

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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April 2, 2023

“Our Love For The Lord”

By R. J. Evans

A true test of one's spirituality can be measured by his love for the Lord. The Apostle Paul had much to say concerning the subject of love. He wrote, *"If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord come!"* (1 Cor. 16:22). In his great chapter on love, 1 Corinthians 13, he points out that he may accomplish some great feats, but if all is done without love- "I am nothing" (Vv. 1-3). He stated in Col. 3:14: *"But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."* In this short article, let us observe some things about our love for the Lord.

Our love for the Lord is reciprocal.

"We love Him because He first loved us" (1 Jn. 5:19). This is love's proper motive. Concerning the love manifested toward mankind, Paul explained it in this manner- *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Rom. 5:8). Paul also said, *"For the love of Christ constrains us"* (2 Cor. 5:14). The great love of Christ for us involved His learning *"obedience by the things which he suffered"* (Heb. 5:8). He became "sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). He sacrificed Himself as an offering "once for all" (Heb. 10:10). He "bore our sins on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). He made provision for our "redemption through His blood" (Eph. 1:7). He "died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:3). "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (Jn. 15:13). And we could go on and on. What great love! And it was all done for us! As Paul said, *"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"* (2 Cor. 9:15). Surely, in view of all the above scriptures, we should certainly reciprocate His marvelous love!

Our love for the Lord should be undivided. Of Peter, Jesus asked, "do you love Me more than these?" (Jn.21:15). The church is the bride of Christ (Rom. 7:4; Rev. 22:17). We are betrothed to one husband (2 Cor. 11:2). Because of this relationship, Christians who turn their backs on the Lord and become friends of the world, are said to be guilty of spiritual adultery (Jas. 4:4). Divided love is not tolerated in physical marriage; neither is it to be tolerated with respect to our spiritual marriage to Christ. Also, we need to take into consideration that he who claims to love the Lord, and at the same time, "hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 Jn. 3:15). To become a spiritual adulterer or murderer because of a lack of love is a very serious, deadly spiritual condition.

Our love for the Lord should be obedient. Christ taught, "If you love Me, keep My commandments...He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word...He who does not love Me does not keep My words" (Jn. 14:15, 21, 23, 24). Could it be any plainer? As He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, "He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Heb. 5:9). Paul spoke of our Lord taking the form of a servant, coming in the likeness of men, "And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7-8). He is the perfect example of suffering, obedient love. He is the epitome of it! True love runs deeper than mere words-it acts! Because Jesus loved us, He gave Himself for us (Eph. 5:25).

Because we love Him, we must freely and fully give ourselves to Him by faithfully obeying His commands. Just saying, "I love you," means nothing unless those words are demonstrated by loving obedience to all His commandments. We close with these meaningful words: "*Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen*" (Ephesians 6:24).

“Our Heads In The Lion's Mouth”

By Mark White

Back in 2003, news reports terrified us with stories of the white tiger who nearly killed Roy Horn of the famous duo, Siegfried and Roy. These Las Vegas entertainers have been thrilling audiences for decades with their exotic animal shows. Until recently, these animals "never put a scratch" on their handlers. But Roy Horn found himself in critical condition because a trusted animal, for whatever reason, almost took his life.

It seems to me we are fascinated with such dangerous, risky exploits. Another television star, Steve Irwin (now deceased), of Crocodile Hunter fame, was particularly exciting to watch. He ultimately died from the poisonous barb on the tail of a sting-ray, but audiences often watched just waiting for the moment when a crocodile, poisonous snake, or other deadly critter would bite or snap at Steve. He died in September, 2006.

All of this titillation and excitement may just reveal more about us than we realize. The Bible features Satan, our adversary, as a "roaring lion, walking about seeking whom he may devour." (I Peter 5:8). He is dangerous and deadly, but our familiarity with him causes us to be off-guard. When you couple our over-familiarity with the Devil with his cunning ability to appear as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14) you have a disaster waiting to happen.

How often do we put our own heads in this lion's mouth, falsely feeling secure and impenetrable to his bite? I fear we do it all the time. We foolishly think we are the exception to the rule that "whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7). We play with fire, expecting not to be burned, when suddenly we are engulfed and consumed.

A businessman takes funds from the company by padding his expense account or "borrowing" with the intention of paying it back before anyone notices. Suddenly the great jaws of the lion clamp down on his head! An unmarried teenager looks until he or she finds a willing partner for sex and an unplanned pregnancy, venereal disease, or gnawing guilt results. A young married couple views pornography over the internet as a "marital aid" without realizing they are undermining trust, confidence and genuine intimacy. Before long, what seemed to be an arousing burst of excitement in their marriage destroys the very thing they foolishly thought they were building!

The trusted lion, in whose arms they sought comfort, has ripped them asunder. An innocent little alcoholic beverage, consumed at an office holiday party, eventually leads to a dependency on strong drink on a daily basis. The drinker never intended it to be so, but without his realizing it the great jaws of the lion had caused the razor-sharp teeth to sink deeply into its victim's jugular. "At the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper." (Prov. 23:32)

James 1:14-15 contains a stark warning concerning the dangers of sin and temptation. "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Sin is deadly, no matter how it appears at first. It is a killer! It kills your desire for spiritual things; it kills your self-respect; it will kill your soul eternally. Sin is not a cuddly, cute little kitten, it is a vicious, man-eating lion. It can never be trusted, no matter how much experience we have with it. I wish that we could see sin for what it really is! The mirage of pleasure and satisfaction it offers us is in reality the venom of a deadly serpent.

Yet, in spite of this knowledge, we still defend sin! Roy Horn, shortly after being mauled by his tiger pleaded, "Don't harm the cat!" The tiger tasted his blood, almost decapitating him with his powerful bite, yet he defends the cat! Who knows why this wild animal did what he did? The tiger is not a domesticated house pet. In one brief moment that lesson was painfully, tragically remembered. A wild animal cannot be trusted, no matter how much familiarity his handler has with him. It's just the nature of the beast.

Our sin must scare us. It must frighten us into reality. We should all shudder at its prospects. We can ill afford to become comfortable with it, much less nurture and cuddle it. It makes little difference if one sin is more deadly than another, for they all have what it takes to kill us!

GOSPEL MEETING

Speaker: **Billy Randolph**

Location: **Meeks Street Church of Christ**

Date: **April 16th -- 19th** (Sunday To Wednesday)

Starting Time: **7:00 PM Nightly** (Except Sunday)

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, and Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Brandon Briggs, Jimmy Briggs, Chad Harris, Randy Ferrell (Brandi's brother in law), Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Wayne Bivens (recovering from double by-pass), Ricky Doles, and Jamie Jones.

Danny Cottrell got to go home from the Rehab last Friday.
Brandon Briggs had his procedure done last Monday.
Dan And Lynlie Cottrell's house was hit by a tornado Friday night.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:	Tim Harris Jr.
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #1:	<i>"The Concern For Pollution"</i>
<u>Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:</u>	Jerry Kennemur
Workbook:	Colossians
Author:	Donnie V. Rader
Starting Page & Question:	<i>Page #17, Question #11</i>

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:	Brian Meade
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Fred Johnson
Scripture Reading:	<i>Job 1:6-12</i>
Song Leader:	Jerry Kennemur
Lord's Supper:	Danny Sheffield
Assisting:	— —
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon #2:	<i>"When Satan Comes To Services"</i>
Closing Prayer:	Paul Johnson

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

April 5, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class:	Brian Meade
Workbook:	The Miracles Of Jesus
Author:	Mike Willis
Starting Page & Question:	<i>Page #104, Question #1</i>
Invitation:	Dan Cottrell
Song Leader:	Paul Busby
Closing Prayer:	Russell Briggs



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Meeks Street Church of Christ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgiXJxZC1oraOugO9qIfBtw?view_as=subscriber

And Our Facebook Page.

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“The Concern For Pollution”

Lesson Text: **2 Peter 2:20.**

I. So Much Concern For Pollution Of This World.

- Men Go To Great Measures To Fight Pollution Of The Earth.
 - Eliminating Carbon Emissions, Carbon Footprint, Desire For Clean Energy....
 - Helping People Get Clean Drinking Water, Conserving Energy, Recycling....
 - Cleaning Up Trash Out Of The Environment Where We Live.
- But The Biggest Threat We Face From Pollution Is All Around Us!
 - The pollutions Of Sin And It's Defilements Is Not A Big Concern To Most.
 - Christians Need To Make Men Aware Of This Great Threat To All Men!

II. Christians Must Fight The Pollution Of:

— Our Hearts.

- **Mark 7:1-23.**
- The Pharisees and Some Scribes Were So Concerned About The Physical (**vs. 1-5**).
- Jesus Addressed The Real Problem (**vs. 14-23**).
- Sin Proceeds From The Heart (Conceived, Planned, Promoted, and Loved).
- **Proverbs 4:23; 16:9; 19:21; 27:19.**

— Our Speech.

- We Live In A Country That Values Free Speech, But Not All Speech Is Good.
- You Can Say It, But Is It Right To Do So? Clean Versus Filthy Speech?
- Many See Nothing Wrong With:
 1. Telling Dirty Jokes (Salacious Humor).
 2. Derogatory Language.
 3. Curse Words.
 4. Ugly Words.
 5. Lying Lips.
- **Ephesians 4:29; 5:3-5; Colossians 3:8; Titus 2:6-8.**

— Our Eyes.

- **Psalms 119:37 (ESV); Psalm 101:3.**
- Pornography Is The Largest Business On The Internet.
- According to a nationally representative survey of U.S. teens, 84.4% of 14 to 18-year-old males and 57% of 14 to 18-year-old females have viewed pornography.
- But It Destroys A Healthy View Of Marriage and All It Stands For.
- Television Shows And Movies That Promote Lust, Greed, Violence...
- Someone Might Say, “Is It A Sin To Enjoy This Kind Of Entertainment?” **Phil. 4:8.**

— Our Morals And Values.

- **Isaiah 5:20-24.** Israel Lost Its Moral Compass- God's Word!
- Can America Do The Same? **Psalm 9:17.**

III. How Do We Fight This Pollution?

1. Realize The Danger. **Ephesians 5:15.**
2. Eliminate The Trash Out Of Our Lives. **1 Peter 2:1.**
3. Be A Good Example To Others. **Philippians 2:15.**

“When Satan Comes To Services”

Lesson Text: **Job 1:6-12.**

I. To Criticize God’s People.

- **Job 2:3-6.** Same Scenario— Satan Continues To Attack God’s People.
 - A Pattern Of Behavior For Satan— **Revelation 12:10.**
- It’s Why Slander Is Such A Problem— **1 Timothy 6:3-5.**
- God’s People Have Been Criticized:
 - Moses- **Numbers 12:1-10.**
 - **Jesus- Matthew 11:18-19; 12:22-28.**
 - Paul- **Acts 21:27-31.**
- How To Handle Satan’s Criticism: **1 Peter 3:14-16.**

II. To Distract Minds From Worship.

- Satan Seeks To Disrupt, Discourage, And Distract Our Worship In **Job 1—2.**
- The Evidence Is In How He Treated Job! **Job 2:7-10.**
- Does Satan Seek To Distract And Disrupt You From Truly Worshipping God?
 - True Worship Requires Full Concentration And Focus- **John 4:23-24.**
 - Does Our Mind Wander To The Things Of The World?
 - Does The Devil Throw So Much At Us That It Is Hard To Even Be There?

III. To Keep Hearts From The Word.

- Jesus Told Us That He Does- **Luke 8:5-12.**
- Why? Because He Knows What The Word Can Do In Our Lives:
 - It Increases Our Faith- **Romans 10:17.**
 - It Builds Us Up- **Acts 20:32.**
 - God’s Word Saves- **James 1:21.**

IV. To Sow Strife And Discord Among Brethren.

- Satan Tried To Do His Best To Start Strife In **Job 1—2.**
- That’s What He Does- **John 10:7-10.**
- Imagine A World Without The Devil To Upset Unity/Harmony Of Brethren!
 - Perfect Peace, Perfect Harmony, Perfect Order.... But Not Now!
- God Hates Those Who Sow Discord- **Proverbs 6:16-19.**
 - Why? **Proverbs 16:28; 1 Timothy 6:5; Titus 3:9-11.**

V. What Can We Do About It?

- Don’t Let Satan In Our Assemblies!
- How? Don’t Let Him Have Any Influence On Our Lives- **Ephesians 4:26-27.**
- We Must Continue To Resist And Reject Those Who Are Working For Him.
 - **2 Timothy 2:25-26.**

Conclusion: **2 Corinthians 2:11.**