

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: Avoiding the Pleasure Trap

Choose to Love God Rather than the World (1 John 2:15-17)

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world-- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life-- is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Core Understanding of Seed & Sower: LIFE Exists, But MATURITY Does Not

The issues addressed by the stony and weedy ground are issues believers face and which must be overcome for believers to be fruitful and mature. (cp. Col 2:6-8; Phil 4:6-8)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Developing Roots

Luke 8:13 But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. (Eph 4:11-16; Col 2:6-8)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Eliminating Worry

1. Put God's Work and Ways First (*Matt 6:22-33*)
2. Prompt Yourself About God's Care for You (*1 Pet 5:7*)
3. Pray Instead of Worry – Give Everything to God (*Phil 4:4-8*)
4. Point Your Care Toward Others (*1 Cor 12:24-25*)
5. Prioritize Worship Before Work (*Luke 10:38-42*)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Avoiding Greed (Covetousness)

The DEFINITION of Greed (Covetousness)

- the obsession with accumulating money and/or material goods (*1 Tim 3:3; 3:8; Titus 1:7*)
- the valuing & pursuing material goods more than valuing & pursuing God (*2 Tim 3:2*)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Avoiding the Pleasure Trap

The Pleasure Problem

Luke 8:14 "Now the ones [that] fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

Mark 4:18 "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; [they are] the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ and the ... desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

1. **Our Past** – "serving various lusts and pleasures" (*Titus 3:3; Eph 2:3*)
2. **Our Problem** – "your desires for pleasure that war in your members" (*James 4:1,3*)
3. **Our Position** – "those [who are] Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (*Gal 5:24; 2:20*)
4. **God's Plan** – "teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age" (*Titus 2:14*)

How to Respond to Lust

1. **Refuse to Yield to the Rule of Lust** (*Rom 6:12*)
2. **Make Jesus Your Power** (*Rom 13:14*)
3. **Refuse to Feed Lust** (*Rom 13:14*)
4. **Walk by the Spirit** (*Gal 5:16*)
5. **Choose to Discard a Life of Lust** (*Eph 4:22*)
6. **Make Drastic Choices** (*Col 3:5*)
7. **Live on Purpose, not by Passion** (*1 Thes 4:5*)
8. **Focus on God, Not on Gold** (*1 Tim 6:9*)
9. **Run Away from Lust, and Chase After Godliness** (*2 Tim 2:22*)
10. **Recognize the Controlling Danger of Desire** (*2 Tim 4:3*)
11. **Say No and Say Yes** (*Titus 2:12*)
12. **Refuse to Conform (because you know the truth)** (*1 Pet 1:14*)
13. **Let No Mean No (don't toy with temptation)** (*1 Pet 2:11*)
14. **Live in God's Will not by Your Want** (*1 Pet 4:2*)
15. **Recognize the Waste a Lust-Led Life Is** (*1 Pet 4:3*)
16. **Know the Word, and Live by the Word** (*2 Pet 1:4*)

Choose to Love God Rather than the World (1 John 2:15-17)

1. The Command

Analysis:

- Present
- Active
- Imperative

Meaning:

- Not a feeling but a choice
- Choosing to live for & focus upon

2. The Object(s)

The World:

The Things in the Word:

3. The Rub

God and the world don't mix.

You cannot love the world AND God.

You can love one OR the other – not both.

4. The Explanation

The world's "things" (The lust-willed life):

- Acting upon what feels good
- Acting upon looks good
- Acting upon what puts me first

Living by lust is not from God

Living by lust is from the world

Why?

- Ignores God's rightful place
- Puts God's gifts in place of God
- Puts us in place of God

5. Another Reason

The world is a poor investment!

- The world is going away!
- The lust of the world is going away!
- Whatever the world offers will not last.
- Whatever the world promises will not satisfy, fulfill, or pay off.

6. The God-Loving Life

Loving God = Doing God's Will

Doing God's Will = Eternity-Focused

Doing God's Will = Satisfies, Fulfills, and Pays Off FOREVER