

How to Apply: "Love Not the World Nor the Things in the World"

with Guest: Scott Aniol

SATURDAY, April 26, 2025 at 8:00am CT

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

How to Apply Love, Not the World nor the Things in the World. Worldliness is our topic today right here on the Christian Worldview Radio Program where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a non-profit, listener-supported radio ministry. Our website is TheChristianWorldview.org and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout today's program. As always, thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support in lifting us up in prayer.

The highest calling for Christians is to pursue holiness. Scripture says this definitively. 1 Peter chapter 1, "As obedient children do not be conformed to the former lust, which were yours and your ignorance, but like the holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior because it is written, you shall be holy for I am holy." What hinders the pursuit of holiness defined as Christ-likeness is the opposite, worldliness. Worldliness is defined in Scripture as the sinful lusts pride, which the world around us relentlessly promotes.

1 John 2 says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world." So here's what worldliness tells us. If it feels good, do it. If it looks good, get it. If it elevates me, go for it. Not surprisingly, the fallen world ruled by Satan presents endless ways to draw us off the path of holiness and down the dead end of worldliness and most problematic, there's something inside of us that is drawn to what the sinful world offers. It's enjoyable, it causes us to laugh, it makes us feel in. it boosts our view of self and it's really not going to affect me, right?

Scott Aniol, Executive Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of G3 Ministries and Professor of Pastoral Theology at Grace Bible Theological Seminary joins us today in the Christian Worldview to discuss worldliness and how to identify and overcome it. We hope you find the conversation edifying for your Christian life.

Scott, thank you for coming on the Christian Worldview Radio program today. Before we get to our topic about worldliness, I wanted to ask you about a big piece of news that came this week. As a matter of fact, Christianity today had a headline in their daily email, I think it was that said quote, "Pope Francis, friend to evangelicals, dies at age 88. This pope represents a religion that written in their doctrines, rejects justification by faith alone. It adds human merit to earning salvation. The sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist and Penance and so forth. They may dispute that, but I think that is in fact what they believe, according to their documents.

And they also claim that the Roman Catholic Church is the only means of salvation. I saw a sign where we are in Minnesota on the Roman Catholic Church in front of their church that said, "It must be firmly believed that

the church is necessary for salvation." But not only that religiously, Scott, but the Pope was a pretty open leftist, political leftist on issues like homosexuality, that's actually a moral issue and on immigration and economics and so forth. But perhaps most heretical of all is what he said in Southeast Asia last year about there being many paths to God. Listen to this:

Audio Sound Bite: Pope Francis:

On this final day in Singapore, September 13th, concluding his trip to Asia and the Pacific, Pope Francis spoke to young people at an inter religious gathering.

Because every religion is a way to arrive at God.

Sort of a comparison, an example would be they're sort of like different languages in order to arrive at God.

But God is God for all.

And if God is God for all, then we're all sons and daughters of God.

But my God is more important than your God.

Is that true?

There's only one God and each of us has a language so to speak, in order to arrive at God.

There are different paths.

Understood?

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

The Pope said every religion is a way to arrive at God, Sheik Muslim, Hindu, Christian, there are different paths. And then he concluded by saying, "Understood?" Well, yes, we understand exactly the heretical universalism that he is espousing here. Scott, as we think about this Pope dying, how would you say biblical Christians should think about this and speak about this in terms of the death of Pope Francis?

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

I think you nailed both of my concerns with what I've seen some evangelicals say with relation to this Pope's death. In the past, certain popes have been sort of more culturally and morally conservative and from that standpoint, there's been some agreement, for instance, in opposing abortion or in promoting true marriage between man and a woman and these sorts of things. This pope was, as you mentioned, a cultural leftist and that in itself is a problem for conservative Evangelical Christians. But the greater problem, as you also mentioned, is that Roman Catholicism is heresy. It is sending people to hell. And so even where I think we as conservative Bible-believing Evangelical Christians do see the death of the Pope as something important and significant, just like any world leader dying is significant for the world. He was unquestionably influential. I saw someone tweet yesterday that he is in one large sense, a politician. And so from that perspective it is significant when this influential, a politician, does die.

And so it is not wrong, I think for even conservative Evangelical Christians to be interested in who the next Pope is going to be in terms of the influence, the political influence, around the world. But we cannot allow ourselves to be confusing to those who are following us, to those under our care, in our families and in our

churches to the point where it seems like, and this is the case with many tweets from major evangelical leaders I saw yesterday, where it seems like well, he's a Christian just like we're a Christian. That is not true.

As you mentioned, not only is Roman Catholicism itself a heresy that is sending people to hell, but this Pope in particular seemed to be even worse in many respects in teaching a sort of universalism that all religions lead to God. So it is very concerning to me. I saw a major well-known evangelical leader yesterday make the comment on X, "Pray for the Roman Catholic Church as it selects its next pope." Which is just very confusing. Again, there's nothing wrong with being interested in even praying for who this person will be in terms of his large worldwide influence, but it's very confusing when we as Christians don't make a clear differentiation between the true biblical gospel of justification by grace alone, through faith alone, and Christ alone and what Rome teaches, which is heretical doctrine that is sending people to hell.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

That's very well said. Scott Aniol is our guest today from G3 Ministries here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. Scott, just one more question about the death of the Pope. You talked about the spiritual side of it and how biblical or Evangelical Christians are responding to it, but one thing that's been a bit surprising as well is about how political conservatives have responded to the death of the Pope and been very complimentary about his life and what he advocated for. Albert Mohler wrote a column, I think it was in World Magazine, he said, "Francis liked to push progressivist messages to liberal activists and the progressivist wing of his church." He offered leftist comments to reporters and journalists and sent signals about liberalization. He rehabilitated the Marxism of the liberation theologians and condemned western capitalism. He claimed to speak on behalf of the poor and the oppressed, but seemed to have little understanding of both economics and Catholic moral theory.

He spoke up for immigrants in the context of Europe's migrant crisis, but kept the gates of the Vatican locked to migrants. Even the Catholic Bill Donoghue, who's a Catholic leader, wrote in November 2024, "The Pope stunned Catholics and Jews alike when he called for an international probe of Israel's decision to defend itself from Hamas terrorists. He inquired whether this constituted genocide. In final sentence here from Bill Donoghue in what proved to be a real eye-opener, the Pope admitted that as a young man, the person who did more to shape his thinking about politics, was a female communist atheist named Esther Ballestrino. She introduced him to prominent communist publications." Not only is there the religious evangelical confusion that you just talked about, but it's even confusing to watch Fox News to be on social media and to see people who are supposed to be conservative in their worldview and how to explain that they complement the life of this Pope and what he stood for despite the fact that this Pope's policies stand in direct opposition to a constitutional America.

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Right, absolutely. Even viewing him, as I mentioned a moment ago, just as an influential political leader in our day, I don't understand how somebody who claims to be conservative in their political views and certainly in their cultural views, moral views can support what he stood for. He very clearly pushed the Roman Catholic Church in a leftward direction, whereas again, even setting aside the very important issue, the heresy of the church at Rome, which is not something we should set aside at all, but even just laying that aside for a

moment for the sake of discussion, there have been in the past, ways in which we as conservative, political and also Evangelical Christians, can look at what Rome was saying in terms of ethics and in terms of politics and say, "Yes, that's true and we can agree with that." But with this pope that wasn't even the case and very much was sticking his nose into political issues and trying to push things in a leftward, Marxist, anti-freedom, anti-capitalist direction. That was really harmful for the world.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

Scott, let's transition into our topic of the day here on the program, which is how to apply the biblical command or exhortation to love not the world nor the things in the world, this idea of worldliness. I think I had mentioned to you that I was recently amongst a group of Christians and a discussion came up on the issue of worldliness, and as different people went around the room, I was taken back, and these are all grown adults, most of them with children who really seemed quite put off, which would be, I think a mild way of putting it, but more resentful as to some of the standards or let's say rules that their parents or the Christian schools they attended growing up still bothered them to this day, whether on the specifics of how to dress or music or entertainment or what you did or how you lived your life, basically.

I want to start out just with that as context, but I want to read a key passage on this issue of loving the world that comes from the Apostle John. He writes in his 1 John 2: 15, "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. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the father, but is from the world. The world is passing away and also its lusts, but the one who does the will of God lives forever."

So this is going to be our home base today as we talk about this issue of worldliness, and perhaps you could explain the context for why the Apostle John writes this passage on not loving the world or the things of the world, and what is he getting at or what is he describing?

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

It's important to, like you said, look at the context and look at what he's exactly arguing. He's using the word cosmos here to describe the world. A word that can be used in a number of different ways and so it's important to recognize how he's not using it here. He's not referring to the physical globe, which is one way in which the word can be used. He's not even referring to every single individual person. I mean, this is the same apostle who says in the gospel of John chapter 3 that God loves the world, right? And that's referring to individual people. He's using this word here in this context to refer to an ordered system that is governed by Satan and contrary to the law of God and the values and morals of God's moral character and moral law as of course are embodied in the pages of Scripture and the commands that God has given us in His holy word.

So John is commanding us to avoid, to reject, to not love anything that is part of that system that is contrary to God. So we're talking about spiritual values, spiritual emphases, that are contrary to God's loves and God's character and God's morals. We are supposed to love God. We are supposed to love what God loves and therefore, allow those things and God's law to influence how we behave and how we live as Christians and the flip side of that would then mean that we hate and refuse to love those morals and values and emphases

that are characteristic of the system of this world that is contrary to God as governed and ruled and influenced by Satan. So the world is a spiritual system that is contrary to God, but I think it's important to recognize that that spiritual system then influences very real life behavior and influences how we communicate and what is embodied in our actions.

And if we're talking about, you mentioned a moment ago, things in our culture, cultural aspects and artistic expression and all these sorts of things can embody and communicate worldly values or they can communicate and embody values and beliefs and morals that are consistent with the law and the will of God. So we really have two opposing systems, God's law and the system of this world controlled by Satan that are in opposition in our world today. As Christians, God wants us to be discerning and avoid what is of this world because what is of this world is not of Him, is not from Him, as John clearly says in this passage, and instead pursue those things that are in line with and consistent with God's moral law.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

So to be accurate to say from what you just described, that worldliness, which maybe you could define as pleasing the flesh, is the opposite of holiness, which would be pleasing God.

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Yes, I would say worldliness is anything that characterizes us that is consistent with this system that is contrary to God. So when we live in such a way that we are manifesting or acting out or embodying values that, like you said, lust of the flesh would be certainly part of that. He mentions pride here in this text. Anything that is consistent with Satan's desires rather than God's desires would be the very definition of worldliness.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

Scott, there's the issue of entertainment. Which television programs Christians watch, what music they listen to, what movies they watch, how we dress and adorn ourselves, what kind of hairstyle we have and the length of hair, whether someone has tattoos, the types of words we choose that come out of our mouth, how we spend our money, and the list could probably go on and on and on of things that one Christian might think, "Well, that's worldly." Another Christian might think, "Well, you're telling me that's worldly, that's actually, you're legalistic." So what are some general principles that will help Christians discern on any of these given issues, what would be honoring to God versus dishonoring to God? Maybe later in the interview we'll get to the point of there are some issues that I think are guided by individual conscience, but what are some clear principles to apply when it comes to some of those things I just mentioned?

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Sometimes it can be difficult because cultures change and you mentioned a lot of things that are part of the media of this world, the communication of this world, culture, entertainment, dress, all of these things. Sometimes it's difficult because we don't have, in the Bible, lists of dos and don'ts when it comes to every aspect of what we encounter in culture. So it requires discernment and that's part of the challenge. I think we need to be the kind of people who are so immersing ourselves in the Scriptures. The New Testament encourages us to pursue knowledge and discernment. This is the mark of maturity.

You see in Hebrews chapter 5, "The one who is spiritually mature is one who has his senses of discernment trained to distinguish between good and evil." And that's not something that happens with just an easy set of rules or dos and don'ts, which may account for in the example that you opened with. Some of the hesitancy by people who grew up with just an easy list of dos and don'ts without necessarily any rationale or explanation for why these things are worldly and why we need to avoid these things. Maybe taking the easy route of just creating a list of rules, and as long as we stick with those rules, we're going to be okay. The problem with that is we're not actually teaching people to be discerning, and that's required in being able to decide what is actually pleasing to the Lord and what is not.

We need to so immerse ourselves in the Scriptures, to learn to love those things that God loves and hate those things that God hates to the degree that when something new comes along in the culture, a new form of communication, a new form of entertainment or music or you mentioned movies or books or whatever we're talking about when something new comes along, we have so trained our loves and our judgment and discernment by the Scriptures that we learn to recognize what is actually an embodiment of values that are contrary to God's law and what might be because this is often the case. What might come along in our present cultural context where we can look at it and say, "Well, that's actually an embodiment of values and beliefs that are consistent with God's law." We have to be discerning.

One of the passages that I think that's very helpful here is in Galatians chapter 5, where Paul is talking about the works of the flesh and he gives a list of a number of things that we need to avoid, but at the end of that list, interestingly he says, "And things like these we need to avoid." I think the implication there is we can look at lists like that in the Scriptures of works of the flesh of sins that are very clearly worldly, and by learning to avoid those sorts of things along with pursuing the other list in Galatians 5, the fruit of the spirit, things that are consistent with God's law, by learning what those things are like, then we can also discern what we need to avoid in our present culture.

So what is like the works of the flesh that Paul lists in Galatians chapter 5, for example, we need to be the kind of people who can look at culture, entertainment, these things that come across our paths in the broader society, and we need to be the kind of people who can look at something and say, "Okay, that is actually a communication and an embodiment of values that are like what Scripture expressly prohibits." Pursuing that kind of discernment I think is what God is after and really what is the mark of spiritual maturity as the New Testament prescribes.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

So what I just heard you say, or at least one portion of it is, as the believer grows in sanctification closer to the Lord and walks more closely with the Lord, he will have better discernment and understanding to know what pleases God, holy things and what displeases Him, worldly things.

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Absolutely. There's an analogy here with us and other people, right? The more that you get to know somebody, to truly know them, you begin to know without even asking what they like or what they don't like.

I've been married to my wife for 21 years now. I don't have to ask her, "What restaurant do you want to go to? Do you like this food? Will you be pleased by this gift?" I know what she loves and I know what she hates because I have spent time with her, and our relationship has grown through the years, and the same is true with the Lord. The more that we are in the word, learning to love what God loves and hate what He hates, then we are more able to be discerning with regard to things that might not be explicitly addressed in the word, new things that come across our paths in the culture, but we just know instinctively, God's not going to want me to partake in that because I know that He hates that.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

Scott Aniol is our guest today on this topic of Worldliness, and he's the Executive Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of G3 Ministries. We have links to him and G3 at our website TheChristianWorldview.org. You mentioned Christians in the past, Scott. How did Christians of previous eras, whether it was in the early church, let's say the first century, whether it was during the time of the Reformation, early American history, the Puritans, how did they approach this issue of worldliness and was it different in the way we as let's say, 21st century Christians see things now?

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

You read the Puritans, you read Reformers, you read early Church Fathers, even one of the oldest documents that we have, the Didache, which was a kind of a manual that would be given to somebody about to be baptized, and a large emphasis of that treatise is on how to live a holy life. There was, what I've been talking about for the last several minutes, it was the emphasis that we need to pursue love for God, we need to pursue love for his word, and then also we need to be aware that there is this system of values around us that is controlled by Satan and then is hostile to God, and we need to be always vigilant, always aware that Satan is seeking to devour us and always asking poignant questions about what various elements of the culture around us is actually embodying so that we can avoid those things that are worldly and pursue those things that God loves.

This seems to be the consistent emphasis. And in some ways, perhaps it was easier when Christians lived in a culture that was vehemently hostile to Christianity. It was easier to see black and white, that's worldly and that's consistent with Christian values because they were killing Christians, they were arresting Christians. Where it has become difficult, I think for us in our modern age, is because again, this is something to be thankful for. We can praise the Lord that we live in a culture and in a country that has been for a long time, influenced by Christian values in many respects. But what that has done in many ways is created a lethargy. We're not so vigilant anymore about what is worldly and what is not.

What happened in the culture in America in the '60s and the '70s when there began to be some overtly anti-Christian values that were being promoted in the culture. A lot of Christians, because they had been asleep at the wheel, they were awoken to the fact that there still is worldliness around us, but instead of promoting, I don't want to paint with a broad brush. I think there were a lot of good Christians who did promote the kind of discernment that we've been talking about and that the reformers and the early church fathers advocated. But there was a segment I think of Christianity who rightly reacted against the worldliness that was now all of a sudden springing up in culture, but instead of teaching discernment, they just sort of took a snapshot of what

they rightly identified as worldly, created some lists of things to avoid, and that became the mark of what worldliness was. So now worldliness and godliness becomes just a list of standards, lists of dos and don'ts.

The problem with that is that as culture changes and new worldly things come across the culture and maybe new things come across the culture that are not worldly. Perhaps a generation or two of Christians had not been taught discernment, and so, one of two things I think have happened. One is the reaction that you mentioned early on where people who grew up with those lists, now when they hear the word worldly, they react in a negative way and almost deny that there can even be such a thing as worldliness, and it leads to sort of a licentiousness and a lack of discernment in culture.

Or the other response is to continue to pursue lists and rules almost to a perspective of legalism where maybe not overtly, but it certainly implicitly, we feel like as long as we keep this list of dos and don'ts, that we're right with God and there's no emphasis on the heart. So I think we need to get back to an emphasis on a pursuit of holiness, a pursuit of love for God and a rejection of the system of this world that is contrary to God by being discerning. Discernment, I think, is the need of the hour. We need to learn to be a people who are discerning again.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

I mentioned earlier, Scott, about the fact that there are some issues. The Bible seems to say in Romans 14, I'll just actually just read a couple of sentences there where Paul writes, "One person regards one day above another. Another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind." Continuing down to verse 13, "Therefore, let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this. Not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way." I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean. He's talking about food here, certain kinds of foods, but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, like unclean food to him, it is unclean. For it because of food, your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food, him for whom Christ died.

So I think what he's saying here is that there are some liberties according to your conscience, that some believers will engage and celebrate certain days and have certain foods and drink certain things and others their conscience wouldn't be okay with that. They would be convicting to them, but those who have the freer conscience should be very careful of the liberty they feel, so they don't lead the one who has a weaker conscience into sin or lead them the wrong way. How should this impact Christians to be circumspect in the way we live in our Christian liberties, in how we engage with the world and other Christians who are watching us?

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

First of all, I would say that these passages, I think 1 Corinthians 8-10 is another very important discussion when we're talking about these things. These passages actually are going a step beyond just asking, is it worldly? If it is worldly, meaning whatever it is, this action, this cultural thing, this cultural expression or whatever, if it is worldly, then we have to avoid it. If it is an embodiment of the system ruled by Satan and contrary to God, then there is no gray, there is no Christian liberty on what is actually worldly. We simply have

to reject it. But these passages about the liberties that we have as Christians are actually going a step further and saying, there are some things in this life that aren't necessarily worldly in and of themselves, but nevertheless might cause a weaker brother to stumble into true sin.

I think of Paul's illustration in 1 Corinthians 8-10 of meat that had been offered to idols. Paul's argument is very clear. The meat itself, there's nothing wrong with it. It is not worldly. "It is just meat." He says. And we know that the idol is a false God and is not real, so there's nothing in and of itself that is wrong about the meat. However, we don't just stop there. Paul didn't say, "It's just meat. There's nothing wrong with it. The idols are false, so just grow up and eat it, and there's no problem." He says, "No. We actually have to go a step further and say, well, I have liberty to eat that meat, but if eating that meat is going to cause a weaker brother or sister to fall into sin, then I will not eat that meat."

In other words, Christian liberty is not the freedom to do whatever we want. Christian liberty is recognizing that even though I might have the freedom to do that particular thing, I have liberty to give up that freedom for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of the sanctification of somebody who might be weaker than I am. And again, that spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity is not clinging onto our freedom saying, "There's nothing wrong with this, and so I'm going to do it no matter what, no matter how it harms other people." Spiritual maturity is a willingness to say, "This particular activity in and of itself is not worldly, in and of itself, this is a fine thing to do and participate in, but I in my maturity recognize that my partaking of that is going to cause other weaker brothers and sisters to fall into sin. And so you know what? I don't need to do that. I can give that up for the sake of their soul."

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

Scott, my mom likes to tell me a story. She's 91 years old, and I think it was probably back in the '50s or '60s where she knew someone who had either gotten a television and on the side of the box of the television, this probably wasn't a flat screen. This wasn't a flat screen back then, it was just a big old television. It said, 'It brings the world right into your living room.'

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Wow.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

When this believer saw that, he said, "Don't even bring it in. Just take it out." Yet today, we live in a world beyond television now, in the age of internet and computers and technology that "Brings the world right into your living room."

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Yes

HOST: DAVID WHEATON

So my question for you is I know you have a number of children. I think that you have four children, and I know you're very intentional about family worship times and how you order your home. This is a topic in and of itself maybe for another time, but I'd just like to ask you one question about today in this context of worldliness is what are some of your recommendations for how parents should regulate or even restrict things like computers and the internet and phones and technology and video games and these types of things, which are very different now than no generation has really had to deal with to this degree?

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Scott, what are some of your recommendations for how parents should regulate or even restrict things like computers and internet and phones and technology and video games and these types of things, which are very different now that no previous generation has really had to deal with to this degree?

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

You mentioned TV and phones and computers. There's so much positive that can be done with these things, right? Teaching the scriptures, even just pure wholesome entertainment, there's so much positive, but there's a whole lot of potential for the devil to use these things to infect us with worldliness as well. Our oldest is 18 and I've had conversations with him, I've told him straight up that I am scared to death of what he will encounter in this world, and even just accidentally stumble on something that is going to poison his mind and lead him into sin. My first recommendation is to have, especially with older children, very direct conversations about these things. I want him to know that the rules that we have on our home and the guidelines and the protection is not just something that we're doing because we don't trust them or perhaps we're overly protective or the caricature that a lot of people like to use is you're helicopter parents and that sort of thing.

No, we are trying to protect them, but no differently than we as adults ought to be protecting ourselves. We need to be protecting ourselves from that kind of worldly content as well. So a big recommendation that I have, and this has always been the case with my wife and me, and then as our children have grown older and as they begin to have access to the computer and the internet, and then eventually once they start driving, they have a cell phone and that sort of thing, we make use of filters and accountability software. So filters just help prevent mistakes, accidents, like you click on something and then oops, you see something you can never get out of your mind anymore. There are so many resources today, filters that you can put on all of your devices that just help to prevent that. And I have those filters just like I put on my children's devices and our older kids' devices. And then also accountability software.

So when my 18-year-old son began to drive and we got him a cell phone, I put accountability on his devices, his cell phone and his computer, and I also have the same accountability software on my devices. And what that software does is it sends emails to accountability partners when there's potentially something questionable and you can just see a log of every single website that the person goes to. So I am my son's accountability partner and he is my accountability partner. And we've had conversations about why this is helpful and important. It removes temptation, it removes accidents, it provides accountability. And I've told him, "When you leave our home, I hope that we will continue to be each other's accountability partner. I want

you always to be my accountability partner and me to be yours." My wife has always had access to all my devices and accountability as well.

Again, this is not because we're hyper untrusting. It's simply a wise means by which we can protect ourselves from our own sinful flesh, from temptation, and from the temptation that is coming from without, from Satan, and from the world itself. These are wise means of protection and accountability in situations like you mentioned a moment ago that nobody had to deal with. It used to be, even when I was young, but certainly in history in the past, it used to be in order to get your hands on the worst sorts of evil, you had to go and look for it and search for it and go to certain places. Now you've got it in your pocket. So we have to protect ourselves and we have to protect our children. I think it's a both/and; use the software, use the protective measures, the accountability software, put limits on screen time and all of that, that is so important for your children, but don't just do that to the neglect of having conversations, because you could raise legalists who just are doing things because there's a list of rules. So it's very important to talk to our kids about why we are doing these things, why we have accountability, why we are protecting ourselves, and help them to grow to be discerning and vigilant about the roaring lion who's seeking to devour us.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Scott Aniol with us today. He is the editor in chief of G3 Ministries. We have links to him on our website, thechristianworldview.org. Final question for you, Scott.

We know that our flesh desires the things of the world so much, and so we can do accountability partners, we can do filters, but ultimately, even more powerful than any of those things, and I concur with what you just said, is having a heart inside of us and our children that loves God, that fosters a love of God more than we love the world. So when we or our children are given a choice between do I want to go this worldly route, do I love that? Do I want to love myself and please myself by going that way? Or do I want to go this way and please God because I love him so much? How do you foster that kind of heart, not only in ourselves, but particularly in children who aren't at a point in their life where they have the same level of self-control, of course, that adults should have. How do you foster that heart so they can make the right decisions for themselves?

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Cultivating a heart for God happens through what sometimes we refer to as the ordinary means of grace, the spiritual disciplines that God has given us, reading the Bible, prayer, faithful church involvement, corporate worship, family worship, personal devotional times. So establishing those habits in our own lives of time with the Lord, a faithfulness to the local church, fellowship of the body, all of these kinds of things, as well as in our children at the earliest ages, having times of family worship together, reading the Bible together, singing and praying together, when the kids are at a place where they can read, beginning to help them read the Bible themselves every day, those habits are what over time cultivate our love for God and our desire to please Him. Like we talked about earlier, the more that we know somebody and come to love them, the more we will want to please them and the more we will know what it is to please them.

And that's what we want to ultimately inculcate in our children's lives and in our own hearts. And that doesn't happen overnight. There's no magic secret sauce to make it happen. It happens through the regular work of the disciplines that God has given us of reading His Bible, praying, singing wonderful hymns, studying the scriptures, faithful church involvement and fellowship. And so I cannot over stress the importance when we're talking about avoiding worldliness and pursuing holiness and love for God. I cannot stress enough the establishment of those kinds of disciplines in our own lives and in the lives of our children.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Well, you have been a very good model for that. I follow you on social media and often see you doing your family worship times and it's an encouragement for others to do the same. What an important thing to have that daily time of family worship in addition to all the other things you mentioned, Bible reading and being involved in your local church and so forth. So, Scott, thank you for taking the time to give biblical insight on this issue. It's easy just to be on one side or the other and just be here's your list and do it, and so forth, so we appreciate your biblical approach to this conversation today. All of God's best to you and your family, and G3 Ministries.

GUEST: SCOTT ANIOL:

Thanks so much for having me on.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

This is why we appreciate Scott Aniol, and you can connect with G3 Ministries and his work at our website, thechristianworldview.org. I'm sure you noticed that he didn't give an endless list of thou shalt nots when it comes to worldliness, but rather emphasize these things, deepen your discernment about what is right or profitable and wrong or unprofitable as you read the word, and then deepen your love for God. The better you know Him, the better you will know what pleases Him and what doesn't please Him. Did you catch what he said? That there are many things that are worldly or sinful that there should be no question about because the Bible states them, such as it's worldly to dress immodestly or it's worldly to choose movies or programs or music that glamorizes what is sinful, like sexual morality or obscenity, greed. The wrong heart is motivated by, "I want to get as close to the world without crossing the line."

The right heart desires, "I want to get as close to God as possible and honor Him." We talked about that verse in 1 John 2, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world." But we didn't focus much on the reward in verse 17 for pursuing holiness over worldliness. It says, "The world is passing away, and also its lusts, but the one who does the will of God lives forever."

Let's remember that the reward of doing God's will is far better than pursuing the paltry and temporal satisfactions of the world. But the pursuit of holiness and victory over worldliness can only happen when we trust in Christ for salvation. Only the regenerated man or woman has the power of the Holy Spirit within to overcome the flesh. If you've never been born again, call us or go to thechristianworldview.org and click on

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