

I. REVIEW – LOVE JESUS, PASSION FOR CHRIST

27 So he answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,...’ 28 And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.” Luke 10:27-28 [Matt. 22:37-38; Mark 12:30-31]

A. The first key element of our vision is a **wholehearted, willing, intentional, passionate** pursuit of the Trinity – Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit.

1. Get used to those words – wholehearted, willing, intentional and passionate – I will use them a lot in the next few weeks.

B. God’s love comes to us freely and without limits. It is His love that enables us to return that love back to him. We love him back with His love but it comes from our cup!

We love Him because He first loved us. 1John 4:19

C. As I have said many times before, His love comes with specific ingredients or properties in it. We can’t change that. The moment His love enters us by the agent of Holy Spirit, it activates a process by which we transform and change. Holy Spirit takes the love of God and works it into our lives.

D. Jesus in this moment of human history is working in His church, His body, putting the First Commandment back into first place.

1. ***You shall love the Lord your God...***(His promise to work in our lives)
2. ***With all your heart...***(the core of your spirit made alive by Holy Spirit)
3. ***With all your soul...***(mind, will, emotions undivided and focused)
4. ***With all your strength...***(your time, money, skills, strength, wisdom, etc)
5. ***With all your mind...***(mental willful capacity under Holy Spirit guidance)

E. Jesus knows what he can produce in us if we just say Yes!

F. Jesus calls us into a type of love that can only be empowered by Holy Spirit. What was Jesus’ love like?

9 “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. John 15:9

1. Wholehearted – nothing held back, fully in...
2. Willing – prepared to act
3. Intentional – deliberately done on purpose
4. Passionate – strong feelings or beliefs carried and expressed with deep emotional energy.

II. LOVE PEOPLE, COMPASSION FOR OTHERS – LUKE 10:25-37

Love your neighbor as yourself... ²⁸ *And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.”* ²⁹ *But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”* Luke 10:25-29

- A. *“Love your neighbor as yourself...”* is a commandment of Scripture, but sometimes difficult to interpret. How far does our obligation go? After all, who is our neighbour? Most of us who live in large cities don't even know our neighbours! How can we love them? What do these words really mean, to love our neighbour?
- B. Jesus often spoke in parables, short stories that make a point about the behavior God would bless and what he would not. As you listened to Jesus tell parables you often found yourself being affirmed positively or challenged by your incorrect attitude buried in the story.
- C. Often Jesus would tell a parable to answer a question he had been asked, in this case, “Who is my neighbor?”
- D. In this particular parable, a man traveling to another town is robbed, beaten and left for dead. Two people traveling the same road (Priest and Levite) those who commonly we would think carry compassion for the “lost and broken,” pass by him. Another traveller, a Samaritan, is the one who helps the man robbed and beaten. For those of us today, hearing this sermon, the equivalent of a Samaritan in our day would be either an atheist or Muslim.
- E. One of the greatest attributes of Jesus given to us in one of his names, Immanuel (God with us) is his *compassion* for people.

But when He (Jesus) saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered [harassed], like sheep having no shepherd. Matt. 9:36

- F. God in the person of Jesus had come into the broken fallen world of men to rescue them from a death sentence that they were powerless to change. Only God could change it and he was required to die on a cross to make it work eternally.
- G. Man's greatest need for which God had compassion for was the condition of being bound to death eternally.
- H. We carry and feel this sentence of death, and the fruit of it. The only one who can change the human condition is Jesus and it was his compassion that drove him to act. He lowered himself and became a servant of the Father. Jesus was radical in his service for God his Father.

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men...Phil. 2:5-7

- I. So ultimately, radical servanthood is driven by compassion for others. Compassion compels us to step into the plight of another regardless the cost believing God will make a way and pay for it. Ultimately what we are doing is bringing Jesus (Immanuel) to another person.

- J. “Radical servanthood challenges us, while attempting persistently to overcome poverty, hunger, illness, and any other form of human misery, to reveal the gentle presence of our compassionate God in the midst of our broken world.” Henri Nouwen, from his book, *Compassion*.

III. LONELINESS – THE DEADLY ARSENIC OF OUR TIMES

- A. The world is lonely. That loneliness is like a daily dose of arsenic that doesn't kill us instantly in the moment but the buildup over time wears us out, shuts us down and eventually kills us.
- B. There is a difference between “aleness” and “loneliness”.
1. Aleness = generally means we are by ourself, usually by choice.
 2. Loneliness = generally means we are by ourself, and we don't want to be. We are missing connection.
- C. From the very beginning in the Garden of Eden, God said that it was not good that man was alone (Gen.2:18). This aleness would certain days have benefits but over the long haul of life, loneliness for a friend, a companion, a spouse, etc. would cause a toxic heaviness to grow.
- D. This truth spoken by God is not just about a man having his life partner in a wife. This is an eternal principle that finds its ultimate understanding in the mystery of the Bride of Christ doctrine.
- E. Jesus is the husband of the church His bride; his companion, his compliment, his co-laborer.
- F. My friend the power of the cross and resurrection carries with it the power to break the arsenic of loneliness.
- G. So often we give a religious politically correct answer, “You are not alone, God is with you!” And yes that is true. But Jesus came took on human flesh and stayed with us. He became present.
- H. I am calling this congregation to wrestle with the idea that our Savior, the one who puts compassion in our hearts, is calling us to be compelled by a love that would be willing to disrupt your life for the sake of being present with the love of God in you, making it available for a real living human soul.
- I. I am calling this congregation to be willing to disrupt your day, your bank account, your time; to be present in someone's life to break off the scourge of loneliness.
- J. If you say yes, Holy Spirit will make it clear who, what, where, when, why!
- K. As much as it depends on you, as Holy Spirit leads and provides, don't just tell someone that God is with them, you step in with the love and compassion of God, be present so they feel the love of God through you.
- L. As a church, can we dare to break the cycles of loneliness off of people. That slow killer of the human soul, can we provide the antidote called God's love in us ministered to others.

