

26. September 2025
FIRST LETTER OF ST. JOHN
Love not the world

1 Jn 2:12-17

"I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven on account of his name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young people, because you have conquered the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young people, because you are strong and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever."

Today's passage is addressed to those who have found faith: children, parents, young people. The apostle encourages them to continue their journey. They have received forgiveness for their sins, and thus, the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven have opened for them. They have come to know God as He is the One who has existed from the beginning. They have overcome the Evil One, and the Word of God abides in them. Thanks to true faith, they have escaped the "snare of the fowlers" (Ps 124:7) and are equipped to make their way in this life.

However, all is not yet complete. The faith they have received as a gift must now prove its worth. This is why St. John exhorts them: "Do not love the world or the things in the world" (1 Jn 2:15). What does this mean? Jesus Himself provides a more detailed explanation in His prayer to the Father: "I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world" (Jn 17:14–16).

As disciples of the Lord—and this term includes all who follow Him—we belong to Christ. He is our Lord, and we are guided by His example in everything. This is why

we are not of the world: we no longer think like the world or allow ourselves to be governed by its criteria when they contradict Jesus's teachings.

Today's passage clearly shows us the state of the world away from God: *"for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world"* (1 Jn 2:16). Rather than yielding to the desires of the flesh and allowing them to enslave us, we are called to fight and overcome them. Rather than desiring things that are not meant for us with our eyes, spiritual chastity exhorts us to restrain our gaze and lust in every possible way. Instead of taking pride in our possessions and seeking prestige through them, we are called to share.

St. Paul gives us good advice in this regard: *"but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these"* (1 Tim 6:8). If we want to apply this to our life, it means that we should be satisfied with the basics and not aspire to luxuries and riches, which can easily become a temptation. Whoever thinks that he must first become rich in order to be able to share with the poor has missed something essential.

It is a contradiction to consider ourselves Christians and, at the same time, to love the world, to aspire to the goods it offers and to adopt its way of thinking and acting, often so far removed from God. In such a case, we continue to love the world, and the First Letter of St. John clearly tells us that the love of the Father is not in us.

Our task is to overcome the world with the strength of the Lord, to move in it without falling under its negative influence, or even to turn away from it completely if God calls us to a life of intense discipleship. Today's passage gives us a clear reason: *"And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever"* (1 Jn 2:17).

The world is passing away! It is merely a step toward eternity. If we settle in it, if we love it and adopt its ways, we will have lost sight of the goal of our earthly pilgrimage. It is as if one were to sit on a train and, instead of being attentive so as not to miss the last stop, settle back and be content to travel. If we do God's will instead, we prepare ourselves day by day for the "last station," ensuring that we won't miss it and will be ready to meet the Lord face to face.

Meditation on the Gospel of the Day: <https://en.elijamission.net/2021/09/24/>