

Subject: Love of the World

Text: 1 Jn. 2:15-17

Method: Textual

Title: Loving and Losing the World

General Purpose: Examine how love of the world affects human character.

Specific Purpose: To show the devastation caused by misplaced love and encourage the church to strive to offer an alternate object of affection.

Thesis Sentence: The Bible commands that we "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," but rather that "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. (Mat. 22:37)."

Introduction:

- A. Love is a dominant theme of the Bible: John 3:16; 15:13; Eph. 5:25; John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:16
- B. Love is the fixing of one's affections, to varying degrees (*agape, phileo*), upon (a) particular object(s).
- C. In this life there are many things which rival for our affections.

I. The compelling draw of the world and this life -- Luke 8:14 (All choke the word -- Mat. 13:22)

- A. The cares of this life
 1. Summarized in Mat. 6:31-32 -- "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.
 2. Distracting from things of true importance:
 - a. Luke 10:38-42 -- Martha-distracted, busy, convinced she was doing the most important thing
 - b. Neglected the truly needful-service to Christ
 - c. Distracts from preparation for eternity (Luke 12:16-12 -- the rich fool, and Luke 21:34-36)
 3. Proper attitude to develop: Phil 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 1 Pet 5:6-7 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.
- B. The riches of this life
 1. Deut. 8:11-20 -- The ability to acquire wealth is a gift of God, but something that can separate man from Him more quickly and finally than anything else.
 2. The well-to-do never think that they are well-to-do (Prov 23:1-5 When you sit down to eat with a ruler, Consider carefully what is before you; And put a knife to your throat If you are a man given to appetite. Do not desire his delicacies, For they are deceptive food. *Do not overwork to be rich; Because of your own understanding, cease! Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.*) They can never get enough!
 3. What we have is to be gained honorably, ethically:
 - a. A work ethic from the garden -- Gen. 2:15-17
 - b. Deserving of recognition -- Prov 22:29 *Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men.* (When was the last time you saw a person who labored, scraped, sacrificed to provide for his family profiled on prime time TV?)
 - c. Critical to good discipleship -- 2 Thes. 3:10
 4. A powerful source of temptation -- 1 Tim. 6:6-11 Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil,*

for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

- C. The pleasures of this life -- *play directly to the senses, the feelings*
1. Manifested in desire to "feel good" and reject that which makes uncomfortable (2 Tim. 4:3-4)
 2. Manifested in desire for entertainment (2 Pet. 2:12-18)
 3. Rather: 1 Pet 4:1-5 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles; when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

II. Demas is a case in point

- A. Once faithful (Col. 4:14; Philemon 24)
- B. Forsook the immediate demands of the gospel because of love for the world (2 Tim. 4:10) (Paul was in prison with the possibility of execution looming ahead -- perhaps he was not ready to die)
- C. Church must provide a desirable alternative within the doctrine of Christ -- Acts 2:41-47
1. Certainty/security of doctrine *believed and practiced*
 2. *Fellowship and communion*
 3. *As steadfast in prayer as in doctrine*
 4. *Ready at every need*
 5. *Continuing daily, single-mindedly in service from house to house*

III. The proper objects of our affection -- our love

- A. We are to love God with all of our heart (Mat. 22:37)
1. God is the supreme being. He demands that we love Him supremely (Ex. 20:1-3; Mat. 6:33)
 2. Jesus taught Peter to love Him more than his daily vocation, material possession, etc. (Jn. 21:15-17)
 3. Our affections must be set on things above (Col. 3:1-3; 1 Jn. 2:15-17)
 4. We love God when we keep His commandments. 1 Jn. 5:3; Jn. 14:15,21-24
 5. We sacrifice liberally for those we love. Do we sacrifice for God and His Son? 2 Sam. 24:24; 2 Cor. 9:7; Acts 20:35
 6. We strive to please those we love. Do we strive to please God and Jesus? Mat. 6:10; Lk. 22:42
 7. We love to be with those we love. Do we love to spend time with God and Christ? Mat. 18:20; Rev. 3:20
 8. We love to talk to those we love. Do we love to talk to God? Heb. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:17,18
 9. We are greatly concerned about those we love. Are we concerned about God, His Son, His kingdom? 2 Cor. 11:28
- B. Brotherly Love (Scripture reading: Jn. 4:1-21; Heb. 13:1; Jn. 15:17; Rom. 13:8; Gal. 5:14; Jas. 2:8; 1 Thes. 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:17; 3:8; 1 Jn. 3:11, 23; Jn. 13:34-35)
1. We'll have to love hateful men, enemies, the sinner and the brotherhood.
 2. You may be a Christian, but you can't go to heaven unless you love God's family. 1 Jn. 2:9-11; 3:15; 4:20 (Pretty severe language)
 3. The Church is known for many things. How many times do you suppose it has been known, separate and distinct, because of its love for one another? (John 13:34-35)
- C. Love The Church -- There is an abundance of scripture that teaches that we should love the church:
1. The Lord loves the church, we must love each other -- Eph. 5:25; 1 Jn. 3:16

2. Paul loved the church. 2 Cor. 11:28 and Paul admonished us to follow him. 1 Cor. 11:1
 3. We would work harder, maintain the unity of the spirit, and put first things first a lot more if we loved the church more.
- D. Love Lost Souls -- Rom. 10:1-2
1. We would pray more, spend more, work more, if we loved lost souls more
 2. Love finds a way. Maybe the reason some people have never led anyone to Christ is because they have never had enough love stirred up in their heart.
- E. Love God's Word -- Psa. 1:1-2; 119:35, 97 -- One who has such an attitude will delight in:
1. Studying the word (2 Tim. 2:15)
 2. Hearing the word taught (He won't become upset if the sermon is a few minutes longer than normal)
 3. Obeying the word (1 Jn. 5:3)
 4. One who loves God's word will hate every false way (Psa. 119:104).

Conclusion:

- A. There is absolutely nothing to gain in having an unhealthy, unbiblical love for the world -- it distracts us from development, service and replaces heaven as our goal
- B. Church must provide a desirable alternative within the doctrine of Christ -- Acts 2:41-47
 1. Certainty/security of doctrine *believed and practiced*
 2. *Fellowship and communion*
 3. *As steadfast in prayer as in doctrine*
 4. *Ready at every need*
 5. *Continuing daily, single-mindedly in service from house to house*
- C. We must strive to focus on and emphasize the biblical objects of affection if we are to live at peace with God on earth and go to heaven when we die
 1. Our Father
 2. Our Christ
 3. Our brothers and sisters -- the church
 4. The word of the Lord
 5. The souls of all mankind

Randall F. Matheny
PO Box 911, Warren, PA 16365-0911