

## **When Christ Is First You Love Him Most!**

**Our last two devotions have centered on Christ Being First in Your Life! Jesus being first in your life means that He is the center piece of your life.**

**Colossians 1:18** He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything.

**Why would Christ want to have first place in everything in your life?**

**Answer these Questions:**

1. What does it look like for a man to have Christ first in His life? How would he spend his time? What would his relationships at work, church and leisure look like?
2. What does it look like for a marriage to have Christ first in their relationship?
3. What does it look like for a family to have Christ as the centerpiece of their lives?

When a man Has Christ as the centerpiece of His life, He will seek Him first, Trust Him first and Love Him most! Love in the Christian life is a very important principle. Jesus said that Loving God first and loving one's neighbor as himself are the two key principles of the whole bible. He said that on these two commandments hinge the whole bible. One translation says it this way, "If you are keeping these two commandments, you will be keeping all of God's word!

The problem with Love is that our flesh has propensities to love other things more than it loves God!

### **1. We have a propensity to Love the World!**

**1 John 2:15** Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

1. What if someone loves the world?
2. What is it in the world that men love?
3. Talk about the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life. What are these three things? What do they look like in a man's life?
4. What happens to the man who does God's will? What does doing God's will look like?

**James 4:4** You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1. What does it mean to be a friend of the world and why must we avoid it?

### **2. We have a propensity to Love the Approval of Men!**

**John 12:42** Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

1. What is the Approval of Man?
2. How have you sought the approval of man as a child? As a teenager? As the man you are right now?
3. Has that brought contentment and satisfaction?

### **3. We have a Propensity to Love Money!**

**Read the following verses and talk about them!**

**Hebrews 13:5** Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you," 6 so that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What shall man do to me?"

**1 Timothy 6:8-10** – the Love of money is a root of all sorts of evil!

**Matthew 6:24** "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

1. How do we avoid the love of money?
2. Who will never leave you or forsake you? Can your money promise this? Will your money never leave you or forsake you?
3. Is money the root of all sorts of evil?
4. How does man try to love God and Money at the same time?
5. How do we make sure we are not loving money?

#### **4. We have a Propensity to Love our lives!**

**John 12:23** And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 "He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.

Abandoning your life is deciding that you will do whatever it takes to become like the one you love! You will give yourself to be insulted, beaten, talked about. And when you abandon yourself to our great God, there is no more self protection, no more fear, no more hurt feelings, no more offenses, you leave yourself wide open, vulnerable, exposed. Why, because you love God more than anything, and you will not even let the petty things of this life penetrate your heart to grieve you or embitter you. And when you do this you leave yourself wide open to trust God to do His most perfect work in your ever! But if you love your life more than you do God you will miss what God has for you!

#### **God's Call to Love Him Foremost! Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

##### **If You Love Him What will You do and be about according the following verses?**

**1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

**1 John 3:10** By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. 11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; **(You Love One Another!)**

**Ephesians 5:1** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

One final thought: Hosea says that Israel became detestable to God and became what they loved! In Ephesians 5:1 Paul says in essence, If you are a beloved Child of God you will imitate God and walk in the same kind of love Christ loved you with!

- Do you love Him most?
- What would it take for you to love God more than anything?