

## I JOHN: DISCERNING TRUE FROM FALSE SPIRITUALITY

### Part VI: Practical Maturation Levels In True Spirituality, 1 John 2:12-27

#### B. The Young Men Maturity Level

(1 John 2:13b, 14b-17)

#### I. Introduction

- A. One may be in spiritual fellowship with the Lord, but his spiritual maturity level is an entirely different matter: fellowship relates to one's spiritual health while maturity relates to his growth level in that healthy state.
- B. 1 John 2:12-27 addresses the three practical maturation levels in true spirituality, and we continue with the intermediate level, that of the Young Men Maturity Level in 1 John 2:13b, 14b-17 (as follows):

#### II. The Young Men Maturity Level, 1 John 2:13b, 14b-17.

- A. Young men have learned their lesson while in the Little Children level, the lesson that they must handle their vulnerability to false teachers that in turn is caused by immature believers' relying on people around them in organized Christendom. Young men have thus learned to rely on the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27) and the Word of God (1 John 2:21-24) to discern so as to avoid false teachers.
- B. Accordingly, spiritual young men have come to be spiritually strong in their dependence on the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 John 2:14b; Eph. 6:10) and God's Word (1 John 2:14c) so that they have not only overcome the deception of false teachers, but they have overcome even Satan's wiles (1 John 2:14d; Matt. 4:1-4, 5-7, 8-11).
- C. However, young men need to overcome their love for the world and its lusts, 1 John 2:15-16 (as follows):
  1. The 1 John 2:15a KJV command "Love not" translates the present imperative form (*agapate*) of the verb "love" (from its root *agapao*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 815; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 2) and the negative particle, *me* (Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) that presents a negative imperative to **stop an ongoing activity** (Dana & Mantey, A Man. Gram. of the Grk. N. T., 1955, p. 301).
  2. Thus, spiritual young men must learn to **stop loving** the world system that is under Satan's control (1 John 2:15a with 5:19 NIV and Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 825), learning to overcome the world's lust of the flesh, its lust of the eyes and its pride of this earthly life (*bios*, "earthly life" and not *zoe*, "eternal life," Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 141, 340-342), 1 John 2:16.
  3. These lusts are illustrated in Eve's temptation, Genesis 3:6: (1) She saw that the fruit appealed to the body's appetite, (2) that it aesthetically appealed to the eyes and (3) that it was desired to make one wise, that it appealed to the pride of this earthly life, and what made these appeals lust and not upright was their lure that Eve address them by disobeying God's prohibition to eat of the forbidden tree, Genesis 2:15b-17.
  4. Thus, spiritual young men have a battle regarding their love: they must stop loving the world system that appeals to the desires of the body, the eyes and earthly pride **in violation of God's Word**. [Note: this does **not** mean that meeting the normal drives of the body (food, drink, etc.), the eyes (what is aesthetically appealing) and personal honor (achievement awards, etc.) are themselves sin, for such an idea is actually demonic (1 Timothy 4:1-5), but that seeking such things at the **price of heeding God's Word is sin!**]
- D. John provided reasons for overcoming this **illicit** love for the world system in 1 John 2:16-17:
  1. First, loving the world means one does not love the Father, and that is sin, 1 John 2:15b with Matt. 22:37.
  2. Second, all that comprises the world system is not from the Father, but is from the world, 1 John 2:16a,b.
  3. Third, the world and its lusts are constantly (present tense, *paragetai*, Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 301) passing out of fashion and away, but he who does God's will, including not loving the world, is constantly (present tense, *menei*, Ibid., p. 263) remaining forever, making one dreadfully foolish and depressed in living for the world but continually joyful and wisely fulfilled if he does God's Biblical will, 1 John 2:17.

***Lesson:*** While spiritual Young Men have learned to cease relying on people around them for spiritual stability by depending on the indwelling Holy Spirit and Scripture to discern false teachers, becoming spiritually strong and discerning so as to offset even Satan's wiles, they have yet to overcome the world system and its lusts of the eyes, the flesh and the pride of this earthly life that is controlled by Satan. They gain victory in this battle of their love by realizing that loving the world is incompatible with loving God, and is thus sin; by realizing that all that is in the world system is not of the Father, but of the world; and by realizing the world is always passing out of fashion and away while doing God's will keeps one joyfully abiding forever, making doing God's will both wise and fulfilling.

***Application:*** As spiritual Young Men, may we overcome in the battle of our love by choosing to stop loving the world in favor of loving and obeying God for true fulfillment and joy.