

WRONG LOVES

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Human beings are capable of experiencing love.
2. Fortunately they are capable of loving the proper things in the proper way with the proper motive to the proper end; such as:
 - a. Loving God.
 - b. Loving their families; their neighbors; their enemies; even self.
 - c. Loving the truth.
3. Unfortunately human beings are capable of loving improper things, for the wrong reasons, resulting in serious, even eternal consequences of a destructive nature.
4. Therefore, in this lesson we speak of “Wrong Loves,,” or to state it another way “Love Improperly Placed.”
5. The sad thing about it all, in addition to the shameful, physically destructive earthly consequences of such love, there is the fact that improperly placed love, or wrong loves in our present earthly existence will cause us to be subjected to eternal destruction, or eternal ruin, or both soul and body in the world to come. Mt.10:28; Mt.25:46; 2Th.1:6-10.
6. Notice with me some of these wrong loves to which we are capable in our earthly existence.

II. DISCUSSION

A. THE LOVE OF THE WORLD IDENTIFIED IN 1Jno.2:15-17.

1. What is forbidden or prohibited in V.15?
 - a. “Love not the world.”
 - b. “Neither the things that are in the world”
 - c. Love not the world; no, nor any of its ways.
2. Why is this love prohibited?
 - a. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him”
 - b. Love of the world is incompatible with the love of God.
 - c. It is impossible for the love of the world and the things of the world to coexist with the love of God.
 - d. Love of the world and the things of the world absolutely exclude the love of the Father, and vice versa.

- e. We can love either God or the world, but not both at the same time!
3. What is meant by “the world” and “the things that are in the world”?
- a. What it does not mean.
 - (1) Not the material universe; for it declares the glory of God, Psa.19:1-6.
 - (2) Not the world of men as such, or mankind; for even God loves the world in that sense, Jno.3:16.
 - (3) Obviously in the expression “love not the world” in 1Jno.2:15, both “love” and “the world” are used in a different sense than in Jno.3:16, where it is declared that “God loved the world.”
 - (a) The one love is selfish, unholy, evil.
 - (b) The other is unselfish and holy.
 - (c) In the one case, “the world” means the sinful elements of human life.
 - (d) In the other, the human race in sin in danger of perishing; but so loved by God that “he gave his only begotten Son” to save them.
 - b. What is meant by “world” and “things of the world” in 1Jno.2:15?
 - (1) That moral order which is antagonistic to God and his righteous principles.
 - (2) The sinful elements of human life following after the flesh – that sphere of life in which only self-interests are allowed to rule.
 - (3) In love not “the things of the world” he is forbidding those things the love of which rival and exclude one’s love of God – all those unholy tendencies and pursuits which give the world its evil character.
 - (4) Everything that is in and of the world here condemned has as its source, not the Father, but the world and all the world stands for.
 - (5) The world indulges in its own lusts, pursues its own selfish aims, seeks its own selfish pleasures, without care, concern, or thought of a higher will.
 - (6) The world is a self-seeker and self-releaser, and will not be bothered to be burdened with the larger and higher and holier questions of God, truth and righteousness.
 - (7) Jas.4:4; Jno.3:19,20; Jas.1:27.

4. Specifically, how does John further identify “all that is in the world” that “is not of the Father, but is of the world,” V.16?
- a. Before identifying and discussing the three things specified by John, we must define the word “lust” as this verse uses it because
 - (1) The original word translated “lust” in our English versions of the N.T. is used in two different senses.
 - (a) In a good sense and in a bad sense.
 - (b) With the context determining what sense is meant.
 - (2) For instance, in Lk.22:15 the original Gr. term is translated “desire,” where it is used in a righteous sense, with Jesus saying, “with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” Cf. Phil.1:23; 1Th.2:17. See also Gal.5:17.
 - (3) Yet, in 1Jno.2:16 the same original Gr. term is translated “lust,” and is obviously used in a sinful sense.
 - (4) Obviously, the word “lust” in 1Jno.2:16 is used of desire that is not being held in wise and safe control – it is inordinate desire.
 - (5) Vine, III, 25: EPITHUMIA, denotes strong desire of any kind, the various kinds being frequently specified by some adjective. The word is used in a good sense of a good desire in Lk.22:15; Phil.1:23 and 1Th.2:17 only. Everywhere else it has a bad sense.” (I question the last part of his statement. Ejd. Consider Gal.5:17 and Jas.1:14)
 - b. What is meant by “the lusts of the flesh”?
 - (1) It has reference to all lust that has its seat in the flesh fulfilling sinful desires of the flesh, Gal.5:16,19-21; Eph.2:1-3.
 - (2) It is inordinate desire for sensual indulgences, the longing for the gratification of the carnal appetites.
 - (3) The habit of a man engrossed by sensual gratification.
 - c. What is meant by “the lust of the eyes”?
 - (1) It is that lust that has its origin in the sight—curiosity, covetousness.
 - (2) Interpreted by the aid of other passages, seems to mean the eager desire of possession directed towards temporal and material goods, or covetousness.
 - (3) It is not the desire to look upon pleasing, or beautiful, or sublime things, which is here condemned, but the look of

avarice. For confirmation of this see Prov.23:5; 27:20; Eccl.4:8; 5:10; Lk.14:18,19.

d. What is meant by “the pride (vain glory) of life”?

- (1) It is arrogancy of living; it is ostentation exhibited in the manner of living; the empty pride and pretentiousness of fashion and display.
- (2) It includes the desire to gain credit which does not belong to us, and outshine our neighbors or our fellowmen.
- (3) It involves thinking more highly of oneself than one ought to think.
- (4) It is the lust of shining and making a boasting display; to outdo others in our mode of life.
- (5) It is wanton ostentation in gratifying the desire of sense and sight. (Cf. Jas.4:16.
- (6) It is a manner of life in which the center is self – the essence of which is self-superiority. Cf. Lk.18:9ff.
- (7) It is pride of the peculiarities that mark our lives off from the lives of others – which may be pride of superior intellect, superior acquirements, superior birth, superior race, superior station in life, education, job, tastes, etc.

Concluding thoughts on “The Love of The World”

1. Instead of this wrong love, we should concentrate on:
 - a. The love of God which is the first and great commandment, Mt.22:37-39; Lk.10:27.
 - b. Keeping ourselves in the love of God as Jude 21 admonishes us to do.
 - c. Setting our affections on things above, not on things on the earth, and mortifying our members which are upon the earth, Col.3:1-6.
 - d. Making sure all of our actions are motivated by love, the more excellent way as described in 1Cor.13:1-7.
2. We must remember that the only way the love of the world is unlearned and/or overcome is by the love of God by faith in Jesus, the Son of God, 1Jno.5:1-5.
3. After all, if we should gain the whole world through our love of it and lose our own soul, we would be the loser, Mt.16:26.

B. THE LOVE OF THE PRAISE OF MEN MORE THAN THE PRAISE OF GOD, Jno.12:42,43.

1. Who were these men? Jewish rulers under the law of Moses.
2. What did they believe? They “believed on him”; that is, on Jesus; that he was who he claimed to be-- the Messiah.
 - a. So convincing was the proof and so irresistible was the appeal Jesus offered that many among the Jewish rulers did indeed believe on him.
3. What was it they did not do or refused to do? They did not and would not confess their faith in him.
4. Why wouldn't they confess their faith in him? There were two reasons:
 - a. Because of their fear of the Pharisees, “lest they should be put out of the synagogue.”
 - (1) Cf. Jno.9:22, which reveals that a compact had been entered into by these Jewish officials, those of the ruling class among the Jews, that any Jew who acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah should be excommunicated – expelled from the synagogue.
 - (2) To be “put out of the synagogue,” was to be deprived of the privilege of worship, to be excluded from the fellowship of the congregation, and to be regarded as a heathen.
 - (3) The length of the excommunication could be for a short period of time or for an extended, even indefinite, period of time, depending on the severity of the case.
 - (4) Of course, the treatment for becoming a disciple of Jesus could be even more severe, Mt.10:16,17; Jno.16:1-3; Ac.7:54-60; 9:1-4; 9:1,2; 269-11.
 - (5) But see Mt.10:28.
 - (6) Confession of faith in Jesus is of course absolutely necessary in order to be saved, mt.10:32,33; Ac.8:36-38; Rom.10:9,10.
 - b. Because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God; or “the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God.”
 - (1) Sad, but true – For the praise or glory of men people will sell their soul to the devil quicker than they will for money!
5. Though they believed, their faith was lacking – for two specific reasons:

- a. The faith they experienced was weak, shallow and superficial or lacking in depth.
- b. Being unduly influenced by fear of men and a love of the praise or the glory of men – a wrong love – they refused to acknowledge what they were convinced to be the truth about Jesus of Nazareth.
- c. This heightened, intensified, or increased their guilt since it exhibited a degree of dishonesty and hypocrisy as well as moral instability.

Concluding thoughts on “The Love Of The Praise Of Men More Than The Praise Of God”

1. The example of our text shows how strong, influential, and, how detrimental wrong love such as love of the praise of men more than the praise of God can be in the lives of people.
2. Other Bible examples of some who loved the praise of men and things they would do to get it, and the only benefits they reap from their efforts, Mt.6:1-8; 23:5-12.
3. In loving the praise of men more than the praise of God, they loved what men offered for such love; such as: human acceptance, esteem, favor, recognition, prestige, commendation, honor, glory, etc.
4. Obviously, it’s a wrong love, or love improperly placed, which can result in the loss of one’s soul, and will result in the loss of one’s soul, unless repented of.
5. When people today refuse to confess or act on their faith in Jesus Christ because of threats or pressure from men, they fear they may love such things as: position, job, security, profession, livelihood, authority, recognition, esteem, honor, etc. Cf. Mt.16:26; Col.3:2; 2Tim.2:12.
6. The danger of doing so is still present with us – therefore we are still warned. Take heed – our souls are at stake!

C. **BEING LOVERS OF SELF (SELFISH LOVE) AND OF PLEASURES MORE THAN (OR RATHER THAN, R.V) LOVERS OF GOD, 2Tim.3:1-5.**

1. Once again a N.T. text warns us of the fact of men in this dispensation, “the last days” (V.1), who have “a form of godliness” (V.5), being guilty of “wrong loves,” of being “lovers of their own selves” (selfish love),”

(V.2), and “lovers of pleasures more than (rather than, RV) lovers of God,” (V.4)

- a. The verses of our text tell us it will be a period of great moral danger, described as “perilous times”; that is, hard to bear, grievous, painful, oppressive times.
- b. It will be a period in which all kinds of vice will abound, including people being “loves of self” and lovers of pleasures more (or rather) than lovers of God,” Vv.2-4.
 - (1) Immorality will overflow in every form, and not be condemned because of people with “a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof” (V.5).
 - (2) A loose profession of faith, a loose practice, and easy law, an easy self-pleasing gospel, all the worst forms of a numbing, stupefying, deadening, insensitive, broad, freethinking, liberalism will prevail among even professed religionists will account for, allow and defend such practices.
 - (3) The leading characteristic prophesied for the time seems to be that of “lovers of pleasures more (rather) than lovers of God,” -- pleasure-seekers under a false profession of godliness.
- c. It will be a period in which true godliness will be falsified, with people “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,” V.5.
 - (1) Vice is only aggravated the more when it is practiced under the garb or cloak of religion.
 - (2) Its assumed guise renders it not less but more detestable,
 - (3) It is a daring attempt to drag God down to the level of out sin and ungodliness.
- d. It seems that V.5 indicates there is little or no hope of recovering or reclaiming such apostates herein described; for the verse says, “from such turn away.”
 - (1) Perhaps suggesting:
 - (a) Their case is hopeless.
 - (b) All efforts to benefit them will avail nothing.

- (c) They are to be left to the just recompense of their evil ways.
 - (2) Of course, not without exposing them for their unholy conduct, and making plain to them their eternal destruction unless they repent!
- 2. What a terrifying, attention grabbing text on the subject of wrong loves.
 - a. It begins with “lovers of self” and ends with “lovers of pleasures more than (or rather than) lovers of God.”
 - b. It deals with self-seekers and self-pleasers.
 - c. Because of wrong loves they practice all manner of evil while professing “a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof” by thought, word and deed.
- 3. There are two great forces that motivate people – hate and love. In this text we are introduced to that of “love”; but to a love directed to the wrong objects: self and pleasures, rather than love of God; a love that seeks to satisfy self rather than God..
- 4. Thus we have love parading before us in the hypocrite’s garb – “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”

Some concluding thoughts:

- 1. What better text could be used to describe the present time – the time in which we are living?
- 2. How contrary is the love and the conduct here depicted to the love and conduct motivated by love that Jesus and his apostles require of us.
- 3. See Mt.16:24,25; Lk.18:9-14; Rom.12:1-3; Phil.2:3-9; Lk.10:25-28.

D. THE LOVE OF MONEY, 1Tim.6:6-11,17-19.

Our text deals with four important things with reference to the love of money, our soul and its spiritual welfare both here and hereafter.

- 1. First, the great gain of true godliness, Vv.6-8.

- a. True godliness is itself a gain.
 - (1) Because it is a satisfying reality, never making the mistake of “supposing that gain is godliness,” V.5.
 - (2) Because true “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,” V.8.
 - (3) Because it is accompanied with contentment which it inspires, always blissfully reminding us of the condition in which we entered into this world, and in which we shall leave it, along with the necessities of life furnished us in between, Vv.7,8.
 - (a) If we have little while here, true godliness moves us to be content with that little;
 - (b) If we have much, it reminds us of how fragile is our hold upon our material possessions;
 - (c) And rather than setting our hearts upon them, to use them as stewards who must give an account to the Giver of all good. See Jas.1:17; Mt.6:19-21; Lk.8:14; Col.3:2.
 - (4) Because true godliness promotes contentment; it’s the offspring of godliness; and a contentment that is independent of worldly possessions, which are fleeting, here today and gone tomorrow; and no matter how great the extent one may possess them, their value is less than the worth of one soul, Mt.16:26.
 - (5) Because the godly person makes the best of both worlds – the present and the future one!
 - (6) Because it promotes a contentment that shields us from the dangers of avarice, or the inordinate, insatiable desire of gain; or the love of money.
- 2. Second, our text deals with the soul condemning sin of avarice, the desire to be rich, the love of money, Vv.9-11.
 - a. Note the dangers of avarice, the eager desire to be rich – not necessarily that they are rich; but that they desire to be rich!
 - (1) “They that will (desire to) be rich fall into temptation and a snare,” V.9a. Cf. Lk.8:14.
 - (a) The possession of riches is not condemned, which have, in reality, no moral character; for they are only evil where and when they are wrongly used.

- (b) Neither does the writer here condemn rich men per se; for he would not condemn Abraham or Solomon whom God made rich, etc.
 - (c) Nor is he condemning such rich people who use their wealth righteously as good stewards of God.
 - (d) He condemns the desire, the haste, the eagerness to be rich at all cost, which has its desire in the love of money!
- (2) “And (they fall) into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition,” V.9b.
 - (a) There is the temptation to unjust gain which leads men into the snare of the devil.
 - (b) There is the sacrifice of principle, the abandonment of conscientious scruples, in the hurry to get rich.
 - (c) The temptation in its turn makes way for many lusts which are “foolish”; and which are “hurtful,” because they injure both body and soul eternally.
 - (d) This is more than moral degradation; it results in the destruction of both body and soul.
- b. Insatiable avarice, this eagerness to be rich, had its root, its chief, primary, or principal cause in the love of money, which love “is the root of all kinds of evil,” V.10a.
 - (1) Not money, per se, but the love of money, is “the root of all kinds of evil.”
 - (2) It is not asserted that there are not other roots of evil besides the love of money.
 - (3) But the love of it has been the bait that has enticed many astray to commit all kinds of sins.
 - (4) The love of many kills all other love. Men have sold their conscience, their friends, their family, even themselves and their bodies, for self or money.
 - (5) Avarice degrades our manhood and replaces the love of God in our hearts.
- c. The love of money weans the soul from the truth, “which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows,” V.10b. Cf. Ac.5:1-10.
 - (1) The love of money becomes a master-passion which subdues, enthalls, enslaves our better self.

- (2) God, Jesus Christ and the gospel are exchanged for money-getting – maybe even for a little overtime on the job, or for the job itself! Or to get another client!
- (3) A relish for spiritual things cannot coexist with the love for lucre. Faith becomes dim in the presence of “shining” coins.
- (4) Wealth is a splendid opportunity for doing good, but to the best it is a dangerous temptation. See Mt.6:19-21,24; Lk.8:14.
- d. The love of money plunges the soul into a course of sin that ends in perdition, “which drown men in destruction and perdition,” V.9.
 - (1) Wealth, the love of it, leads to extravagant luxury, self-indulgence, pride, arrogance, feelings of self-sufficiency, and a whole host of sins that defile and then damn the soul.
 - (2) Few people can resist the powerful allurements of sudden fortune: they plunge into such excesses that soon bring them, or their money, or both to a miserable end.
- e. Note the personal admonition addressed to Timothy himself in Vv.11,12 in view of what has been said as a warning to others in Vv.9,10.
 - (1) He, as a “man of God,” is admonished to “flee,” “follow,” and “fight” in order to accomplish that to which he has been “called”; that is, in order to “lay hold on eternal life.”
- 3. Thirdly, our text reveals the divine charge Timothy is to give to those who are rich in this world, Vv.17,18 (As in 1:3; 4:11,12; 5:7)
 - a. Negatively: “that they be not highminded (boastful), nor trust (place their hope) in uncertain riches,” V.17a.
 - (1) The haughty disposition which is often engendered by wealth is warned against.
 - (2) The wealthy must be careful lest they have a tendency to look down on the poor or cultivate a feeling they are the special favorites of Heaven because they have been so highly favored with worldly substance!
 - (3) They are warned against the great danger of trusting in wealth, or to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches.
 - (a) Note what Job says about such trust or hope in defending his integrity against the false charges of his friends in Job 31:24,25,28.

- (4) One's tenure of (term of holding) wealth is very uncertain because:
 - (a) As it were, such things often take to themselves wings and fly away.
 - (b) We may be taken away by death from the enjoyment of our earthly possessions.
- b. Positively, further charged, V.17b: "but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."
 - (1) God is the sole giver of all we possess that is good.
 - (2) He gives richly all things for our good according to our need and our enjoyment in service to him.
 - (3) He is our Fountain of blessings, so that no uncertainty can ever attach to the supply of every gift that is good and perfect, Jas.1:17.
 - (4) Wealth is but one of God's gifts: to trust in it is to trust in the creature or the gift rather than the Creator or the Giver.
 - (5) To trust in riches is to commit oneself to a great uncertainty.
 - (6) The Greeks spoke of Plutus, the god of riches, as a fickle divinity, representing him as blind, to intimate that he distributes his favors indiscriminately; as lame, to denote the slowness with which he approaches; and winged, to imply the velocity with which he flies away.
- c. Positively, still further charged in V.18: that they use their riches liberally in good works and cheerful benevolence to worthy recipients.
 - (1) Being willing to unselfishly share our material possessions with those who are worthy objects of charity guards against selfishly lavishing it on extravagant luxuries, which is to abuse it and our selves.
 - (2) Zeno, the Greek philosopher, founder of the Stoic School, is reported to have said in remonstrating with certain of his pupils for their extravagance, who were saying they were rich enough to indulge in extravagance: "Would you excuse a cook who should over-salt his meat because he had a superabundance of salt?"
 - (3) It is better to be rich in good works than to be rich in mere material possessions.

- (4) Remember this: The Bible regulates our liberal giving and our willingness to communicate in benevolence, even as individuals, 2Th.3:10-12; 1Th.4:11,12; 1Tim.5:16.
4. Finally and fourthly, our text reveals the eternal recompense of the true, proper, righteous use of earthly riches, V.19.
- a. Cf. Mt.6:19-21; Mk.10:17-25; Lk.12:13-21.
 - b. To spend life in getting and keeping money is to be poor spiritually; to spend it in a liberal and scriptural use in the cause of God is to be enriched with eternal life – which is life indeed.
 - c. There is much truth in an inscription reported to be on an Italian tombstone: “What I gave away I saved; what I spent I used; what I kept, I lost.”
 - d. One is reported to have said: “Giving to the Lord is but transporting our goods to a higher floor.”

Concluding thoughts on our text and our entire study of “Wrong Loves”

1. It’s the love of money that is the root of all kinds of evil.
2. Our earthly possessions are a great responsibility. See Mt.25:14-30
3. Earthly wealth may be transformed into heavenly riches.
4. It is possible for a rich believer to lay up treasures in heaven by the use they make of their wealth which on earth – it is not, however, in the way of merit, but in the way of grace; because it is by faith that they do so.
5. There is also a danger of loving money to the lose of our soul, and that even if we are not rich – just the desire to be rich, 1Tim.6:9,10.
6. Remember:
 - a. The rich man and Lazarus, Lk.16:19-26.
 - b. The rich young ruler, Mk.10:17-25.
 - c. Ananias and Sapphira, Ac.5:1-10.
7. A liberal hand creates many a cheerful heart, and vice verse.
8. In previous lessons on “Wrong Loves” we have considered “The Love Of The World”; “The Love Of The Praise Of Men More Than The Praise Of God”; “Lovers Of Self.”
9. This is our fourth and final lesson on “Wrong Loves” that result in the loss of our soul unless we repent, “The Love Of Money.” Let us close with: Mt.22:37-39; Lk.10:27; 1Jno.4:21-5:3; Jude 21; 1Cor.13:1-7.