

1 John Series

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The Purpose: Am I Following Trusting the Strategy of Envelopment as an “Indirect Strategy” to Resist the Cosmos?

I. Review & Introduction:

1:1–4	Prologue—call to sharing eternal life with God through the apostles
1:5–2:11	Preamble—daily interacting with the Triune God
	1:5–2:2 fellowship with God the Father at His Holy Integrity
	2:3–8 fellowship with God the Son at His Commandments
	2:9–11 fellowship with God the Holy Spirit at His work in believers
2:12–27	Purpose—call to resist the doomed world system and its Christ-denying teachers
	2:12–14 resistance begins with confidence in the Spirit’s work in one’s life
	2:15–17 resistance utilizes the strategic envelopment of the world-system being accomplished by the Father
	2:18–27 resistance adheres to the Spirit-confirmed, once-for-all time apostolic doctrine that renders innovation unnecessary and contradictory

We’re in contact with an eye-witness of Jesus Christ—across 2000 years of history!

1:1–4 Corresponds with the “prologue” of a classic epistolary address

1:5–2:11 The Trinity is the _____ for a wholly independent, self-contained, personal God (Slide 2)

1:5–2:2 Relationship with the Father = relationship with the essence of God >> absolute integrity

Ethical reality:

Walk in the Light “as He is in the Light”

- Admit our guilt
- Acknowledge specific acts
- Like little children coming to our daddy (**2:12, 13c**)

2:3–8 Relationship with the Son = relationship with the revelation of God in His words and works >> supremely in Jesus Christ as the Incarnation

True history:

Keep His commandments: honor Jesus’ words as _____ of God

Like fathers who have a historical perspective (**2:13a, 14a**)

2:9–11 Relationship with the Holy Spirit = relationship with the achievements of God in His words and works >> supremely in fellow believers’ lives

Community of regenerate believers:

Like young men, warrior-age, that share a common danger (**2:13b; 14b**)

THIS IS OUR STRENGTH—we operate from a position of strength, not one of weakness.

II. Call for Resistance 2:12–17 (Slide 3)

2:15 Love of cosmos OR love of the Father EITHER-OR

2:16 for = explanation

Lust of the flesh

Mortal bodies now fallen and vulnerable to evil influence

- (1) physically dying—
- (2) disease, pain, indifferent to sources of pleasurable sensations >> addiction prone
- (3) mind-body connection: anger & anxiety cause toxic reactions
- (4) brain is indifferent to ethical quality of thoughts received

SELF-EVALUATION: Am I responding to an inner feeling in order to violate God's design? Separate that from legitimate feelings—hunger, thirst, pain, sorrow. Am I managing my flesh or is it managing me?

Lust of the eyes

Ability to picture thoughts is indifferent to ethical quality

Aesthetics, our sense of beauty can be hijacked

SELF-EVALUATION: Am I responding to some external attractive object I see that I want intensely enough that I am willing to disobey God's Word? Am I managing my sense of aesthetics and beauty or has it been taken over by a covetous spirit?

Pride of life

Arrogance in thinking I am master of my fate with my physical possessions—whether health, money, property

SELF EVALUATION: Am I so immersed in my plans for the details of life that I've forgotten my creature status—that I brought nothing into this world and shall take nothing out?

2:17

World and its lusts is passing away

STRATEGIC ENVELOPMENT

“Progress” in the Church Age—see chapter 10 in *An Introduction to the New Covenant*

- (1) Quantitative: **Rev. 5:9–10**
- (2) Qualitative: doctrinal clarification
- (3) Ready Jesus Christ to return to earth to establish the Millennial Kingdom of global governance and replacement of the evil principalities and powers by a resurrected and therefore incorruptible governmental body.
- (4) Unilinear progress in the heavenly realm not apparent “down here”
- (5) Indirect strategy in operation (B. H. Liddell-Hart, *Strategy*, p. 25) as seen in Christ and Christian life—indirect strategy appears as weakness to the enemy that lures him into a direct attack but results in a defensive counter-maneuver that defeats him. (Slide 4)
“Effective results in war have rarely been attained unless the approach has had such indirectness as to ensure the opponent's unreadiness to meet it. The indirectness has usually been physical, and always psychological. In strategy, the longest way round is often the shortest way home. . . . The aim is to weaken resistance before attempting to overcome it; and the effect is best attained by drawing the other party out of his defenses.”

The supreme example is the crucifixion. Christ appeared as defenseless before the authorities so Satan thought by inspiring them to kill Christ he would defeat God's plan of salvation. But Satan's very move to have Christ killed undid the entire legal basis of his position!

Similar examples can be seen in our daily trials where our only "offensive" weapon according to Eph. 6:10–17 is the "sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God" (6:17). Satan appears as the attacker in this passage which we "resist", "stand firm", and "extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one."

But he that does the will of God abides forever

Our eternal identity is being shaped here and now in time—this identity goes unaltered into the eternal Kingdom of God whereas whatever is connected with the fallen cosmos is discarded.

III. Conclusion

Indirect Strategy of Envelopment "brackets" all evil, cutting it down to size, as a temporary aberration on creation. (Slide 5)