

Chapter 18. World Love versus God Love.



The Apostle John, by the way known as the Apostle of Love, gives us the clearest statement of separation with God and from the world, from the love of the world versus the love of God.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.” (I John 2:15-17)

There are two kinds of worlds in the Bible, the world God originally created, and then the world of sinful man has created and is creating under the leadership of the arch enemy of God, Satan and the great lie. “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth..”, this is the world God created; and it is so good what Dr. Peter Jones says, perhaps getting a little carried away with theological jargon, not theology from which he shows great overcoming, but he says that is THE Bible and everything else a commentary then on Genesis 1:1.

Quickly this new generation of World lovers would respond with the well known John 3:16, how God so love the World. Actually we should add there is a third kind of world, a world only that God could love, and as this new generation of theologians strive to emulate what only God has the capability to love, they have made a big step to the bad theology Dr. Jones speaks of, forgetting the transcendence of God, making man and God one when they are two, or in the Paganism of Romans 1.

“And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man...” (1:23)

AND

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” (1:25)

The great sin of the world, to worship and serve man as a substitute for the truth and worship of God the Father. It is the BIG lie of the world, that the world can do that, only possible to maintain in many theologies like that of the Jesus Seminar. It has subtly crept into Baptist institutions like SWBTS and Baylor and Wake Forest Divinity

School because they have to be accredited, and that means model after the two largest seminaries in the world, Yale and Princeton. In the hustle to get degrees and love the success of the world, graduates have forgotten that only the Trinity is able to participate successfully in that third kind of love, like Jesus could do that love and remain unspotted as “He was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin.” New graduates of theology take half a verse and go everywhere preaching like the recent Baylor graduate who sees the word world in the Bible as only being the Roman world. And even if this is not clear on World Love, this and many other world scriptures is clear:

“You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.” (James 4:4)

One more world word in the Bible and we pass on—

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:1-3)

You must see the difference between theological preaching and Bible preaching, first with an example of preaching from the Bible and second with from Baylor, then we leave Baylor alone.

18-1: Non-Conformity to the Extreme Tolerations of the World from Bible preaching.

“For you, being so wise, tolerate the foolish gladly.

For you tolerate it if anyone enslaves you, anyone devours you, anyone takes advantage of you, anyone exalts himself, anyone hits you in the face.”

– 2 Corinthians 11:19-20

The Corinthians had a tolerance problem. Earlier in the chapter, Paul said something similar. “For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.” They bear with false teaching. They tolerate the intolerable.

A Redefinition of Tolerance

In the last 10 to 15 years, the worldview of postmodernism has come to dominate the collective intellectual consciousness of western society. And perhaps the pinnacle virtue of postmodernism is tolerance.

Now, contemporary postmodern tolerance is not what English-speaking peoples have always understood the word tolerance to mean. A person was judged to be tolerant if, though he held to his views strongly, believed them to be absolute truth, and believed just as strongly that all other mutually exclusive views were absolutely wrong, he nevertheless insisted that others had the right to disagree with his deeply-held convictions. He believed in his convictions unwaveringly, and even believed that everyone else should believe what he believed. But he didn't demand agreement or try to coerce consensus. He tolerated the existence of differing opinions, even on what he believed was non-negotiable truth. The old view of tolerance was well-captured in the oft-quoted aphorism, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

But the postmodern version of tolerance is of a totally different sort. To today's culture, tolerance is no longer the idea that wrong views, though wrong, nevertheless have the right to exist and to be heard in public discourse. Now, you're only tolerant if you believe that no position is any more or less true, right, or valid than any other view. In his book, *The Intolerance of Tolerance*, D. A. Carson explains the shift this way:

"The new tolerance suggests that actually accepting another's position means believing that position to be true, or at least as true as your own. We move from allowing the free expression of contrary opinions to the acceptance of all opinions; we leap from permitting the articulation of beliefs and claims with which we do not agree to asserting that all beliefs and claims are equally valid." (3-4)

And with that revisionist definition of tolerance comes also a revisionist definition of intolerance. Which is a big deal. Because there are few worse charges to be accused of today than being intolerant. Since tolerance no longer means tolerating the existence of opposing views but instead asserting that all views are equally valid, intolerance is disagreeing with the notion that no one position is more true, valid, or trustworthy than another. If you insist that someone is unambiguously and unequivocally wrong about something, you are intolerant. You're an uncharitable, arrogant bully. Perhaps even a bigot.

The Embrace of Self-Defeating Relativism

Do you recognize what the central philosophical underpinning of that worldview is? It's relativism – the rejection of absolute truth itself. If no one claim is more true or right

than any other, there is no such thing as absolute truth at all. And the postmodernists don't dispute this. In 1995, the United Nations released what is called the Declaration on Principles of Tolerance, and in Article 1 on the meaning of tolerance, it asserts that tolerance "involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism." As Carson says, one can't help but observe that that assertion sounds quite a bit dogmatic and absolute!

And of course, that is the failure of all forms of relativism: relativism is hopelessly inconsistent, because the claim that there is no absolute truth is itself an absolute statement. If someone comes up to you and says, "There is no absolute truth!" just ask them, "Is that absolutely true?"

It is rationally baseless. Such a worldview immediately collapses under its own weight. And so Carson observes, "Under the new aegis of this new tolerance, no absolutism is permitted, except for the absolute prohibition of absolutism. Tolerance rules, except that there must be no tolerance for those who disagree with this peculiar definition of tolerance" (13). Ironically, but inevitably for all systems that are based on relativism, what is now called tolerance is actually what the world has always known as intolerance.

The Church Apes the World

And because the church inexorably imitates and apes the foolish fashions of the world – always ostensibly as a misguided means of attracting the world – contemporary evangelicalism has imbibed these very redefinitions and philosophical presuppositions. So many professing Christians are scared to death to offend the sensibilities of the postmodern culture. For them, the worst thing in the world is to be called intolerant. And so what has happened? They have subtly, maybe even in some cases unintelligibly, abandoned their commitment to the absolute truth of Scripture, in favor of being more tolerant of a "diversity of opinions."

People rise up in the church and begin teaching doctrine that does not accord with the pattern of sound words entrusted to us in Scripture. Others stand up against that error and criticize it for not aligning with biblical truth. Yet still other men push back against that and say, "Hey, let's not be so rigid and dogmatic, OK? These folks are aiming to ground their teachings in Scripture; they just have a different interpretation than you do. Who's to say that our interpretation is better than their interpretation? After all, the text isn't all that clear anyway. We should hear them out. We should give them a platform. We ought to be tolerant of a diversity of views."

This is what happened in the Corinthian church. The false apostles showed up when Paul was miles away, and they began sowing doubt about the integrity of his character and the truth of his Gospel among the believers there. And when the Corinthians first

discerned that that was going on, they should have risen up and rejected these men for the wolves that they were.

But what happened? They flashed their 'letters of commendation.' They touted their Jewish heritage and connection to the Jewish church. They bragged on their eloquence and their strong leadership. They boasted in their high-priced honorariums, and their large fanbase, and the bevy of their ministerial successes. And the Corinthians were taken in! And so they tolerated the subtle deviations from the truth. And when those subtle deviations became more obvious deviations from the truth, they tolerated those as well. And when the toleration of little compromise after little compromise led to their enslavement, their being devoured, and taken advantage of, and even physically assaulted – by these fools who preach another Jesus, and a different spirit, and a different gospel – they tolerated it. They bore it beautifully.

Jesus, the Intolerant

This text teaches us, dear reader, that there is a limit to biblical tolerance. There are certain things that we simply must not tolerate in the church. You say, "But Mike, wasn't Jesus the supreme example of tolerance? He refused no one! He welcomed everyone to Himself!" Not exactly.

In Revelation chapter 2, Jesus commends the church of Thyatira for their deeds, their love, their faith, their service, and their perseverance. Whereas the church of Ephesus needed to repent and do the deeds she did at first (Rev 2:4-5), Jesus said that Thyatira's "deeds of late are greater than at first" (Rev 2:). But – as Kevin DeYoung has put it – though Thyatira was loving, their love could be undiscerning and blindly affirming. Consider what Jesus says in verse 20: "But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality."

Jesus is intolerant of Thyatira's tolerance of error and immorality! And He promises severe judgment for it. Verse 22: "Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts."

Friends, the Jesus of Revelation 2 is not the Jesus of postmodern leftism. The real Jesus is decidedly intolerant of false doctrine and moral relativism. And for those Christians, and churches, and ministries who compromise the Word of God in an effort to be more "tolerant" and more "affirming" than Jesus is – on whatever issue – they will find themselves under the judgment of the One whose eyes are like a flame of fire, whose feet are like burnished bronze (Rev 2:18 whose robe is dipped in blood, and who strikes down the nations with the sword of His mouth (Rev 19:13).

Truth is Intolerant of Error

Martin Luther said it well when he wrote, “I am not permitted to let my love be so merciful as to tolerate and endure false doctrine. When faith and doctrine are concerned and endangered, neither love nor patience are in order. ... When these are concerned, neither toleration nor mercy are in order, but only anger, dispute, and destruction – to be sure, only with the Word of God as our weapon.”

Truth is intolerant of error. And we are not permitted to tolerate the preaching of error in the name of truth. Rather we are, 2 Corinthians 10:, to “destroy speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and [to] take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”

Not by force, of course. Not by coercion. We understand that in a fallen world, the whole of which lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:, error must exist alongside the truth. As Christians, we do not seek, as some do, to outlaw from the public square every viewpoint but our own. We tolerate the existence of different ideas, and worldviews, and ways of life.

We Will Not Bow

But behind the pulpit – in Christ’s Church – there is one rule for the lives of Christ’s people. There is one sovereign standard that norms the thinking and the beliefs of the followers of Jesus, to the exclusion of all others. And that is Scripture alone. We must never so adopt the world’s notion of tolerance that we allow anything to rule our faith and practice but the voice of our Good Shepherd as spoken in His Word. We bow to Him alone.

John MacArthur has said it well:

Christ is our King. Scripture is our law. And in ways that have not been true in the past, Scripture and the laws of our country now collide head on. And we’re going to feel it. We are the target now. [...]

I ran through my Bible the other day, just looking for everywhere I could find the term “bow down.” It’s all over the Old Testament. [...] Unfaithful people bowed down before idols and godless kings. But faithful people did not bow down. Mordecai did not bow down. Daniel did not bow down. His friends did not bow down. Jesus did not bow down. Paul did not bow down.

These are going to be very challenging days. But we will not bow. We will be gracious, and we will be loving, but we will render to God what is God’s.

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18-2: Conformity to the Extreme Tolerations of the World from Baylor's Theological best preaching.

For some reason the Baptist Standard has fallen inline with the preaching theology of Baylor in their "Baptist Preaching", like parts of a sermon entitled *A Generous Interpretation | Baptists Preaching*. It is based loosely on James 1:17-27, and what a generous interpretation it is, more in line with the paganism and Gnosticism that Jones speaks on than with the Bible as the World of God.

1. First Quote from this Baylor Preaching.

"The book of James wants to articulate a buen camino for the community of Christ. Throughout this small book he seems to be talking about a general posture of compassion within a community. A posture of compassion which must start by expecting the best of people... and interpreting each other's actions through the lens of best intentions. We must be generous interpreters of the words and actions of others or else we will move through life bouncing from one outrage to the next. Always waiting to be offended."

At heart this is extreme toleration of homosexuals and others of the that sort group in II Timothy, the group of self-love, love of money, despisers of the good, and lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, and without natural affection. While in the next verses Paul, and God through Paul, warns both that (1) these of this sort have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof, even deny the power and transcendence of God, and (2) are to be avoided, and certainly that must mean not to both be fellowshipped with and worshipped with. It is like taking the national dens of thieves of Jeremiah and Jesus to the bosom of truth, where it is in the Bible a known LIE.

2. Second Quote.

James stands at the margins of scripture speaking a word to us. Your faith is not your own. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God is this: to care for the orphans and widows, and to keep oneself unpolluted by the Romans (he says, "World"; he means "Roman world"). Your faith will increase in relation to the growth of your compassion for those on the margins. Your faith will grow the more you give yourself to the body of Christ.

There are no margins of Scripture, and this would seem to be like President Stiles of Truett Seminary statement of belief of “under the Bible”. Sounds good, whatever it means, but my goodness your talk about on the margin of what can be said from the Bible of the Bible as the Word of God this is so insufficient. Remember, insufficient Scripture begets an insufficient Jesus, a Jesus of World Love, if you would!

3. Third.

“...this God is the highest, purest reality we can seek. But, God is also the ground of being...in all our seeking... all our thinking... all our living... we live through God. As Augustine says, “God is not only beyond my utmost heights – but also more inward to me than my inmost depths.” There’s no partaking in reality without this ultimate reality, without the ground of being, without or aside from God.

The But’s always get the Baylor faculty and graduates, and you will find the same trend as you read any of the theologians of the modern paganism and Gnosticism. Most of the time they are transitioning from some lip service and acknowledgment of the Bible to the religion of world love, to the modern theology of paganism and Gnosticism, and in that Gnosticism they are departing from the Word of God. Of course, they do it smartly as some of the most brilliant in the world, those of extreme academic excellence.

4. Fourth Quote.

“We all share the same origin. We are all of God. And like those pilgrims on the camino we find out sooner or later that we share a common journey. Since we’re all in this together, and since we all share so much of the bounty we have been given from God, we need to give ourselves a break. Let go of the anger that poisons your mind and prohibits the growth of the implanted word within you. Be doers of the word because its in the doing that faith takes hold of your life. If you’re looking for God look to the margins with the forgotten children and women. The word in us has a word for them...but more importantly, the word in them will shape us into the people of faith Christ has called us to be. We are all of the same origin. Being doers of the word means seeing the word in action around us. It means seeing God in others. And we can’t see through angry eyes. We would be better (live better, live healthier) if we would be generous interpreters of the words and actions of others.”

This all “of God” gets them, implying both a non-transcendent God and an inner special spark from the holy, and suggests “of the world” more than “of God”. What you will find throughout the Bible, the Integrity with Christ of ultimate integration is “IN THE WORLD, BUT NOT OF THE WORLD.” Paul told us if you are going to separate yourself from all adulterers and other sinners, then you must needs get out of the world; but no, he meant those sinners of habitual sinning within the church, the adulterers if you would, within the church. Oh my, these once our heroes of the faith and so brilliant and talented and good examples, have become victims of the new

theology of paganism and Gnosticism; and theology, not the institutions that teach it or the faculty and graduates are to shoulder the primary blame, it is to be placed on modern theology.

18-3: Half truth begets a half love and certainly a half faith and half Jesus, *and less than half a Bible.*

What do we call these likeable and many ways admirable graduates of the new theology except Conformist to the world. Even their Bible on the world is half truth; yes, world in the Bible sometimes includes the Roman world but by no means is exclusive to Rome, not exclusive to the past, and certainly does not include the world we naturally want to love and identify with. That world is more the love of the world as in John 3:16 where God so loved the world, the lost of the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. It is not the world of the non-conformists of self sacrifice and self service that Paul writes of in Romans 12:1,2, the world that those IN CHRIST and of ultimate integration dare not be a part of. What you will notice except of course from the Jesus Seminar of modern theology is first the statement of a sound doctrine from the Bible and then a BUT. You will find it in President Stiles statement of belief for Truett Seminary, often, and in particular as he tries to almost conviction less strives to define how Baylor and the Seminary are “under the Bible”.

What we will find in Ephesians is that love is a vector with both magnitude and direction, new graduates of theology have taken the love magnitude intensely and almost their whole theology and forgotten the directional quality: that is it must be directed toward God through Christ and to Christian brothers. That is not to say, no love for the lost, but even therein in a god-like fashion the sinner must be loved with his sins and without being spotted or singled by the world, sin, and Satan. With few exceptions gays and lesbians have made their commitment to this wrong world, and their failure for God retention in their thinking shows the results in their unnatural use of each other (Romans 1). Also as Dr. Jones points out from the reading of Gay is Good, they being only 1.7 % of the population have an agenda to control religion and theology. Those that have been caught in Baptist churches and reprimanded are these new age theology graduates that place their support more with the gay agenda that with other programs.

18-4: World Love brings to birth a Gospel of Prosperity and Success.

The most outstanding model of mysticism and paganism, the paganism of world love is the preaching of Joel Osteen. It is so popular because the world can easily identify with it. Even as the “world knows its own”, the readers and buyers of Joel’s best selling books recognize a religion that they can easily and naturally agree with, that of paganism and mysticism so riddled with self this, self that, and also self. However, it is

the self that loves the world, all the things in the world, a world of lusts of the flesh and lust of the eyes, a world of pride of life.

Gospel of Prosperity and Success

(The Gospel of World Love)

It is not only the Gospel of Prosperity we must abhor as unsound doctrine and avoid, it is the corollary of the Gospel of Wealth in the History of American Thought that is called the Gospel of wealth and the corollary of success. Of course, those of worldly success can be dominated by the same false motivations as of prosperity and wealth. Why? Because the Gospel of Prosperity and Success is the Gospel of World Love. Perhaps you will understand it best as the "love of the world" of I John 3 or the "be not conformed to the world" of Romans. Not only any millionaire preacher today has sold out to the love of the world and these things, but anyone friend overtaken by pride of life is exhibiting more love of the world and things in the world than the Love of God. At this extreme has come what Dr. Peter Jones calls the paganism and Gnosticism of Modern theology, Bible studies, and millennial thought. Difficult to understand until he quotes Romans 1:25, you remember how the chapter is both individual and civilization paganism at work, repeated in every generation and climaxed and made evident and obvious with promotions of homosexuality, but with the falling away in churches and in the world, it has come to dominate American Thought. (Christian intellectuals call it the Passion of Western Civilization.)

Dr. Jones, from the UK, tells of how Christian was America in 1961, thinking that as a strong Bible believer he had gone to heaven, then teaching abroad and coming back in 1991 to a Christian cultural shock which he calls paganism and Gnosticism. It would be offered here that the repeat of Romans 1 is their program and agenda, then their rationalization is going back to the Gnosticism that Paul fought in early churches, a Gnosticism that sought to replace a transcendent, above all and apart from all Heavenly Father, with some kind of secret knowledge within them, some like to call it a divine spark. Much like the operation of Giglio's Passion Conferences today.