

Why Do We Love the Lost?

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. Mark 10:17-22 - God loves the lost and desires their salvation - 1Tim. 2:3-4
- B. Why should those who profess to be the children of God love those who are not the children of God?

I. ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

- A. Gen. 1:26-27
- B. After Adam and Eve sinned, God said humankind was in His image - Gen. 9:6
 - 1. Sin does not cause us to cease to be in God's image.
 - 2. Everyone has a measure of dignity and value simply because he is human, a bearer of the image of the Divine
- C. Jesus taught that every soul is beyond value - Mark 8:36-37
 - 1. So valuable is a soul, that Jesus exchanged His human dignity and earthly life for our eternal life and happiness for souls
 - 2. Every human being has a priceless, immortal soul.

II. ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE OUR NEIGHBORS

- A. Matt. 22:36-40 - Love them for their own sake.
- B. What is the most important thing in your life? Is it your salvation, relationship with God, and home in heaven?
 - 1. If you are convinced that is the most important thing in life, shouldn't you feel compelled to help others you profess to love to make that their most important thing?

III. ALL PEOPLE WHO DIE LOST WILL SUFFER

- A. Regardless of the circumstances of our lives, everyone sins - Rom. 3:10, 23
 - 1. All sinners perish, but salvation is available to all sinners - Rom. 6:23
 - 2. This bothered the apostle Paul, who did something about it - 2Tim. 2:10
- B. The destination of the lost is not a fate a caring human being would ever wish for another human being - 2Thes. 1:6-10
 - 1. We must love the presently lost because they will become the eternally lost if we don't.

IV. GOD LOVES THE LOST

- A. God wants everyone on the earth to live with Him in heaven
 - 1. 2Peter 3:9; Ez. 18:23
- B. However, there are two factors that can prevent this from happening:
 - 1. The lost have to want to be saved. God will not save someone against his own will - Rom. 10:18, 21
 - 2. The saved have to bring the gospel to the lost. Christianity is a teaching religion; one person must teach another. Even Jesus did not tell Saul of Tarsus what to do to be saved, but sent him to Ananias in Damascus
 - 3. Rom. 10:13-17

V. JESUS LOVES THE LOST

- A. Mark 10:20-21 - Jesus didn't debate the young man's assertions or criticize his efforts or tell him about his flawed reasoning; He loved him and told him what he needed to know to be saved.
 - 1. Luke 13:34, 19:41 - He did not say, "What a filthy city full of disobedient Jews!" In spite of their condition, He still felt the strong desire to embrace them, but they were unwilling
- B. What do we feel when we see the lost?
 - 1. Are we just repulsed by the drunk staggering down the street? Or do we feel compassion for him?
 - 2. When was the last time you wept for the lost? We weep over their coffins, but then it is too late.
 - 3. Bill Calame's confession

VI. THE APOSTLES LOVED THE LOST

- A. Rom. 9:1-3 - We might do that for one of our children, but would we feel that for others?
- B. 2Cor. 5:14, 20 - Loved them enough to plead with them for their souls

VII. THE GOSPEL OF GRACE DEMANDS OUR LOVE FOR THE LOST

- A. Rom. 1:14-16; 1Cor. 9:16-17
- B. We have the same stewardship - Mark 16:15; Acts 4:18-20; Phil. 2:1-4

VIII. WE WERE ONCE LOST

- A. And someone loved us enough to teach us of salvation. It is personal to us.
- B. So put a name on the lost. "The lost" is abstract; put someone's name in its place and make it personal to you.
 - 1. Trust me; if you make the effort to save a lost soul, whether they respond or not, it will forever become personal to you both.
 - 2. You will remember it; they will remember it for eternity, whether in gratitude in heaven, or in agonizing regret in hell
- C. Loving and saving the lost is the glory of God; we can share in His glory and greatest work when we give the gospel to others
 - 1. God's mercy is the pinnacle of His glory. His mercy brings Him more glory than His justice. Just as the cross is more glorious than Hell, so the mercy of God is magnified by saving the lost from Hell.
 - 2. Our efforts to reach the lost, whether fruitful or fiasco, are more glorious than our embarrassed silence
 - 3. Luke 15:10