

Love Not the World

Introduction

Good morning, dear brothers, and sisters. I am a little nervous, as you can tell. In fact, I have been meditating for several weeks now, and I think I understand a bit of what the Lord wants to say. Last week, I was sitting at the table with Kenny and Jerry, and I told them that I was nervous. Jerry, in his usual style, immediately responded, “Oh, that is good, that is good, that is good.” And Kenny chimed in with, “Praise the Lord.” They say that Brother Stephen used to say, “Never ready, but ever ready.” We will see how much that applies today.

Let us look to the Lord in prayer.

Loving, living, Almighty Heavenly Father, everlasting and covenant-keeping God, mighty and wonderworking Lord, we come once again into Your presence with praise, adoration, worship, and thanksgiving. Thank You for granting us open heavens this morning. You have been enthroned on the praises of Your saints. Thank You, Lord, for the beautiful reminder that You loved us and gave Yourself for us. And indeed, in doing so, Lord, You took care of our old nature as well and You crucified us with You. And now, henceforth, we can live a life by the life of the Son of God.

Now, Lord, even at this hour, as we come once again, Your Word says that he who comes unto Me I shall in no wise cast out. Lord, we come once again to humble ourselves. We pray that You would speak to us—speak to each one of us. We are all in need; we are all empty. Lord, we pray that You will speak to us according to our needs. There are things on our hearts as individuals, as families, as an assembly, and as the body of Christ at large. There is so much on us, O Lord, and we know that Your grace is sufficient for all things. Help us, O Lord, that we can hear Your still small voice.

As to the ministry, we commit ourselves into Your hands. Lord, we pray that You would hide me behind the cross and use me as seems good in Your sight. We ask, O Lord, that the time You give us would be a blessing, binding all sin and the wicked works of the enemy by the victory of the cross. We cover ourselves, claiming and acknowledging Your headship and lordship. We ask all of this in the most precious name of our Lord and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Brothers and sisters, please turn with me to I John 2:15-17. The Lord said, “Let us search the Scriptures.” It might be useful to literally search the Scriptures, so let us search I John 2:15-17.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love 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 pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”

The burden on my heart is the mind of Christ. There is an American phrase that you will have to pardon me if I do not get it quite right? This morning I am, “taking a bite that I cannot chew.” Something like that, right? The mind of Christ—this infinite Christ that is so close, yet at the same time seems so far away. Not because He really is far away, but because He is so infinite and ever-expanding. Every time it seems that we have touched Him, have gotten a sense of Him, understood Him, or known Him, immediately we realize that we know so little of Him. It is like waves and waves of horizon breaking forth before our eyes, revealing the depths of His humility, which is what we want to consider today.

At the beginning of His ministry, He said that, “the prince of this world comes, and he has nothing in Me.” Then, as time goes by, He states, “I am not of the world.” Later, during the high priestly prayer, right before the night when He was betrayed, He says, “I am not in the world.” We do not always understand what He says, His words often go beyond human words. That is why He said, “I will send the Comforter. He will be with you, He will be in you, and He will speak to you.”

Scrape Off the Last Bits of Gold Dust

And therefore, let us try to break the ice. I must share an incident that I witnessed. There is an oriental bazaar in Sri Lanka. For those of you who may not remember, Sri Lanka is an island country located south of India in the Indian subcontinent. This oriental bazaar has been there for several generations. It is not like the high-tech malls and shopping centers; rather, these are businesses that have been running for generations. The entire street features similar business outfits throughout.

There are similar shops, basically, all over. Now, you might wonder what is so different about them. Here is the interesting thing—very interesting, in fact funny. What happens is that they go about their business the entire day, and by the end of the day, when they are about to close, or as they close their business, an army of people descends upon the market. I think the closest comparison would be janitors—people who come to help clean, sweep, and pick up the garbage, and so on. They descend upon each shop and do their chores.

Here is the interesting thing: the businesses do not pay these people for providing their services. Quite the opposite. These individuals who come to serve—sweeping, cleaning, and picking up garbage—actually pay the businesses for the opportunity to render those services. Did you catch the weirdness of this?

So, what do you think is really going on? What kind of businesses are these? They are all gold shops, specifically goldsmiths. After securing all their gold and treasures in lockers, these businesses let these people pay them so that they can come in to scrape off the last bits of gold dust that accumulate on the granite surfaces. These workers literally scrub the floors every day.

In fact, some of those floors are now worn out. They scrub them, gather the debris, and plug all the drains to prevent any water from draining out. They collect all of it, which would look very murky and dirty, filled with gunk. But they would collect all that and they

would sieve through all of that, and what do they get? Gold. Even the dust from this book is gold. So, I am pretty sure we might not get any gold bars today, but I pray that we at least get some dust.

John 13 – Jesus Washed His Disciples’ Feet

So, what we want to consider is the mind of Christ. To set the stage, I think the Lord's table, as we meet week after week, is the perfect setting to remind us that we do not belong to this world. Turn with me please to John 13. This is the beautiful scene of the upper room. There is so much in that upper room that you want to be there. In that upper room, we see that the Lord Jesus Christ now needs to depart from the world. He knows who He is, and that is what it reminds us of in verses 3-4: “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.”

What Christ did, as He picked up a towel, knelt, and prepared to wash the disciples' feet, was an absolute conscious decision made in full acknowledgment of His divinity. He knew who He was, and as He knew who He was, He did perhaps the most unexpected thing. He took the utter opposite of what that divinity might entail: He becomes a servant and begins to wash the feet of the disciples.

Now, at the Lord's table, as we are brought here week after week, we worship together. There is a great danger in familiarity; it can lead to contempt. If not contempt, it can create a sense of, “I know this,” or “I think I know this thing.” The issue lies not so much with the truth itself, but with our flesh. The law is holy, the commandment is holy and good, but it is my flesh that is weak. Therefore, week after week, as we come, we enjoy the worship. It truly is like heaven. Every time I have mentioned to the elder that I wish the worship were much longer, it is because I could just enjoy that foretaste of heaven in worship.

When it comes to the Lord's table itself—partaking of that bread and partaking of that cup—it can often become a little mechanical, even with all good intentions and the wonderful worship that we have. What I am trying to consider here is that it is the Lord's table where the Lord brings us to examine ourselves in the light of the Word of God, if we are in the faith. There is always a balance of truth in the Christian life, that golden mean, as the brothers would call it. There is the position in Christ and there is the practice in Christ. It is a balance of both; you cannot separate them.

A lot of times, we approach things a little casually or without much consideration, thinking it is all position in Christ, when it actually is a matter of practice. There are moments when we become overly concerned, picky, and worried about our practice, when we should really be enjoying the liberty that comes from our position in Christ. At the Lord's table and during worship, in my mind I have always thought that as we worship the Lord, it is our position in Christ that matters. It is no longer a question of what I have done or what I have achieved; it is entirely about our position in Christ, what Christ has done for us on the cross. How beautiful it is!

I thank the Lord. When I saw the email this morning with Galatians 2:20, it fit perfectly. I thought, "Lord, with the mouth of two or three witnesses. Thank You!" This reminds us that it is entirely Him as far as worship is concerned. There is no condemnation, no guilt, and no element of repentance. It is almost as though we have never sinned. However, when it comes to the Lord's table, it is our practice that is being brought into light—the balance of truth.

Having worshipped Him, as we partake of those emblems of His love—His body that was broken for us and His blood that was shed for us—it is a question of our practice. Something interesting about the Lord's table: if you look at I Corinthians, chapter 11, the word "Lord" appears seven times. It is not the table of Jesus anymore; it is not the table of Christ anymore. It is the table of the Lord. The whole question there is, if you have worshipped and acknowledged that He is Lord, where is the fruit of it? We have heard about that whole fruit concept over the last two weeks. Where is the fruit of it?

And in a way, before we could ever be judged by the world, which is never going to happen, the Lord is giving us this opportunity to judge ourselves. What is really judgment? Judgment is when you acknowledge the truth as God sees it, is it not? Remember those two thieves? On one side, one said, "Well, if you are God, then save Yourself and save us." That is how sometimes we are; that is how some are, I would dare to say. But then there is this other one, the penitent thief. He says, "We are receiving the just reward of our doings. This man has done nothing amiss." What did he just do? His judgment, he acknowledged it, the sentence of truth that should have come upon him. He judged himself. And as he judged himself, the Lord says, "today you shall be with Me in paradise."

The Lord is not trying to cause us pain or suffering; He is only raising the thermostat until the point when we acknowledge the truth and see it as He sees it. It is a little funny—though I do not know if it is funny to the American taste. At times, my wife and I would go back and forth discussing something, and I would be the more difficult one. I would keep bringing it up again and again, and then she would say, "All right, if you say so, then it is so." I would immediately respond, "No, honey, not because I said it. Do you not see it?"

That is what it is all about. I know I made it kind of light-hearted, but the Lord is not so much trying to bring condemnation upon us; He is trying to bring conviction. Remember the story of Joseph? When you look at it, he meets his brothers, and we might wonder, why would Joseph do that? Why would he hide himself? Why would he keep pushing them? He continues to do so, and we think, "Joseph, that is not your character. That is not what you have been doing so far. Why are you acting this way?" He keeps pushing them until, at one point, Judah says, "Take me in and let this little one go," until the point where they remember what they have done to Joseph.

Is it not true? As soon as that happens, he turns down the thermostat, so to speak, unmask himself, and throws himself upon his brothers, and feeds them. Dear brothers and sisters, it is not legality, it is not legalism, and it is not correctness that the Lord is seeking. Rather, it is the acknowledgment of truth as He sees it. If that requires the furnace to be heated seven times, He will do that. The Lord's table is therefore set before us as an

opportunity for us to explore ourselves, to let a man examine himself. It is not a point where I am examining someone else; it is our individual responsibility. As we come, we are testing ourselves, judging ourselves, and acknowledging the truth as the Lord's Word reveals it to us.

Of course, that assumes that you have been in the Word of God throughout the week, you have been touched by the fellowship of the saints, and the Word of God has been brought back to you again, and again. What that has raised as a conviction in your heart, you are now trying to set right before the Lord. One might ask, does this really happen categorically at the Lord's table itself? Well, it happens all the time. But just like everything else in the Christian life, there is a time of testimony. There is a time when you decisively draw that line and say, "This is where I draw the line."

Just like baptism, it is an outward testimony of something that has happened inwardly. Likewise, as I judge my walk with the Lord, what is it? It is nothing but the Lord's table experience. If you truly see these two, for lack of a better word, sacraments as some would call it—baptism and the Lord's table—what are they? One speaks about our position in Christ; nothing that we bring, simply to the cross we cling. The other, the Lord's table, the question of our practice, the balance of truth, the golden mean. The Lord's table. Dear brothers and sisters, my intent is not to make you uncomfortable, but if the course of truth makes you uncomfortable, then let it be so.

Here we have in the upper room the Lord Jesus Christ, fully conscious of His divinity, of where He has come from, where He is going, and what His mission is. He arises from the table, takes a towel, wraps it around His waist, takes a basin of water, kneels before the first disciple, and immediately they shrink back. There are two disciples whose experiences are captured for us: Peter and the other one, Judas.

Dear brothers and sisters, allow me to take a little liberty and say that those twelve disciples are indeed historical figures. I am not taking anything away from their historicity. At the same time, truth is comprehensive; it exists in infinite concentric circles and dimensions; bigger, and bigger, deeper, and deeper; at the level of the individual, at the level of the family, at the level of the assembly, and at the level of the cosmos, it just goes that way. If you would allow me, I would like to say that in my mind I have always thought of these twelve disciples as twelve traits that a believer possesses. Think about it. I believe you would recognize these as twelve traits.

The Contrast Between Peter and Judas

Now there is Peter and his response. We know that when the Lord comes to him to wash his feet, Peter asks, "What are You doing?" The Lord replies, "You do not know what I am doing right now, but you will." Immediately, Peter responds, "Lord, if that is the case, not just my feet, but also my head and my hands." He acknowledges, "If You think that only my feet are dirty, no, Lord, I must acknowledge that my head is not right, and my hands are not clean." This is the examination at the Lord's table; you begin to examine yourself. Well, it looks fine. I worship the Lord who has saved me.

But now, what is the Lord going to get back? I know as I say this, someone will raise their brow and say, "Brother, you are slipping into works, efforts." No, under no circumstances. Ephesians chapter 2 says that it is not of works, ... but unto good works. How weird is that? It looks like there is a dichotomy, but there is no dichotomy. There is a dichotomy to the flesh. It looks like there is a this or that, but there is none. What God has put together, let no man put asunder.

And as we come to the Lord's table, we see in Peter that he immediately examines himself, saying, "Lord, not just my feet, but my hands and my head." In saying this, Peter is essentially acknowledging, "Lord, there is nothing good in me. Yes, Lord, there is nothing good in me. I need this constant washing." That is a fact, right? There is no man who does not sin. James says that in all things we offend many. So, sin is not the greatest surprise. I know I might get some pushback on this, but the surprising element is not sin itself; rather, it is the impunity of not humbling yourself, not acknowledging that, yes, Lord, I am not okay, that I am not right. That is the matter.

It always puzzles us that the Lord would let go of Peter. If you examine what Peter did, he literally denied Christ. On the other hand, Judas recognized Christ. In the Garden of Gethsemane, as Judas approached, he kissed Him, acknowledging Him. On the surface, it looks like he is acknowledging Him: "My beloved is mine, and I am His." It appears that way. Peter, on the other extreme, seems to have completely disassociated himself, saying, "I have nothing to do with this man." Judging by the surface, whose iniquity is greater? Yet one is forgiven and restored, while the other goes to perdition.

Humility

What do you think is really happening there? It is not so much about who committed sin and who did not commit sin, and it is not about being holier than thou. That is not the point. The point is, who was humbler? Who humbled himself before the Lord? The question was never the absence of sin. When I was born again, I thought, "Lord, how beautiful it would have been if You had just removed this sin nature in me and the presence of sin in me." I struggled and questioned and almost clenched my fist at that so many times. I was listening to dear brother Ed Miller, and he was in Deuteronomy 7, explaining how the giants are there, how God said, "I am not going to remove the giants immediately, I will do that little by little, otherwise the beasts will increase."

And I am asking, "why will You not remove the giants? Why? Are You just trying to test us? Are You just trying to make us feel sorry about ourselves? What are You trying to do?" That dear brother in the Lord said something so beautiful that has been so precious. He said, "The Lord leaves those giants, those struggles, to remind us that the absence of the giants is not the intention. The annihilation of sin is not necessarily the intention. That is the negative connotation." The positive is, he says, "The possession of the land, the rest of the land, the fruit of the land. That is what really matters." How much have you come to the experience of the cross? How much have you surrendered yourself? That is what really matters. The Lord knows that we will always need His help as far as sin is concerned.

I John 2:1 says, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." He remains a Father in the midst of our failure. He does not suddenly become God. He does not suddenly become Judge. He remains Father.

So, the question is, who humbled himself? Peter does, and in fact, there is much to think about it. Most of the time, almost all the disciples, whenever they speak to the Lord, particularly in the context of the Lord's table and the Lord's Supper, they address Him as "Lord."

Worldliness

Do You know what Judas calls Him? He does not call Him "Lord." Out of the fullness of the heart, the mouth speaks. He does not address Him as Lord. There is something to draw from that, Judas does not acknowledge Him as Lord.

Who is Judas? Is Judas a person? I have always looked at Judas and thought of him as a trait, a characteristic, an attribute of my human nature. What do we associate Judas with? Money, all the time. He is the one who has the money bag. He is the one who steals from it. He is the one who objects when Christ is adored, and all this seemingly precious ointment is poured on Him. He objects. He said, "Why are we just wasting all of that?" He is the one who has the money. He is the one who betrays the Lord for thirty pieces of silver.

Who is he? What is that money? What is money really, if you think about it? You know, if we use the principle of first mention, as the wise brothers call it, what is the first occasion when something is bought in the Bible? Not something in the sense of just being mentioned, but the actual act of something being purchased. You know what that is? It is the burial site for Sarah. What is bought is the grave.

What does it remind us of? Money speaks and represents; it is that currency, it is that unit which is the language of this world system, money. Not just in the sense that I need to buy this thing. I need to have some fancy clothes, some nice cars, some nice things, and so on and so forth. Not just that, but money in general speaks about that in the scripture and reminds us about that. In fact, if you do not turn to the King James Version, you would miss that wonderful point when people tempt Christ and say, "Well, you know, is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?" And then He eventually says, "No man can serve two masters, and what are the two masters?" He mentions God and Mammon.

In the newer translations, it says money; but no, brothers and sisters, not in the older translation. There is wisdom in reading things from good old saints who changed the world and brought this testimony to us. It is wise to read that version once in a while. It says "Mammon," it is the deification of that currency.

It is a deity. In fact, if I am allowed to quote Milton, John Milton in Paradise Lost, (I am definitely not endorsing any of the things that he said there): There is a beautiful section where he is describing all these principalities, before they fell, right? And as he is describing each one of them, he describes Baal and Tammuz and so on and so forth. And

then he comes to Mammon, and he says that even when he was in heaven, he looked downward to the pavement of heaven, to the gold itself. That principality that looks downward, earthward, that is the most carnal; that element of creation which somehow sticks to the creation itself to the extent that when the Holy Spirit wanted to mention or hint about it, the first occasion would be the burial. Just perhaps to say that that is where its power ends, but that is until you need it, or you come across it, God, and Mammon. And here is Judas Iscariot. So, what is Judas Iscariot to me? In my little mind, I have thought of him as that element of worldliness.

The Eternal Perspective

I Corinthians 15:19 says, “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” Now, it sounds good, but think about it. It does look very poetic and very lofty. If you are just hoping in Christ in this life, then we are all people most miserable. But there is actually a lot of meat to that. Think about it.

Do you know why of all people we are the most miserable? If we have taken this wonderful sacrifice that the Son of God has paid for us—this infinite God dying a death for a wretched dead worm like me; if I take all of that and make it just some kind of surety for some earthly blessing, like a nice job, nice life, comfort, perhaps family and kids, and my ministry and my understanding, and me, me, me, I think that would be so obnoxious to the God who sent His Son to die for us.

Dear brothers and sisters, there are people who live better than us and have no idea who Christ is at this point in time. What does that mean? It means that those things are very much achievable outside of Christ, in the common grace and common mercy of God. But here, we are talking about things that are Eternal, with capital E: the Lord's table.

Peter judges himself, and even as he denies the Lord three times, there is a wonderful incident in Luke 22:31-32 where the Lord reminds Peter that Satan has desired to sift you, but I have prayed for you. The intercession of Christ is not limited by anything but rather limited by human will and acknowledgment of truth.

Peter acknowledges, “My head is not right, my hands are not right, and You already know about my feet. Lord, I am absolutely at Your mercy.” And the Lord says, “I have prayed for you. You will get through this.” But Judas does not do any of that. Judas just marches out. He takes the Lord's table; for him, it means nothing. For him, it is perhaps just a tradition. For him, it is perhaps just some delicate, nice thing that people do. He does that, and you know what happens? He goes to eternal condemnation. He goes to perdition. I will stick with that term.

The Consequences of Ignoring the Table

I do not know what happens to Judas after that, properly speaking, but in every sense, we know that he has lost his place among the apostles. You know, something even more interesting happens as soon as Judas leaves, and this is what I wanted to dwell on.

Please turn with me to John 13:30. “He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.”

Now, the Lord did the best that He could do over the years for Judas. He had seen the Lord preach, speak words which no man had spoken until then, and teach with such authority, unlike the scribes. Judas saw the mighty works of God in the Lord. He witnessed how the Lord could raise the dead and calm the storm. He saw all of that. He observed how, just at the Lord’s touch, the leper was healed. He even saw that when the Lord was not consciously touching someone, someone else who touched the hem of His garment received healing.

Judas saw all of that. He witnessed the wonderful Sermon on the Mount and the Olivet Discourse. He heard it all and knew everything. In fact, there is good reason to believe that when the Lord sent out His disciples to the nation of Israel in Matthew 10, he was with them. When they returned, rejoicing that even the demons were subject to them in His name, he reported that he had tasted the powers to come. He had experienced all of that, but now he would lose it all. The Lord brings him to the Lord's table. John’s Gospel tells us that Jesus need not be told what is in man's heart; He knows everyone's heart. He knew what Judas was about to do. He takes it a step further, fully aware of who He is, what He is, and what His purpose is—He is God Himself. He arises from the supper, binds a towel around His waist, picks up a basin, and starts washing the feet of his disciples. Yet, this act did not melt Judas' heart.

And here is something that I think we can say rather accurately on the basis and authority of the word of God: If you do not set things right at the Lord's table, there is good reason to believe that you have set the condemnation upon yourself. Let me say that again: If one does not acknowledge the death of the Lord Jesus, does not recognize that it is the Lord who has died, and does not examine himself or want to bring himself into scrutiny, then those words that describe many among you are, I do not want to say that, but you know what those words are: sick, weak, dead. You might think that this is just some kind of typological, allegorical, or parabolic language. No, dear brother and sister, that is a fact.

But why is it that this is the last resort? The Lord's table is the last resort for you to fix things. How do I say that? Look at this verse thirty: “He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.” What would we expect? If I were there, I would immediately lament the fact that, oh, I did so much for this guy. I prayed for him all these years. I showed him all those things. I kept him close to my bosom, helped him see everything for himself, and put every piece of evidence out there of my grace to him. But here he is, he has gone out. Oh, and I would lament it. Do You know what Christ does? Something very different.

John 13:31-32, “Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.” Every time I read that, I want to say, “Lord, again? Is that one of Your rhetorical devices? Are You saying things that do not make any

sense to us?” But one brother explained—by the way, I am standing on the shoulders of giants—that what is happening is that as soon as that last thing that held back Judas from betraying Christ was removed, Judas committed to what he was going to do.

Christ sees right from that upper room, perhaps looking out the window; He is now able to see the cross. He is able to see the cross, and as He sees the cross, He sees resurrection. As He sees His resurrection, He sees His ascension. As He sees His ascension, He sees Pentecost. As He sees all of that, He sees His body. As He sees all of that, He sees His intercession. He sees His return and His reign. He sees all things committed back to God, and the Lamb sitting on the throne of God.

The Importance of the Lord’s Table

Well, one might ask, “How did Christ make the connection from this point to that point?” Here is the thing: if the Lord's table does not bring conviction to the heart of Judas, nothing else would. Dear brothers and sisters, very humbly I would admit that so often I have brought myself under that condemnation. And I would dare to think that there have been times you have made that mistake as well. If there is any practical value, dear brothers, and sisters, we should go back and look at some of these things in our life. We look at our baptism. There are times I have been really confused, and the only thing that has reminded me is the fact that I was put under those waters and was risen again. It was the answer of my conscience.

And likewise, the physical element—the physical aspect that I need to face Christ at the Lord's Table—that has kept me from going against Him. It has kept, as they call it, the fear of God in one's heart. Dear brothers and sisters, what is the Lord's Table to you? Is it a sacrament? Is it a nice, lovely, fluffy thing? No, it is dangerous, dear brothers and sisters. Beauty is dangerous, extreme beauty is dangerous, as is Christ, in a certain sense. Yes, the same thing can be a cup of blessing, and it can also bring a curse. It brought a blessing to Peter, but it became a curse for Judas.

The Glorification of Christ

As soon as Judas had committed that act, Christ opened His heart, and as He saw His glory, He then opened His heart and spoke to His disciples. He began to talk to them about things He had not spoken of thus far. He speaks about heavenly matters, as you know, and I do not think we have time to go through all of it, but in John chapter 14, He begins to talk about, “Let not your hearts be troubled;” the Father's house, the many mansions, and His return. He speaks about the Comforter. Here is something interesting as well: if you trace it, as He speaks about the Holy Spirit, He says in chapter 14 that He will bring to remembrance what I said.

And do you know what He says? John 14:27: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.” Chapter 15 comes, and now He speaks about abiding in the vine, that beautiful, precious thing that so often we have found our refuge in—a picture to which we have run, run so often to abide in Him, to hide in Him. Again, He speaks about the Comforter, and

this time, you know what He says? The intensity increases. He says, “He shall testify of Me.”

And you know, there is another word, it says, “My joy.” John 15:11, “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you.” It goes from My peace to My joy.

And now chapter 16, He speaks about the persecution. In chapter 15, you have the world and the troubles of the world, basically what the world is going to do to them. But in chapter 16, you have religious persecution.

The people who think that as they do some harm to the people of God, they believe that they are doing God a service. You know, there again He has something to say about the Comforter and something to say about Himself. Of the Comforter, He says, “He shall glorify Me.” It went from being that He will just bring His words into remembrance to becoming that He will testify of Me. All the more, He says that He is going to glorify Him,

And then He says something about Himself. He says, “My victory.” You think, where is His victory? Yes, it is John 16:33 and the last portion: “In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” Those beautiful things He could not have ever said while Judas was in their midst. Not the traitor, but the trait, the trait of Judas.

Self-Examination

Dear brothers and sisters, let us examine ourselves. Let us think about it. Have you really resolved that nothing of this world, nothing of this system affects you? None of us have reached perfection. Paul, of all people, said, “Not that I have already arrived, but what do I do? Forgetting those things that are behind, I run.” He does not say, “Well, because I have not achieved it, I am going to just cut it short; or basically say that that target does not exist, or that is not what God's mind is.” No, he says, “Well, that is God's mind. But I have not achieved it. I will remain humble and continue to run the race.”

Dear brothers and sisters, are we going to cut it short?” “Cut corners” is the right American idiom, is it not? Are we going to cut corners on this one? Or are we going to acknowledge that, “No Lord, who is sufficient for these matters? Please help us.” As we come to the Lord's table, this is what happens.

I want to take just a few minutes to remind you about something. If Judas is a picture of that world-minded person who has everything—he has heard all the sermons, witnessed all the miracles, received all the gifts—there is one thing he does not have. Do you know what it is?

If I were to summarize or someone were to say oversimplify, “Obedience.” Someone asked me this years ago. In fact, I heard someone say years ago, why did Christ die? I was prompted to say, “To die for my sins.” He said, “Brother, which is one step. Why did He die?” I replied, “To build a church.” He said, “Brother, that is one step. Why did He die?”

The Lordship of Christ

He showed me Romans 14:9. Let us read this together, please. “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”

Dear brothers and sisters, the ultimate issue of the universe is not whether there is a God. That is for the fool who thinks there is no God. If you could knock on Satan's door and ask him, “Mate, I have one question: Is there a God?” He would acknowledge, “Absolutely. Absolutely.”

The real controversy is not whether there is a God. The controversy is whether He is Lord. Is He supposed to have all absolute dominion and unhindered allegiance, or not? It is interesting that the full name of our precious Lord is, “Lord Jesus Christ,” not “God Jesus Christ.” That was never the point of contention. The Lord Jesus Christ, by coming, has proven to all principalities, to all saints and seraphim, to the entire creation that yes, there is a God, and that He has absolute lordship over every single thing. There is a dear brother in Christ, Abraham Kuyper, who said that there is not one square inch in this universe upon which the risen Son of God does not say, “This is Mine.”

The question, brother and sister, this afternoon is: “Can you say that about your life?” How can you say “Lord,” but then have ties with the world in some form or fashion? The lust of life, the lust of the eye, of the flesh, the pride of life—little things that look innocent. Spurgeon said that if one were to have a brother killed, stabbed by someone— I am paraphrasing, and I am sure some of you would know—this younger brother now takes the knife that killed his brother and hides it in his bosom. What do you call such a person? Every time, somewhere, somehow, we make some kind of compromise with the world. Though it may not be sinful, all things are allowed to me, but not all things build up. All things edify, even those that seem very simple and humble.

Living with Detachment

I do not know what it is—maybe it is your way of life. I have things; I have baggage. There are things that I prefer. They are innocent. But, dear brother and sister, in the mind of God, He looks at all of that and says that this is the world. There are some verses in the Bible that I feel are dangerous, and I think, “No, Lord, You did not say that.” Please turn to I Corinthians 7: 29-31.

Now we know the context is about teaching on marriage, celibacy, and all of that—the whole teaching around marriage. Here Paul is ultimately coming to a conclusion. Read this with me: “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.” Right in the middle, he said something that is too dangerous for someone like me. Think about the only thing that you are allowed, or at least okay to attach to in this world. What is it? It is your family.

It is your wife. It is your husband. What does Paul say here? He is not saying to abandon anyone, but he is saying that he who has a wife should live as though he had none; he who weeps should live as though he did not weep; he who rejoices should live as though he did not rejoice. What does this mean, dear brothers and sisters? Just imagine if the most obvious and the most sinless, in fact, even God-ordained systems and institutions; we are being summoned to think of them as though none of that belonged to you, that you are ready to depart and be with the Lord at any time. How much more with everything else?

My petty little car, my petty little job, my petty little dress, I do not know what it is. It is not one thing; it is anything that is not Christ. It is anything that does not exalt Christ. The point is not to be an ascetic or to become monkish or something like that. That is not the point, because Colossians warns us that all of those things—just beating your flesh—do not do any good. No, it is like Isaac. You know, Abraham said, “Lord, You really want me to give my son?” He said, “Yes, give your son.” He brought him to the altar, and as he placed him on the altar, the Lord said, “Okay, now take him back.” You are like, “Lord, You asked for him, right?” “Well, yes, as long as your heart is not on him, I am okay with it.”

The Mind of Christ

Dear brothers and sisters, are we going to search our hearts? Do we really want that vision that Christ shared with His wonderful disciples? In the upper room, He spoke about the wonderful things. What is it? Your heart, “Love not the world.” He is reminding us to love not the world. What does the world mean?

Now, just to contrast with what Judas did, I want to summarize what Christ Himself is. Luke’s Gospel chapter two, what does it look like to perhaps not be of the world? In John 14:30, does it perhaps look like He is not of the world? Christ said, “For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” He went on to say that “I am not of the world.” And eventually in John 17 He said, “I am not in the world.” That is so amazing! You think, “Lord, You are still here, right?” He is so separate from the world.

Now, what I am trying to portray and develop here is the mind of Christ. What is the mind of Christ? Essentially, it is a mind that is Godward, that is away from the world and the fashions of it. A mind that is away from the world, the pride of it, the lust of it. A mind that has nothing to do with the world. Well, it does sound almost monkish, but that is where the cross is, right? It keeps things there but nullifies them. You have everything, yet you do not have your hands on anything. You are ready to let go and depart to be with the Lord at any time. Have any of us arrived there? No, Paul reminds us that we have not, but we run looking forward toward it.

The Silent Years

Now, when we look at Christ Himself, there is a beautiful word in Luke 3:22, “And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”

Now, that is a familiar portion of Scripture. We really rejoice in it, and we testify, we say yes and amen to it. Now, just a question: When did Christ receive that testimony? Let me put it this way: How many sermons did He preach by the time He received that testimony? The answer is none. How many lepers did He heal by that time when He received that testimony of the Father? None. How many dead did He raise? None. How many crosses had He gone to? None. So, what is it then that the Father is now testifying to, that this is My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased.

What is it? Dear brothers, and sisters I have always wondered, “Lord, everything is recorded in Your Word. But why are those 30 years so mystically buried?” That is the point. They are buried because that is how life is. Most of the time, where your testimony by God is acknowledged is not based on what you did in the pulpit or did in the public, did among the people. It is in the silent years, the silent hours, and the silent moments when only the unseen eye of the Lord saw you, and Christ lived as a perfect man.

You know, I always read Psalm 1: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” I have read it often, and it has convicted my heart because I do not see myself there. I am not that man. Well, it is going to be a blessed man if someone does it. But who did it? I think the only blessed man who did it was Christ Himself. “His delight is in the law of the Lord, and his law doth he meditate day and night.” Well, I have never done that. If you have done it, praise the Lord for it. It is Christ who did it; it is He who did it. It is Him. And as He lived that life, in those silent years, the Father now opens the heavens and says, “This is My beloved Son.” He is receiving that testimony not in the capacity of His divinity, but in the absolute capacity of His humanity alone.

As the Lord embarked on His public ministry, He would reveal His divinity. He began to show forth His glory, as it is written in the context of the marriage at Cana. That was the beginning of His glory; that was when He began to reveal who He was, and people began to believe in Him. But until that time, He was just a nobody.

Have you ever thought about the Passover lamb in Exodus 12? It is quite intriguing. It says that on the 10th day of this month, you shall take a lamb, and then on the 14th at evening, you shall kill it. The question is: what are those 10 days? Those are the silent years, dear brothers, and sisters. Those are the silent years in the little, simple things.

Those are the silent years in the daily walk of how you speak to your wife, how you treat your family, how you do your job; how do you speak, how do you smile, and how you do little, simple things. There are three things that are recorded about the Lord. One, at age 12, I am told—though I am not certain—this is the age when the Jews would recognize a boy as a son of the law. This is the bar mitzvah, which occurs at 12 or 13, depending on the tradition. The Holy Spirit gives us a picture of what Christ is doing. So, what is He doing? Where is He found? In the temple of the Lord.

For them, the temple; for us, the assembly, for us, the brothers, and sisters; for us, the fellowship. For them, the temple was where the name of the Lord was in the Old

Testament. For us, the gathering of the saints is where the name of the Lord is right now, and He was found there. Of course, those who are here are present, but what about those who are not? A humble question: Are you consistent in coming to the Lord's house? "No, brother, this had to be more lofty, more soft, more philosophical." No, it comes down to where the rubber meets the road. It comes down to the fact: Did you obey in the little mundane things or not? He was found in the Lord's temple. And you know what He was doing? He was sitting with the doctors. These are not the Pharisees or the scribes, but rather the rabbis, the teachers.

The Humility of Christ

And it is so amazing that, in that Oriental picture, if you would picture it in your mind, the rabbi would sit on perhaps one of the stairs. And then the students, the pupils, the younger ones, would sit on the lower stairs, and he would share while they listened and asked questions. It would go back and forth. Remember that phrase from Acts where Paul says that he was taught at the feet of Gamaliel? What do you think Christ was sitting on? Did the doctor just suddenly say, "You know what? Come, take my chair?" No, He was sitting at the feet of a mortal. And what was He doing? Hearing. We immediately jump to the idea that He asked them wonderful questions that no one could answer or understand. No, no, no. He was hearing, both hearing and asking is what the Word says. He was hearing. It just boggles my mind—the One who is the eternal Logos, the very expression of God, the One who exposes - that is the original in John - He has shown us the Father, He has exposed Him, the expository preacher of God Himself.

He is sitting at the feet of a mere mortal whom He created, whose life and breath He holds in His fist. What humility! And then, when the earthly parents arrive, and they say, "Why have You treated us this way?" He immediately tells them, "Why did you look for Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

Subject to His Father

I thought, you know, preaching the gospel was the Father's business. I thought healing the sick was the Father's business. I thought many other things were the Father's business, such as fellowshiping and encouraging others. But, dear brother and sister, let me tell you, on the authority of the Word of God, Christ's business is only to do what is God's mind—nothing more, nothing less.

Have you ever wondered about the man who was sitting at the gate called Beautiful in the book of Acts? He was 40 years old and had been brought there since childhood. People would lay him there, and he would collect alms by begging. Think about it: how often would Christ have seen him? Do you follow what I am saying? Why did He not heal him? We are all at the level of good and evil. That is where we were born, that is how we are wired, and that is how we are tuned—in relation to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

But there is one more aspect of knowledge in Philippians; it speaks of the knowledge of the excellency of Christ, which is basically God's will. Christ only does God's will. There

are so many things that Christ would have seen growing up. He would have seen the oppression of the Romans, the actions of Herod and his family, and the oppression from the Pharisees and Sadducees. He would have seen the Zealots going to extremes. He would have sensed what was happening in the pagan nations at that time, where they were building bigger and bigger temples to their pagan gods. With a snap of His fingers, He could have fixed all of that. Just imagine.

But do you know what He is more concerned about? “My Father's business.” And tell me, what is His business? To be with the Word of God, to be a son of the law. Dear brother and sister, without doggedly and completely immersing ourselves in the Word of God, it is beyond any stretch of imagination to think that I can interpret the mind of God for even a second—that is just your sanctified and healed flesh speaking. We cannot trust ourselves under any circumstances, not in the least of matters. Everything must be settled by the Word of God. And there He was, saying that “this is My business, this is My Father's business;” to ensure that I am absolutely committed and a son of the law, as He was.

The second picture, it says that He went to Nazareth and was subject to them. Subject, that is just a staggering word. He was subject, Christ was subject, the King of the universe. The Epistle to the Hebrews says that He is the heir of all things. By Him, God created the worlds—not just the world, but worlds. The brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, the One who upholds all things by the word of His power, who Himself purges our sins and then sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high, receiving a name that is more excellent than any of them. He goes to Nazareth and is subject.

Are you subject? I know most of you are much older, but I would just ask in a general sense: Are you subject to your parents? Are you subject to the authorities that the Lord has placed? What about being subject to leadership, the spiritual leadership that the Lord has put in your life? Are you subject to them, or are they just optional? No, Christ was subject. And therefore, the Father said, “Thus says My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And it does not stop there.

Identify

The last picture comes one day when suddenly a strange man in the wilderness of Judea begins to howl and weep. People go to him and ask, “Who are you? Are you the Christ?” He replies, “No, I am the voice.” If you are the voice, who is crying? And I think in my heart that it is God who is crying, God who is calling. In the wilderness, this voice becomes a man. And he is now howling. And as he does that, the entire nation begins to flow towards him and comes to be baptized, repenting of their sins. They want to set things right with the Lord. They want to be the remnant. They sense that something is happening. The Lord is about to do something, the Messiah is going to come. There is a revival happening, and they gather. And as everyone gathers, you know what happens? Suddenly, the Son of God lifts Himself up from His carpenter's bench one fine day, lays His tools aside forever, and walks towards the Jordan, standing in that queue. Just imagine:

the Creator of the universe stands in the queue where only sinners were supposed to stand. But then He stands there.

He identifies Himself with the people of God. He identifies Himself with the movement of God. He identifies Himself and John suddenly sees his cousin. They were cousins, six months apart. John says, "I must be the one who should be baptized." In my mind, I have always thought that it is not so much that he is saying, "Being the Son of God, You should baptize me." That is part of it, but more than that, he knows how his cousin is amazing, how He has lived a sinless, seemingly spotless life. Therefore, he says, "Well, everyone comes, but You are the one who is supposed to baptize me." And the Lord says, "Suffice it to be so now, to fulfill all righteousness. Suffer it" And then down He goes, into the same waters, like every other dirty sinner like me has gone.

He humbles Himself. And as He performs that last act of humbling Himself, even attaching Himself to the queue, the line of sinners, the Father opens heaven, and the Spirit descends. He says, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Let us have a word of prayer.

Our loving, living, Almighty, heavenly Father, thank You for Your precious Word. Thank You for what You have spoken. Not everything, Lord, might make sense, but whatever, O Lord, is from You, whatever is of Your mind, let it remain. Help us, O Lord, to have the mind of Christ, away from the world, completely committed to Your Lordship and the acknowledgment of Your will. We ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

<i>Love Not the World</i>	1
Introduction	1
Scrape Off the Last Bits of Gold Dust	2
John 13 – Jesus Washed His Disciples’ Feet	3
The Contrast Between Peter and Judas	5
Humility	6
Worldliness	7
The Eternal Perspective	8
The Consequences of Ignoring the Table	8
The Importance of the Lord’s Table	10
The Glorification of Christ	10
Self-Examination	11
The Lordship of Christ	12
Living with Detachment	12
The Mind of Christ	13
The Silent Years	13
The Humility of Christ	15
Subject to His Father	15
Identify	16

Speaker	Nekuri, Madhu
Venue	Richmond, Virginia, US
Date	October 19 th , 2025
Link	https://christiantestimonyministry.com/item/love-not-the-world
Bible	KJV