flesh He was tempted when it was said to Him, If you be the Son of God, speak to these stones that they become bread, when He hungered after His fast. But in what way repelled He the tempter, and taught his soldier how to fight?

Mark what He said to him: Not by bread alone does man live, but by every word of God. He was tempted also by the lust of the eyes concerning a miracle, when he said to Him, Cast yourself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning you: and in their hands they shall bear you up, lest at any time you dash your foot against a stone. He resisted the tempter, for to do the miracle, would only have been to seem either to have yielded, or to have done it from curiosity; for He wrought when He would, as God, howbeit as healing the weak.

For if He had done it then, He might have been thought to wish only to do a miracle. But lest men should think this, mark what He answered; and when the like temptation shall happen to you, say also the same: Get behind me, Satan; for it is written, You shall not tempt the Lord your God: that is, if I do this I shall tempt God. He said what He would have you to say. When the enemy suggests to you, What sort of man, what sort of Christian, are you? As yet have you done one miracle, or by your prayers have the dead been raised, or have you healed the fevered?

If you were truly of any moment, you would do some miracle: answer and say: It is written, You shall not tempt the Lord your God: therefore I will not tempt God, as if I should belong to God if I do a miracle, and not belong if I do none: and what becomes then of His words, Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven? By pride of life how was the Lord tempted? When he carried Him up to an high place, and said to

Him, All these will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me.

By the loftiness of an earthly kingdom he wished to tempt the King of all worlds: but the Lord who made heaven and earth trod the devil under foot. What great matter for the devil to be conquered by the Lord? Then what did He in the answer He made to the devil but teach you the answer He would have you to make? It is, written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve. Holding these things fast, you shall not have the concupiscence of the world: by not having concupiscence of the world, neither shall the lust of the flesh, nor the lust of the eyes, nor the pride of life, subjugate you: and you shall make place for Charity when she comes, that you may love God.

Because if love of the world be there, love of God will not be there. Hold fast rather the love of God, that as God is for ever and ever, so you also may remain for ever and ever: because such is each one as is his love. Love earth, you shall be earth. Love God, what shall I say? You shall be a god? I darenot say it of myself, let us hear the Scriptures: I have said, You are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High. If then you would be gods and sons of the Most High, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all the things that are in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world: 1 John 2:15-17 i.e. of men, lovers of the world. And the world passes away, and the lusts thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever, even as God also abides for ever.

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