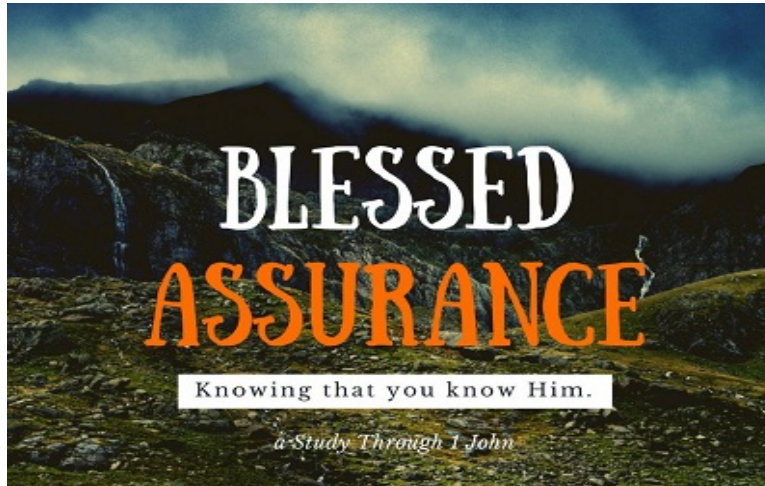


Blessed Assurance

What Time is it?



Bro. Ricky Cunningham
1 John 2:12-27

Sometimes I believe I am probably the most loved man in the world. I mean, Celisa and I are at a place in our life where it is just obvious, and I should never ask her the question, "Who do you love?" but I still do. It is primarily just she and I in the house now, and she will be doing her thing and I will be sitting in the recliner reading my Bible, studying, or whatever I am doing, and I just love it when she stops and says, "Wow, I love you!" But you know, sometimes she doesn't tell me that as much as I want to hear it. So even though I know what she is going to say, I love to do this...she will be doing her thing and she will come by the chair and I will grab her by the arm and say, "Now, who do you love?" Sometimes she will say, "You know who I love." But I really love it when I get that...well, I don't need to go into how much I love that. I know I shouldn't ask that question, but from time to time, I just do. It is one of the questions asked often in our home. Who do you love?

I have to tell you, there is another question that if it hadn't been asked this morning, I would not have made it to the 7:50 am service on time. Celisa

and I are just in that state of mind, as family, where we just enjoy each other so much that sometimes we will be enjoying each other and we will forget what time it is. Have you ever forgot what time it was? I mean, I am supposed to be at church ready to preach at 7:50 a.m., and we were so enjoying each other that all of a sudden I said, "Honey, what time is it?" She said, "7:37." I was still at home, thirteen minutes away from church, not quite dressed yet, not quite ready. I got here just in time this morning to walk into the pulpit! I mean, if I hadn't asked that other question, "What time is it?" I would have missed what I was supposed to be doing this morning. When you suddenly find out what time it is and you are late, isn't it amazing how quickly you can now do what you couldn't do with all of your time before? Do you all know what I am talking about?

The title of the message this morning is, "What Time is it?" As we read the first two paragraphs, I want you to understand why John wants you to know what time it is. See, there are three things we are going to learn this morning. John wants us to know:

- 1. Who we are**
- 2. Who we love**
- 3. What time it is**

When you leave this morning, please make sure you know who you are, make sure you really know who you love, and please, make sure you know what time it is.

Scripture

"I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for His name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome 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 men, because you are strong, and the Word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. Don't love the world

or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. I write to you, not because you don't know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He made to us—eternal life. I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. But the anointing that you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in Him.”

Yesterday after Kory and Michael ran the half marathon at Murray and Jaye and Finley ran the 5k, part of our family assembled at the Cracker Barrel for breakfast. Finley did not want breakfast food; he wanted a hamburger. He is kind of like his papaw — he likes them plain. After I had finished my breakfast, I turned to Finley and he still hadn't eaten much of his hamburger. To be totally honest with you, I have never eaten a hamburger at the Cracker Barrel, but it looked pretty good. So I just tore off about half of Finley's hamburger and I took a bite. It was amazing! Now, I could tell before I even took a bite of the hamburger that it was going to be good,

because let me tell you what makes a hamburger really good. Of course, what makes a hamburger really good is good Angus beef — that makes a hamburger really, really good, but the bread looked absolutely amazing. See, a hamburger is a piece of meat with two pieces of bread. Really, the two pieces of bread just hold the meat where you can eat it. But for something to be really, really good, if you have a hamburger that is matched with the same quality of bread, it is as good as anything you can eat. Amen? I would just as soon have a good hamburger with good bread as a filet mignon. So watch this...we have three thoughts this morning. It is going to be like I am serving you a grilled hamburger. The meat is going to be verses 15–17, the top bun is going to be 12–14, and the bottom bun is going to be 18–27. We are going to hold in our hand the bottom and the top, but what we are going to *taste* is all of this together. Hopefully, we are going to eat a great, God-grilled hamburger this morning.

The Bible opens by saying know who you are. I love how the New Testament, based on the Old Testament, teaches identity. Do you remember when the children of Israel went into Babylonian captivity and one of the first things that Nebuchadnezzar tried to do was to change the names of the children of Israel that he was going to educate? He stripped them of their Israelite names and gave them Babylonian names because Nebuchadnezzar knew to convince them to live like Babylonians he would have to get them to think they were Babylonians. The Bible emphasizes the need to know who you are. Why? It is because identity determines behavior. Listen to me...when you begin to think wrong you begin to believe wrong. When you begin to believe wrong you begin to behave wrong. So what the Bible is going to tell us right off, before we get to the meat of this section, is know who you are. He is going to identify the church by three phrases. He is going to say, "I am writing to you little children," "I am writing to you fathers," and "I am writing to you young men." Then note this, he is then going to turn around and say, "I have written to you little children," "I have written to you fathers," and "I have written to you young men." He basically says the same thing twice.

See, in the biblical world they did not have the opportunity to do what we do — sometimes when we emphasize things, if we are excited about something, or if we want somebody to remember something, we put exclamation marks at the end of thoughts. If you have ever gotten a text from me you know that, usually, if I send something in a text, I put an exclamation at the end of it because I am excited about what I am texting because I don't text that often. Now, if I am really excited about something, I put two or three exclamation marks at the end. Sometimes I will put five or six exclamation marks (you should see my sermon notes!!!!) If I am really excited about the point I am going to preaching, sometimes there will be seven or eight exclamation points at the end because that is telling me this is really, *really* important. Amen?

In the biblical world, they did not have the exclamation mark, so they would repeat things. I love reading what Jesus said in the King James Version of the Bible because that is what I cut my spiritual teeth on. Jesus would be teaching us, and all of a sudden, He would stop and say, "Verily." Then I got to realizing when Jesus said verily, that meant this was going to be good; not that what He said all the time was not good, but when it was really good He would say verily. Have you ever noticed sometimes Jesus would say, "Verily, verily?" He would do it twice. It was really good when he verily-ed once, but when He verily-ed twice, absolutely amazing, "Verily, Verily I say unto you, you must be born again." Wow!!

See, what the biblical writer had to do to get your attention to make you understand how important this thought was, they would repeat for emphasis. So why does John basically say the same thing except one time say I am writing to you (present tense) right now, and then after he has written that, stop and say now I *have written* to you and remind them what he just wrote to them? It is because he wants you to know who you are.

Now, scholars are not sure if there are two or three different groups of people here that he is writing to. See, if you remember earlier in the letter we talked about how John is writing to little children and he views himself

as a spiritual papaw so he starts out by saying "little children." Some scholars believe he is writing to the church in general and calling them little children then divides them basically into two groups — the fathers, and the young men. That may be true; however, I believe in context here that is not what John is doing. Now, it's okay to believe there are two groups, but I want to believe there are three groups, and let me tell you why. Many times when Paul talks about salvation and talks about us coming into the family of God, he talks about adopting us into the family. He talks about how we are orphans and we are exiles, and God, by His grace, adopted us into the family. When He adopted us into the family, He treats us as full-grown sons. So in adoption, when you come into the family you don't come in as a little baby, you come in as a full-grown son. God puts the signet ring on your hand and immediately gives you a place in the Kingdom and lets you do Kingdom business. But John doesn't use adoption terminology when he talks about salvation and us being a part of the family of God. John uses the language of being born again. John couldn't get away from that day when he was there with Jesus and Jesus told Nicodemus, the Pharisee, that you must be born again. Throughout John's writings, you will hear him talk about being born again, and with that birth analogy, John knows that spiritually there are development stages that you go through to become a mature believer in Christ.

I think that is what John is doing here. I think he starts off by addressing those in the church who are little children — they are new to the faith. They are growing like a little weed as we say in Western Kentucky. Amen? I mean, every time you see them you want to say, "Man, you used to be this tall and now you are this tall. You are growing like a weed! I believe you have grown two inches this week." That is how he is using this phrase.

Then he addresses that next spiritual group of people in the church — those fathers. Now again, I don't think he is using the word father here to talk about the father of children. I think he is talking about those men and women in the church who are the spiritual grandpas and spiritual grandmothers, those papaws and memishes. They have the white hair or grey. They have a few wrinkles, but man, when you really want advice,

you aren't going to somebody in their 20's, 30's, or 40's; you are going for the papaws and the mamaws, that group that has lived life from a spiritual perspective, and you know what they are going to tell you is going to be straight, it is going to be good, and you bank your life on it. He is writing to that group in the church, too.

Then in the middle is that group of young men and young women who are strong, and they have the Word abiding in them because they are in the Word. As the Word gets in them as they get in the Word, they grow strong. The next thing you know, this is the group that has overcome the evil one, and of course, we know the evil one is talking about Satan. Is that a beautiful picture of the church? You are the little child, growing like a weed, or you are a spiritual papaw or mamaw, or you are that warrior in the church, fighting Satan and taking him head on. You are strong and you are an overcomer because you are in God's Word and God's Word is in you.

Now listen. John tells us he is not writing because we don't know the truth. He says he is writing to you because you do know the truth...*I am not writing to those who don't believe. I am writing to those that do believe so that you might know that you have eternal life.* Which group would you be in this morning? Are you the little child — anytime we see you, you are just growing? Are you that spiritual mamaw, that spiritual papaw? Or, are you that young warrior in the church? Some scholars believe that all three of these things are true of the whole church so that what John is really doing is speaking to the church generally, but I think he is speaking to the church specifically, and he is saying to you — little children, your sins are forgiven.

Wow, I still have a great time with that thought...my sins are forgiven! But do you know what I needed to know early in my Christian life? I needed to know what I now know, that God didn't forgive me for my sake; He forgave me for His sake. When He forgave me, He didn't just forgive me of my past sin, He forgave me for ALL of my sin. Did you catch that? See, early on I could grasp this truth — that God forgave me of all of the

sin I committed for those thirteen years of my life — so when I got saved on March 24th, 1974, I knew He forgave me for all of my *present* and *past* sin, but I still blew it from time to time as a newborn baby in Christ. I was still a little selfish. I still did things from my perspective rather than God's perspective. So do you know what I really needed to know? I needed to know that even when I sin I was *still* forgiven. Wow. Yeah, that sin that I just committed might cause me to turn from my Father, but I needed to know that my Father would never turn from me. That is why John says little children, your sins are forgiven, and that is why I am writing to you. Will you, as a little child in Christ, just glory in and never get over the fact that God in Christ has forgiven you? But to forgive you of what you did, it cost Him the life of His Son. To free you from sin, His Son had to pay the penalty of your sin. On that cross, God judged you in Christ and He bore God's wrath.

Then, John writes to us spiritual papaws because we "know Him who is from the beginning." Now, I believe, this word, "know," that John is using here is not the word that means we know Him intellectually, we know Him theologically, we know Him biblically. I believe this word means we know Him intimately. I think John is using this word like Moses used the word in Genesis when it says Adam *knew* his wife. If you read that verse, it doesn't mean Adam knew his wife Eve had red hair, freckles, was five foot, three and a half inches, and weighed one hundred and ten pounds. That is not what it is talking about. It means He was intimate with her, because as a result of their intimacy she conceived and bore a son. See, the word, "know," many, many times means to know someone intimately. Do you remember what God told the nation of Israel through the prophet, Amos? He said, "You only have I known of all the families on the earth." Now, God was not telling Israel that it was the only nation He knew about. He is saying to Israel that they are the only nation, the only group of people on the planet (at that time) that He has an intimate relationship with. And I want to tell you, there is just something about walking with Christ through your life and coming to that place where you know Him intimately, amen? I don't know about you, but sometimes I don't want to go to somebody who knows facts about God, I want to go to someone who KNOWS God.

How many of you fully know you are a spiritual papaw or spiritual mamaw? Or, are you still in that stage where you are that spiritual young women or spiritual young man, and wow, you are getting strong? It isn't a strength that you have of yourself, but it's a strength that you have because you got in God's Word and God's Word got in you. Now, you are strong and you have overcome the evil one. Those are the groups John is writing to. In an age in which many of the people were leaving the church following a cultish thought, they were still in the church. The fact that they were still in the church revealed they were of God and had overcome the evil one. What he is going to tell us later on about those who went out from us is *...Hey, rest in this. We did not fail them; they were just never of us in the beginning.*

Before we move on, I want this bread to be fresh. I don't want it to get stale. Just put your finger on this top bun — Who are you? Are you a child who is growing? Are you hungry? Are you a papaw? Are you a warrior? You are one of those three people if you are in the church of Jesus Christ, if you are a part of the family. Now, are you ready to taste some meat? This is going to be good! John not only wants us to know who we are, but he wants us to KNOW who we love. This is going to sound silly, but for us to know who we love, instead of stating it in a positive manner, John states it in a negative manner because sometimes the negative really makes the point. DON'T TOUCH THAT FIRE! Sometimes that message is stronger than trying to teach the positive side of fire. So in verses 15-17, there is just one command — don't love the world or the things in the world.

Then, John gives us three reasons why we shouldn't love the world as a little child, as a spiritual father, or as a young man. In other words, if you are a part of the family of God there is something that you shouldn't love. You shouldn't love the world nor should you love the things in this world, and here is the first reason...he says, "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." This is one of the most convicting verses in the Bible. It is one of the most convicting truths I know. My Bible teaches me this truth: if I love the world, I don't have the love of the Father in me. Which means what? If I love the world, I am not a Christian. Right here is

the pass or fail test. He is writing that we know we have eternal life. If you have eternal life, listen to me, you will not love the world. You cannot love the world because if you have the love of the Father in you it drives out a love for the world. If you love the world, you don't have the love of the Father in you. Can I be truthful? This is either going to be convicting or it is going to be condemning because if you love the world, no matter what you try to tell yourself, no matter how many excuses you try to make, you are not a believer.

The second reason we are not to love the things in the world is because the things in the world are not from the Father they are from the world. John tells us don't love the world because the world and all of its desires are passing away. The only thing one is going to stand forever in eternal life is the one who does the will of God. So get this picture...if you spend your life loving the world and the things in the world, when the world and all that is in it is passing away, the thought here is you are going to pass away with it. When everything of this world is stripped away, the only thing that is going to last forever is that person who has been doing the will of God. So the person who does the will of God cannot love the world. Amen?

Now, what does John mean by world? I have shared this with you many, many times, but sometimes in the English vocabulary, I hear or read a word that I don't know what it means and I get my dictionary and look it up. I get frustrated because I went to the dictionary for clarity but now there is confusion; there are eight different meanings to some words! But because I was wise enough to go to the dictionary, I now know what to do; I go through each of those eight meanings and I put my word in the context, and by about number five I get it. In John's vocabulary, he uses "world" different ways. There are times when the Bible uses the word, "world," to talk about the world of creation, the world of nature, the universe, so to speak. That is not what is being referred to here. The Bible is not telling us not to love God's creation. If you are a believer, you ought to love to sit on your porch sometime and watch the sunrise, or be out in the pasture with your cows when the sun is going down and see that sun drop off of the horizon. If you ever get to do it at the Grand Canyon, it is

absolutely unbelievable! If you ever get to sit on the ocean and see it finally go back past the waters, it is incredible! That is not what the Bible is talking about. The Bible also uses the word, "world," to talk about the world of humanity. As a matter of fact, the Bible says for God so loved the world of humanity that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but shall have everlasting life. If God loves people, you and I should love people too. But see, there is another way that John used the word, "world." In John 15, when Jesus got His disciples together He said the world is going to hate you because they hated me. He said if you were of them, the world, they would not hate you, but since you are not of the world, they are going to hate you. What John is doing is using "world" there to talk about a classification, a system that is not under the rule and reign of God. Did you catch that?

See, this word, cosmos, is translated from a Greek word that literally means to arrange, to order, to systematize. It is where we get our English word, "cosmetics," from. Now, for those of you who are new to Hardin Baptist Church just know I love cosmetics. I am not against cosmetics at all. I just want to be on record saying that. As a matter of fact, one of my favorite things to do is, my wife would tell you this, I just love to watch her get ready in the morning. I really do. We have a bathroom counter and she has her side, and I have my side. My side has a mirror and the sink. Then there is a big door and three drawers, and then her side starts. She has a mirror and the same number of lights. She has the door and the three drawers. Just know that I only use one of those drawers, actually about one third of that drawer, because all that my drawer has in it is a toothbrush, toothpaste, a razor, a trimmer, deodorant, and finger clippers. That's all I need. I don't have a comb. I don't have a brush. If you have hair like me, it doesn't have to be combed or brushed. I know some of you wish you had hair like me but you don't, and you don't have a comb either! Celisa's side — oh man — she has three drawers full! If you were a mechanic, you would be tickled to death; she has every tool imaginable in those three drawers. It takes three drawers to hold all of her tools. I tell her I ought to get to go to Sears and just buy all of the tools that I want for my shop to have as many! But I love it. I love watching her pull those

drawers out, take little things out, and every centimeter of her face gets touched. I just love to sit back and watch because it is beautiful. She is beautiful without it, she is REALLY beautiful with it because when she does all that stuff she does there is an order; there is a system. You ladies know what to do. Wow! It is AMAZING what you can do with cosmetics.

Now, the picture here is behind the beauty there is an order, a system, an arranging. What the Bible is saying is be careful, the world is going to look beautiful, but what you need to understand is there is a system of thought, a system of belief, a system of thinking that is anti-God and it's antichrist, and we are supposed to not love that. There are things in the world that are designed, authored, by that anti-God sentiment and you and I are not supposed to love it. To not love means we are supposed to hate it, be mad at it, stay away from it, have nothing to do with it, because if you really love God you can't love that. As a matter of fact, if you love that, you don't love God. Can I just say this? The Bible doesn't even give room for you to flirt with it. There are a lot of us who will not admit that we are flirtatious. I can't tell you how many times in marital counseling the husband says, "She thinks I am flirty, but I am just friendly." Or the wife will say, "He doesn't understand I just have a friendly personality. He thinks I flirt." The Bible doesn't even make that distinction. James says, "You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?" In other words, if you are even going to be friendly with the world, you are lining up as an enemy of God because what you are flirting with and what you are trying to be friends with is anti-God, who you say you love. How, therefore, can you entertain yourself with something that is anti-God?

Paul tells us not to let this present evil world system squeeze you into its pattern of thinking and behaving, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. And he wants us to know we get it, so he is going to name what is in the world. He is going to call out the lust of the flesh, he is going to call out the lust of the eyes, and he is going to call out what my Bible says is pride of life. The ESV says pride of possessions. Whoa! This is going to go one of two ways this morning. You are going to either be convicted and assured that you are a believer, or you are going to be condemned

that you are an unbeliever. Don't water this down. Don't walk out of here and make yourself an excuse. You may make an excuse as to why you sin against your spouse, but you cannot make an excuse as to why you sin against God.

Desires of the flesh, church hear me, you know this, you have to know this! Even though are either a little child, a spiritual father, or a young man, and you have been saved from the penalty of sin and you have been set free from the power of sin, you still have the presence of sin within you. You have what is called an unredeemed flesh. Your unredeemed flesh has not been redeemed yet. Your unredeemed flesh will not be redeemed until the second coming of Jesus Christ when you get a glorified body. Therefore, even though you are a believer, you still live and operate in a body. In that body, you can be influenced by sin, the lust of your unredeemed flesh. Are you listening to me? Now, let me tell you what your unredeemed flesh wants to do. As a Christian, your body is now the temple of the Holy Spirit. Your body has been presented to God as an instrument for good, an instrument to God; you are a slave of righteousness so you have these desires within you. What your unredeemed flesh wants to do is take those desires that God gave you for good and use them self-centeredly, use them for you. Let me give you three examples. God has given us the desire for hunger, the desire for thirst, and the desire for sex. Now, there are others, but these three just serve as examples.

The desire for hunger...wow. To fuel this body, God designed us to have a desire to want to fuel it. I don't know about you, but when you go to the gas station, they have the 87 octane, the 89, and the 93. Have any of you ever put the 93 in your vehicle? It is just a little bit better gas. As a matter of fact, some of you put the cheap stuff in until you start to get a ping in the engine and then you put some of the good stuff in there. Well, God designed you and your body and He gave you food to fuel the body. Look at what some of us are doing with fuel. Look at what some of us are doing with food. Instead of sitting down to a meal and using food to fuel the body so our body can be a temple of God and we can do what God wants us to do — you know what we do. As a matter of fact, we have created a

class of foods call the comfort foods. If you have a certain feeling or emotion, you just reach for this or for that. How many times have you sat down at a meal and made this comment to your family, "I am as full as a tick; if I eat another bite I am going to bust," and you are reaching for another bite while you are saying that? As our bodies slow down, as our metabolism slows down, some of us don't slow down with what we are putting in the tank. Why? It's because we get comfort out of using a desire that God gave us the wrong way.

It is the same way with thirst. God designed the body to reach for some liquid and look what some of us are reaching for. We reach for something that actually depresses us. We reach for something to actually knock the chill off of the day. We can't cope with life unless we have this or that. What our unredeemed flesh is doing is causing us to reach for something to satisfy itself with, something that we shouldn't be reaching for. We either need a high or we need a low. Yet, Scripture talks about living soberly. It is a misuse of what God has given us — desires.

It is the same way with sex. Instead of being sober with our sex drive, many are over and many are under, therefore causing this or that. You just can't get any peace. You just can't walk in oneness to the point where some of us want to blame our spouse for the reason we have reached for this or that, watched this, or are doing that, and you won't admit you have a problem with your unredeemed flesh. Do you get it? Satan is going to appeal to your unredeemed flesh as much as he can. What you have to recognize is if you really love God you will be wise enough to see that what is behind much of the stuff we are involved in comes from the pit of hell, smells like smoke, and has been offered by Satan! God clearly says these things are not of me! Yet, we can't wait to get our hands on them because we can't live sober, because we love the things of the world more than we love God. John says if you love the things of the world, you don't have the love of God in you. What John is going to teach us is that you might struggle with sin for a short period of time, but if you struggle with sin for the rest of your life and sin enslaves you, you are not a believer. One of

the keys to knowing you have eternal life is you take control of your unredeemed flesh. Amen?

Secondly, Paul calls out the lust of the eyes. Do you remember Eve? She just said that fruit was good to look at. Years ago, I thought I was not worldly because if I could just stay away from somewhere I didn't have to have it — I would just stay away from clothing store, I would stay away from auto dealerships because if I ever went in...well, I was going to get one. Now, please don't hear me say having truck or clothes is sinful. That is not what I am saying, but you do understand, right? There is a lusting for everything that you see that is actually revealing you are not seeking your satisfaction in Christ, but you are seeking it in things of the world. Does everybody get that? Do you know what the real key is? The real satisfaction is to be in it, and so not be of it that you don't want it, because you recognize you don't need it because all that you need is Christ. Did you catch that? Did not Satan tempt Jesus by showing Him all of the kingdoms of the world? He saw them but Jesus used the Word of God to defend the attack of Satan.

Then Paul talks about the pride of life, or the pride of possessions. In America, he who has the most toys wins. He who lives in the biggest house...he who has...we know how this goes. What is it about us that we can't just be satisfied with what we have? We have to get the next one, and the next one, and the next one, and the next one because somehow we just really believe if we finally get there then maybe we will feel good. No! There is something about a believer who is able to live in this world and not be caught up in what the world says makes you successful so that, basically, you can use your entire life not pursuing possession or things but use your entire life pursuing God and the things of God. Guys listen...if you are satisfying these lusts, this pride, and you are continually in that rat race, Scripture is clear — you don't have the love of the Father in you. That is not me saying it that is just a quote from God's Word.

John closes with this thought. He goes back and calls us children. Now he sums up the whole family. He says...*Family, listen! Whether you are a little*

baby, whether you are a young man, or whether you are a spiritual father, look at your watch. See what time it is! It is the last hour! You should have seen me getting ready in the last minute this morning. I did in one minute what I couldn't do in forty-five minutes. All of a sudden, I realized it was the last minute and if I didn't leave I wasn't going to get to church in time. I have always feared oversleeping and missing the early service. I was fully awake, but fully not aware of what time it was. I thought it was time to just enjoy my wife and watch her get ready, when all of a sudden it was time to be ready. It is not time to get ready. It is time to BE ready. The church is not waiting for the last hour. We are not waiting for the time of tribulation. We are in the last hour! The antichrists have already appeared. They are everywhere. They deny Christ! They deny the essence of Christianity! And what are we doing in the church? We are entertaining ourselves with it! Are you kidding me? What Christ died for, we are finding fulfillment in?

John had a whole group of people who were rejecting the message at church and turning away from the church to their own philosophy, and he is coming back and saying please listen little children, I am not writing to you because you don't know the truth — you know the truth, I just need you to practice what you know. Don't love the world! He tells us we have an anointing. You know this, right? You actually have the presence of the Holy Spirit of God within you, and the Holy Spirit of God within you leads you to know right from wrong...what to do and what not to do. If you don't have that, you are not His.

See, who you are and what time it is holds together this thought: who do you love? Do you love the world? Do you love God? You either love God or you love the world. You don't love both. It is either God or the world. Which one do you love?