

Good morning! When I was a kid, there was a man in our congregation named Harold Loomis. He may have been, like my parents were, a Charter Member, since as far back as I can remember, he was active in the life of our congregation. By using the word *active*, I mean that he attended nearly everything; church, Sunday School, and mid-week Lenten and Advent Services. Mr. Loomis was an older man, much older than my parents, and even though he was very active in congregational life, he was completely out of step with the rest of our congregation. The reason I say he was out of step is because he was completely focused on what the Bible teaches---so we thought he was impractical, a little bit of a nut. He didn't seem to care what everyone else was doing---he was focusing on Jesus. This morning, let's consider that as we read this passage together:

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **1 John 2:1**

Christian writers, from the New Testament writers through the present, have a lot to say about "the world". We Christians seem to talk a lot about the world. What is the world, anyway? Contrary to what many Christians seem to think, the world is not people who are not Christians. People who are not Christians have the same enemy we do! When the Bible talks about the world, it means those systems, governments and ideas that organize themselves against God and His kingdom. In the context of today's passage, it means that you and I must be on guard; we must not align ourselves with those parts of our culture which reject Christ. How are you doing with that? Yeah, me too. I love the world and the things of the world a little too much, I think. I love self-sufficiency. I love assurance of my own material comfort. I try to buy enough insurance (sorry, Matt) to avoid having to trust God to provide for me and for my family when I am gone. If I'm honest, I have to admit that I'm fitting in a little too comfortably with the world. Jesus tells His disciples (us) in today's passage that if we love the world, we don't love the Father. I want to love the Father more than I love the world--- and I don't want it to be a close contest. This morning, I'm repenting of my love affair with the world and the things of the world and asking God to help me love the world less and to love Him more. How about you?