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SMALL GROUP GUIDE

OVERCOMING THE WORLD

Examine where your true affections lie, recognize the emptiness of worldly cravings and pride, and invest your life in what is eternal.

Based on 1 John 2:15-17

OVERVIEW

THREE KEY POINTS

This guide is designed to help your small group dig deeper into the message of overcoming the world. The sermon draws from 1 John 2:15-17, where the apostle John warns believers not to love the world or the things it offers. Through three key points, the message calls us to examine where our true affections lie, recognize the emptiness of worldly cravings and pride, and invest our lives in what is eternal rather than what is temporary.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 **Love for the world cancels our love for God.**

John is not warning against loving the earth or creation. He is warning against loving the system of rebellion that works in opposition to the will and purpose of God. When we love what the world offers more than we love God, we cannot genuinely love God at the same time. No one can serve two masters.

2 **Cravings and pride will never be satisfied.**

The world offers three things: cravings for physical pleasure, cravings for everything we see, and pride in what we have achieved and possessed. None of these can ever be fully satisfied. They are not from God. They are from the world, and the world uses them to keep us under its control rather than under God's.

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3 **Invest in the eternal, not the temporal.**

Everything this world offers is temporary. One day it will all fade away. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever. The things God gives us, His love, grace, wisdom, peace, and promises, are the only things worth investing our time, money, and thought life into.

DISCIPLESHIP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

OPENING REFLECTION

Before diving into discussion, take a few quiet moments as a group and ask each member to think about this question privately:

Where have I been placing the most energy, attention, and hope this past week, in the things of God or in the things of the world?

Invite anyone who is willing to share a brief, honest answer before moving into the discussion questions.

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

01 The sermon defines "the world" not as the earth or creation, but as "the system of rebellion that is working in opposition to the will and purpose of God." How does this definition change the way you think about the warning in 1 John 2:15-17? Where do you see this system at work in everyday life?

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02 The sermon lists several institutions where this system of rebellion is at work, including schools, government, media, families, marriages, and even the church. Does that list surprise you? How do you personally navigate living in these systems while trying to remain aligned with God?

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03 The sermon says, "Since the fall of Adam and Eve, mankind has moved further and further away from God." Do you agree that things are getting worse as people move further from God? What evidence do you see of this in your own community or generation?

SECTION 2: LOVE FOR THE WORLD VS. LOVE FOR GOD

04 The sermon states, "We cannot love God and the things of this world at the same time." That is a strong claim. How do you personally draw the line between enjoying the good things in life and loving the world in a way that competes with your love for God?

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05 The pastor says, "Sometimes we're asking God to give us the things of the world when we should be asking God to give us the things of God." Think about your recent prayers. What have you been asking God for? How does that list reflect your priorities?

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06 The sermon uses the illustration of a treasure, stating that your heart will always be where your treasure is, and that your treasure is revealed by where you spend your money, your time, and your thought life. Using that standard, where is your treasure right now? Be honest with the group.

SECTION 3: CRAVINGS, PRIDE, AND CONTROL

07 The sermon draws a distinction between desires and cravings. A desire is something you want. A craving is something that controls you until it is satisfied. Can you think of an area in your life where a legitimate desire has crossed over into a craving? What did that feel like?

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08 The sermon says, "God will never give us what we craved. Because if God gave us what we craved, he would be siding with the world." How does this reframe the times God has not given you something you desperately wanted? Does this perspective bring you comfort or does it challenge you?

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09 The sermon describes pride as self-centeredness that does not want anyone or anything exalted above itself, including God. Where do you see pride showing up most in your own life? In your relationships? In your career? In your spiritual life?

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10 The pastor says, "God resists the proud, but he gives grace to the humble." Have you ever experienced a season where it seemed like God was working against you? Looking back, was pride a factor? What changed when humility entered the picture?

SECTION 4: INVESTING IN THE ETERNAL

11 The sermon says that on the day we die, we will not be thinking about houses, cars, clothes, or accomplishments. We will only be thinking about how God will judge us for how we lived. Does living with that kind of eternal perspective feel natural to you, or does it feel distant and abstract? What makes it hard to keep eternity in view?

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12 The pastor says, "Everything God is giving us in this world is going with us into eternity," referring to love, wisdom, grace, peace, and the promises of God. How does knowing that the spiritual investments you make now carry over into eternity change the way you think about your daily choices?

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13 The sermon closes with this charge: "Until you die to self, you cannot truly live to God." What does dying to self look like practically in your life this week? What is one area where you sense God calling you to let go of a worldly attachment?

THIS WEEK

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose one or more of the following applications to work on individually or as a group before your next meeting.

Conduct a treasure audit.

Spend 15 minutes reviewing the last 30 days of your calendar and your spending. Ask yourself honestly: Where have I been investing my time and money? Does that reflect a love for God or a love for the world? Write down what you find and bring it to God in prayer.

Replace a worldly request with a godly one.

Identify one thing you have been consistently asking God for that is rooted in worldly desire. This week, replace that request in your prayers with a petition for something eternal, such as wisdom, grace, healing, forgiveness, or greater love for others. Notice how your posture in prayer shifts.

Practice humility in one specific relationship.

Pride damages our relationships with God and with people. Identify one relationship where pride has been creating distance. Take one concrete step this week to humble yourself in that relationship, whether through an apology, an act of service, or simply listening without needing to be right.

Memorize or meditate on 1 John 2:17.

Spend time this week sitting with the truth that this world is fading away, but anyone who does what pleases God will live forever. Write it on a notecard, put it somewhere visible, and let it reorient your perspective when the pressures and attractions of the world feel overwhelming.

Pray for someone who does not know God.

The sermon closed with a call to intercede for someone in your life who has not yet come into a relationship with God. Commit to praying for that person by name every day this week. Ask God to open a door for you to share your faith with them.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

CLOSING PRAYER

Close your group time by praying together. Use the following prompts to guide your prayer, or pray freely in your own words.

- Thank God that He is good and that His goodness is better than anything the world can offer.
- Confess any areas where love for the world has competed with love for God.
- Ask for the Holy Spirit's leading to help you resist the patterns of the world and align with the will of God.
- Pray for the people in your lives who do not yet know God.
- Ask God to fix your hearts and minds on the eternal things that are going with you, not the temporal things that are staying behind.

A WORD TO KEEP

"This world is fading away along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever."

1 JOHN 2:17

GO DEEPER THIS WEEK

Join us Wednesdays at 7:30 PM for Bible Study, or bring this guide to your small group.

Join Wednesday Bible Study

See all Connect groups