

Hebrews 13:4-6

by Don McClure

The sermon emphasizes the importance of contentment, the plague of covetousness, and the evidence of a mature Christian life, which is living in the spirit, not in the flesh.

Duration: 38:06

Scripture: Hebrews 13:1

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Marital Faithfulness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the importance of living in the spirit rather than in the flesh. He emphasizes that brotherly love should continue and that believers should show God's love by caring for others, including strangers, prisoners, and those who have been mistreated. The speaker highlights that living in the spirit is a test of one's spiritual growth and maturity. He also mentions that the evidence of a transformed life is when Christ's love and nature are evident in a believer's thoughts, behavior, and desires. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the importance of honoring marriage and avoiding sexual immorality, as God will judge fornicators and adulterers.

Transcript

A couple of weeks back we had our men's retreat where we joined with Harvest and Calvary of Santa Barbara out in Murrieta, some of you men were there and I shared on a Saturday night and somehow or another, I can't remember exactly how I got into it but the issue of covetousness and it's something that it's a plague, I believe almost in our culture, in our society, in the world in which we live it's a constant struggle, covetousness is that is essentially, what covetousness is, is it's simply a desire to have what others have and we don't anything that God has given to you is not covetousness, is not to covet unless God has given you something that belongs to you, you can't really covet or lust after your own wife, that desire, that love, that attraction is pure, is to be holy, God has

given it to you but what covetousness is, is to covet or long for something that isn't yours, that belongs to somebody else and that is something I think sometimes that has almost overtaken our society, we live in a world that's just almost controlled by it, it's like the whole media, the advertising world, it's constantly trying to get a little hook into that nature that we have, that fleshly, selfish nature that so easily covets, it looks at what it doesn't have and it's unhappy and it wants what it doesn't, and it's very easy for us, I had mentioned when I was up at the conference on how that so often you can, anybody if you just sit in a room and you let your mind go, it's easy to start looking around and you can start coveting, we could you know, I

mentioned to the men on how you

could be sitting here in a room and you could look around and you could find almost from everybody something you could covet from, you may look at one and say I wish I had his looks I wish I had his hair, I wish I had his car, I wish I had his job, I wish I had his wallet, his bank account, I wish I had his house I wish I had his portfolio and retirement fund, you know, or whatever, and I wish I had his health, I wish I had his voice, I wish I had his talent I wish I had his intelligence, and we could almost look around the room and wish we had something from almost everybody in the room that we don't have that they do, and how easily we could just look at it and then next thing you know you're going, well I wish I had his kids trade mine, and then well I wish I had his wife you know, but

then the scary thing might be the guy might say you can have her, and you say well wait a minute, she's beautiful, and then he may turn back and say yes she is, but if you are going to keep her you're going to need his looks, his hair, his house, his car, his job his retirement, and his wallet, because she's very expensive to maintain, but you can easily look around and covet, you can very easily look around in this world and I wish I had this, I wish I had that, and it's something, it's a plague, I think, in our society in our culture, and here the writer of Hebrews tells us there that what covetousness really does, he says let your conduct be without covetousness, he says here, be content with the things that you have I think one of the greatest things that could ever happen in our life

where we could almost take and have a real application of this verse within us, if something could happen within the average Christian where we could, Lord I want this covetous heart, covetous heart to be dealt with, and teach me love, teach me genuine contentment with what it is that I have, and I think that's so difficult because one of the amazing things is I believe right now I'm probably speaking to some of the wealthiest people in the world and yes I'm talking about you, not somebody ahead of you or behind you, to me if you got up this morning and you had a roof overhead, whether you owned it or rented it it's immaterial, if you had a heater that went on, if you had electricity in your house, you reached over and there was an alarm clock there that went off, there was a light that

you turned and went on for you, there was a refrigerator and an oven and a stove, there was cabinets with food in it you had dishes for different occasions within the cabinets that you could look at and decide which ones you wanted to use, you ended up, you walked out you closed the door and locked it behind you, you had a key that went into a car, you got in that car and you drove here you have a wallet, you have a credit card within it and you are among the wealthiest people on the planet but the tragic thing is few of the wealthiest people on the planet enjoy their wealth because we all know somebody that has two cars or three cars or somebody else that has yes I maybe have two, three, four, five sets of shoes but Imelda has three thousand or whatever else it is, there is somebody that

has, yes maybe I have I go to the closet and I just say oh what will I wear and the problem is half the stuff we don't even know it's even in there anymore because it's been crowded over into stuff or we moved it into boxes or it's in other places maybe but we've got clothes for many seasons, many occasions many outfits, you go to a lot of the other places in the world you go to China, you go to India, you go to Pakistan, you've got a couple of things you wear, you've got most of the world they're still on dirt floors there's no electricity for much of it nothing of the things of which we have, they look at us and here we are this phenomenal sense of wealth that we have and yet tragically covetousness has spoiled it for us rather than looking there and being content with what we have

because somebody else has more we lose the attraction and the enjoyment and the blessing for what it is that we do I mean we've got a car that actually has tires on it they go around and we can get in it and it gets us some place but it has a scratch on it or it's five years old, ten years old and there's all these new cars that go flying around us and all of a sudden we can't enjoy our car anymore and we can't enjoy this or we can't enjoy that instead of just looking and realizing how wonderful this is that has happened to me and to me when somebody can learn the blessedness of true contentment when they can honestly look at that which they have it is one of the greatest treasures there is I suppose in all the world, I think sometimes we enviously almost look maybe when we watch our

children or our grandchildren on their birthday or Christmas when you give them something and they're so simple, they're so naive and they just get this little thing and it's for them and they light up and then we've got this expensive thing in there, they don't know what you're supposed to covet for yet, they just enjoy the little box and they play with it and we say no, no kid, that's not valuable, this is learn to covet child, you know or something on how so often though but yet we have to look at them and envy that simple little heart that is so easily entertained, that is so easily happy at peace and one of the great things that we have forfeited that we have lost so often in our world is just the blessedness of pure contentment of just looking at what it is that we have and honestly

being able to rejoice in it to enjoy it, that's one of the great things is when we get here towards the end now of the book of Hebrews as he's giving us these verses, they are just kind of a bunch of little add-on afterthoughts after you know he has been giving us the book of Hebrews that he just kind of oh yeah I want to tell him this, I want to tell him oh that came into my mind too as these verses can almost just seem to be an afterthought, they aren't they're almost the conclusion, the first eleven chapters if you were with us I mentioned this last Sunday, the first eleven chapters of Hebrews are doctrinal and they want to tell us all that Christ has done for us, he's better than Moses, better than Aaron the high priest, better than the law, better than any sacrifice he takes us into

a better land a better place than the promised land, than Canaan, he takes us into high and heavenly places he forgives us of our sins, he trades place with us he has died for us, risen for us, ever lives to make intercession for us and he lays all of these things out for us over and over and over again, wonderfully argued and explained in the first eleven chapters of Hebrews are all doctrine, chapter 12 is one now that takes it on a step from there, after it says that you have Christ this is who he is, this is what he's done for you he is alive, he is risen, he is real, your sins are forgiven he is the great high priest who has passed into the heavens he is the one who ever lives to make intercession for you and then he goes on in chapter 12 he says therefore, since we are surrounded by

so great a cloud of witness, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, and consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself, lest we become weary and discouraged in our souls, but here the writer of Hebrews, he says, now if we understand this is who he is, this is what he has done, he is so real he is so alive, he is so powerful, he is so magnificent he has forgiven us, he has taken over our lives he does come in and indwell us, he wants to reign as king and present us to God, have us dwell

there and seated in heavenly places with him, he says, seeing then that we have this, how that we now the great occupation of the Christian ought to be looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of my faith

that I have somebody there that in wanting him so bad I'm willing to lay aside the sin and the weight that so easily besets me, anything that could take my eyes off of the great goal of knowing him, of living with him, of sharing his life, that here the writer of Hebrews in chapter 12, he tells us, he says press on, seek after him, lay aside anything that would distract you from him and his work and his power and his life within you, and here now is the whole objective of chapter 12 is now enter into him, let him take over your life and now in chapter 13 he talks about if I have

done that he says then you'll see his heart in you, the great evidence of the exchange life, the Christian life, the mature godly life is the fact that Christ is now reigning, that people will now look at the Christians and say I see the love of God in you I see the passion of Christ in you, I see the heart of God, the nature of God, the desires of God, the behavior of God, the thoughts of God they're on your heart, they're on your lips, they're in your mind they're what makes you tick, and here is these things are there he then goes on now in chapter 13 when he says just let brotherly love continue, let God's love flow through you don't forget to entertain strangers care for others around you, visit those that are in prison those that have been mistreated and do these things, but you see

now the great issue is that if I have done this, one of the greatest evidence of it is that I will no longer be living in the flesh these first 12 chapters now going into 13, 13 is kind of a test, am I learning to live in the spirit, am I really becoming a spiritual human being to where you can see is it my flesh or my nature or God's nature or the spirit, Galatians 5 19 tells us, let me just read this to you, I'm sure you've heard it and know it but again, now the works of the flesh are evident which are, and here he just said there we all of us we were all born with this nature, nobody had to learn it go to school for it, be trained in it every human being when all of us were born and came on this planet, we were born with what the Bible calls the nature of the flesh, the I, the ego the

pride, the self-life essentially, and it's a fallen nature, but he says the nature of it the works are evident which are adultery fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries and the like of which I tell you beforehand and I told you in times past that those that practice such things do not inherit the kingdom of God he says this is just the carnal man, we all have it selfish all the way, everything is I, me, my, myself, I want, I'll have and then when you don't give it to me, I'm mad, or I'm jealous, or I'm angry or I'm something, and it's the human nature there and that we all have it, every one of us is human beings, we're born with it, we came

packaged in it, nobody should have a difficult time understanding that, the issue in the Christian life is how do I deal with that, and then Paul tells us well the answer for that is in the next verse in Galatians 5, 22 he says but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, against that there is no law, and those who are Christ have crucified the flesh with his passions and his desires here he said that the great desire of the Christian who has given himself to Christ as he recognizes yes, this is me, adultery, fornication uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, yes, yes, yes, I know it don't have to go into it, I understand, the envy, the strife the jealousies, the pettiness, it's all in all of us but how do I get rid

of it, as Paul says, and he says well those who are Christ they've crucified this, they've put to death this with the desire that the spirit of God would rule, well the first 11 chapters of Hebrews are just telling us here's how you can have a life in the spirit, here's who Christ is, here's what he's done for you, he's alive, he's risen, he can take over your heart, he can take over your life, he can give himself to you and if

somebody wants to do that, you know, you now have a way out of the flesh if you're sick and tired of this old nature there's a wonderful answer, you simply come and the issue is am I sick and tired of it enough that I'm willing to come to say Jesus will you crucify it, will I do I want you more than I want it that's one of the great battles of life isn't it,

they're both in front of every one of us each day, I can either have my nature, I can have my flesh or I can have the life and the spirit, they're both available to us every day, right now, all of us we sit there, it's almost God says what do you want, you want my spirit, you want your flesh if you don't, well I hate the flesh okay well then do you want my spirit more, well I don't know let me go talk to the flesh and see if we can work this thing out you know but we're constantly kind of going back, now will you behave nicer because I want you to know if you're not going to get any nicer and do a little bit better and be a little bit more controlling, I'm going to crucify you with Christ no, no, no, no, okay, well then let's work this out that's what most people seem to do, that's what

we so easily do rather than really coming and saying no no, I've had a whole history years and years and years of negotiations with the flesh, years of discussions, years of it's promises years of it's give me another try, and I've let it try again and again, the only escape is Christ and letting him rule, and letting him reign, letting him take over and here it is something there because one of the things the flesh generally simply is is that it's very selfish, it's I me, my, myself, I want, I'll have, the flesh by nature, the whole world is our servant the whole world exists to take care of us that's what the flesh essentially is, and when the flesh and when the world isn't taking care of me, when it isn't coddling me and cuddling me, and entertaining me, and making me happy I'm mad at

it, or I'm envious, or I'm a murderer drunk, or reverie, or whatever else it may be that I'm so upset by the whole thing, but if Christ is reigning then the evidence of it is there will be somebody there that they find themselves, brotherly love will begin to continue there will be the evidence of the transformed life, of the mature life, of the crucified life, call it what you want, but the life in Christ will be love, will begin, brotherly love will be there, there will be a concern for strangers though I don't know them yet, I will someday, here or in heaven that there's people, prisoners that are bound, they're chained, they need somebody to help them and to care for them, there's those that are mistreated, and here this morning now we look at where he tells us, there in verse four he

says, marriage is honorable among all, in the bed undefiled, but fornicators and adulterers God will judge, now he looks here and he tells us, the writer of Hebrews now wants to talk about one of the great, you know, evidences of the love of Christ, it starts there with learning a brotherly love learning to just be nice and gracious to a stranger learning to care for people that are imprisoned and in bondage in one way or another, learning to look at people that are mistreated perhaps though one of the greatest though tests and evidences of a real love, is there is somebody there it's married love, one of the greatest places of it all, here he says marriage is honorable among all, in the bed undefiled, he looks there and he says now one of the great evidences of if the love is really

there is that you'll see there that somebody looks at their marriage and their marriage has an honor to it they have an absolute tremendous honor about their marriage and they're determined that the marriage bed we'll look at this in a moment, will be undefiled and one of the things about the carnal man, the carnal nature, the carnal being so covetous the heart there, a natural heart there is something that easily defiles the marriage bed, easily because the flesh just, I want, I'll have it, gratifies itself in many ways, but one of the things that protects and strengthens a married love, is that when somebody looks there and they have

literally shut off all other loves within their life all other forms of other loves, there is something there that they want, that their relationship with

their marriage is so pure, and here as he tells us there he lets your marriage be honorable among all the bed undefiled, fornicators and adulterers God will judge, there is something there that God looks at marriage, it is so high, it is so precious, it is so wonderful but God, he looks there and he says a fornicator or an adulterer now if you don't know the difference, essentially adultery is just sexual relationships that have happened between when one of the people is married fornication is sexual relations that happen when they're, you're not married and here the Bible simply tells us, you know there he says that there is somebody there, God wants us to look at our body whether we're married or unmarried there is something that whether I have met the one that my life is to be given to

or I have met them, that either way that my heart and my life and my affections are given to them and them alone and only in marriage that simple that simple I remember I, one of these guys, I didn't come to Christ until I was a junior in college and then after, you know, one of the things I had already known, you know, was the fact that it was that sex outside of marriage, somehow I knew that was wrong and back when I was a kid, society knew that doesn't seem to know it anymore and even as a non-Christian I'm unbelievably grateful that the only woman I've ever known is my wife and but the thing is, and not till after we're married as well, but it's something that I remember now coming to Christ there and realizing there that the that you're not to have any relations till you're married

and there is a Christian, I can just remember being so bummed by that, for some reason I didn't understand God, what are you doing?

I don't understand this almost having a debate within my mind with God over this whole thing now God, you created the man, you created the woman and here you go, you create this young man, you create this young woman you let them meet each other, you let them develop this attraction you let them there go spend time with one another as they find out, I think I care, and then the care turns into desire a desire turns to an attraction and they begin to love one another they've obviously, obviously, hopefully seen, wow, they're the opposite sex that's good these days, but it is something that but here as they've noticed that, this is a woman this is a man, there, and then they spend time walking together, talking together, sharing their innermost desires knowing they want to fall in love, I

want to get married we want to have some children, we want to have the rest of our lives together you let them fall in love, head over heels with one another and then, here you let them be together and they've got all of this going on within their body and their desires, and I love you and then he says, now don't touch her I mean God, that is cruel I mean God, to me, I was just wondering how in the world could you possibly do that I mean here God, particularly when you're the one that created every desire every nerve, every muscle, every organ, every part of these two systems and you put them together, you let them have this attraction, this love and desire, and say, oh this is wonderful, and then you let them get together and say, oh no, no, no, stop you know, that's it, and you look at

this, and to me God, that's cruel, that is terribly cruel that God would do that, why, I mean that's right up there I remember, you know, with pulling wings off flies in school you know, or something, when you entertain yourself I mean, this is, God, that is a terrible thing to do to a person, that you would do this and God, why don't you just make them let it all happen and then when they say, I do, just let it happen woo, you know, or something, hey, let's get out of here you know, when it's right, why do you let this battle rage

and go on within life why not just give them the impulse and the desire at the wedding or something but you see, the thing that is so critical about it all, is it's not just, it's part of an issue of the marriage bed essentially being undefiled here is one of

the greatest tests, I suppose, that there is in all of life because you see, a selfish love lives for itself, a selfish immature, carnal love, I want, I'll have give me, it can't wait, it must have and there it is something that seeks it's own comfort, it's own pleasure, it's own satisfaction, it doesn't care about the other person, and one of the things that has to happen for a marriage to ever work, is that a person has learned that they do what is right for the other person, not what is comfortable for themselves, they look there and what is right before God, by his designs, by his plan, and one of the great tests, I think that there is, that when somebody looks there and says, I don't do in my marriage, what is comfortable, what is fun what is easy, what is selfish, I do what is

right, and one of the greatest tests of it all is right there in the whole process as the relationship is being formed, where God allows this unbelievable desire and pressure, and yet he says, don't answer the door don't go down that road, do it right one of the things I noticed in marriage counseling through the years, is I'd have gals come to me and sit down and say, I want out of the marriage, you do why?

I can't take it anymore, why? I'm just used up, he just uses me uses me, uses me, that's all it's all about, you know, I'm just there for him, whatever he wants, whenever he wants, however he wants he uses me in the morning, from the moment he gets up to the loft, he goes to the office, and before he gets home, and he calls, I want this, and uses, uses, uses, I'm just used up and I can't take it, I remember one time asking somebody well when did you ever tell him it was okay to use you and she looked at me, never, I would never tell him it's okay to use me, well you must have somewhere, he got the idea somewhere it's okay to use you, when did it happen?

I don't know and then I, did you, were you having sex together before you got married, well what does that have to do with it, we've been married 15 years, do you yes or no, well yes, but we got married well wait a minute, that's when you told him there's a verse, the bible says you don't do that, did you know you don't do that, well yes, but it was fun and we were in love, oh it was fun and you were in love therefore now you have the authorization to do what the bible says not to do, and do what gratifies yourself, and now you started using each other, and so often in many marriages their relationship has been so defiled because they use and use and use, there's a couple users I get from them what they want, they get back and forth, and they're both using and the debate is only if the

use is imbalanced then we get mad hey wait a minute, I don't mind being used as long as I get to use you more than you use me, and I don't think it's been fair lately I don't like you anymore, you know and so often that's what it is, and until people look there and said no, I don't do what is right what I want to do, I do what is right and there's a lot of men when it comes to it, they can't football games on and they can't get up and carry in a bag of groceries, they can't put away a dish, they can't do something, they can't clean up, they can't help, now remember I'm just, I'm preaching what the bible says ought to be here, I think it's very right to have a woman feel that she's needed in the home I just want to move through this how did I get into this jam here, but anyway how easily

we can use, I just lost the sermon right there, didn't I but how easily we can use but there is no verse in the bible that says hey you can clean up a mess, hey you can vacuum a carpet hey you can help, you can do your part there's no verse in the bible that says that, and let me tell you though, but if a guy can have this

great desire and something that says I want, I need, I care and he can be with that girl and he can long for her and desire and yet he says no, it isn't right that person that can shut down all of those drives within himself, let me tell you he can get up even during a USC football game and carry in the groceries he can get there and no impulse is going to be as strong so often as that one when somebody says I don't, I'm not alive to satisfy myself and if I do I'll

defile the relationship I do what is right and the people that have learned, sometimes you may be here today you may have been married for many years and yet you use each other and to in marriage we're there to be used by each other make no mistake about it, but there's a difference there of us being offering, giving our lives to be used and there's another one of somebody just using and we all know the difference I believe but when there's something there that we look and we realize I'm used and used and used but the wonderful thing is we can come to Christ and say Lord I want to crucify the old nature I want this covetous, idolatrous you know adulterous, you know fornication nature, I satisfy me that that human being is there to take care of me I think many people we just go and say

will you forgive me sometimes we think that we got a marriage license and that stopped the problem all it usually does is give license for more using each other instead of there where we look there and say no, I have used you I'm sorry, will you forgive me I don't want to go on using you, how many marriages that we're tired and we can so easily get used up and it's because so often we use each other for our own gratification rather than no, I'm here, to esteem another is more important than myself, to lay down my life for another and the wonderful thing that can happen though is that when we look there and we realize here and maybe some have never looked there and it says marriage is honorable among all he says, it's as if all of the relationships of life you want to look at something

there, your brotherly love, you want to look at the strangers, you want to look at the prisoners you want to look at these things and say those are great loves and he says yes, but among all of the loves the most honorable of them is marriage and here he looks at this and the word honorable means valuable and costly do we look at our marriages as something that is absolutely valuable and it is costly and where we are willing to pay any price for it that we would look there and say to have a wonderful marriage I don't care what it costs, it is so valuable I want it to be the highest thing I ever paid for in my life I want to be able to look at a human being and say I paid more for that than anything else it cost me more to have that than it did to have that job, that house, that car that

this, that that, that they can look the greatest and most valuable and costly asset is their marriage that's what it means, and that I paid the price and the price is the same for all of us it's the crucify, the old life it's the price of looking there and saying I cannot go on and have a happy marriage and live in my own flesh, that's the price I'm going to have to pay if I want a good marriage, if I want a marriage that's undefiled that I want to have something that the only one that I know is that whatever other attractions or desires, I shut them off there are many entertaining things out there, isn't there? in the world for us, there are other things to flirt with and people to flirt with and there are all sorts of TV and video and DVDs and things there to where you can vicariously

have all these affairs that can go on in the life but when somebody looks there and says no, my marriage, there is only one person that will ever be in the marriage bed my mate, ever be in my heart my mate, and the thing is the flesh has no power to do that the flesh can say wow, that's impressive that's a wonderful thing, I can't do it and I have no intention of doing it, I don't want to do it I want anybody, I want everybody, I want every woman out there, I want every man out there, I don't want to just have one in my heart, but

the spirit of God says well then, you can have them all and you'll have none at the same time but when something happens where we look there and say I want it and I'll pay the price, I will pay the cost for it, and then lastly he tells us now, he says let your

conversation in verse 5, or your conduct, pardon me, be without covetousness, be content with such as you have, look there now at just all of the world not just simply my husband, my wife and say this is mine this is the person, and no other and I'm gonna be content, I'm not gonna measure him up, her up with anybody else ever again, it's him and him alone, it's her and her alone, I'm going to be content with them or any and every other thing that is within my life as it is, but then he looks there and he says and then one other thing though, he looks at us and he says I will never leave you, or forsake you that there there is a love, all of the other loves, as wonderful as they are they're ones that are finite as wonderful as a married love is as profound as a family love is, as a

brotherly love is, as all of these other loves are they are all loves, that there's only one source of love for them the love of Christ, and here Jesus says if you want to succeed in all of those other loves you've got to have the love of God that will never leave you or forsake you a love there where you find yourself looking and saying Jesus I don't have this brotherly love, I don't have this love for strangers I don't have this love for people in bondage and in prison, and these ill-treated ones who cares?

I don't have much of a married love either but then he looks and he says well I'll never leave you or forsake you and I love them all as much as I love you, I can give you that love, in any and every relationship, I can give you that heart whether you have it naturally or not, which we do not that isn't the issue, the issue today we may look and say but God I don't have this love for my wife I don't have this love for people, I don't have this love and the Lord smiles and says hello of course you don't because you don't value my love yet much either but when you value that I will never leave you or forsake you more than anything else in the world, I will overtake and fill and empower all of the other loves, all of them the issue isn't to me how much you love your wife or your husband, the

issue is how much Jesus Christ loves them, and if you're filled with him the issue isn't how much does he love the stranger, or you love the stranger or somebody else, the issue is how much does he and when I look there and realize the whole of the Bible, the whole of the book of Hebrews has been the exchange of my life for his and do I long for the evidences of that exchange life to say Lord I don't care but you do, let me close just with reading, actually this is from Charles Spurgeon it's this morning's reading, I got up and I thought man I wish I read this yesterday but it was today Song of Solomon 1 7 it says thou whom my soul loveth is the verse that his little devotional is on this morning he said it is well to be able without any if or but to say of the Lord Jesus thou whom my

soul loveth many can only say of Jesus that they hope they love him or they trust they love him, but only a poor and shallow experience will be content to stay here one ought to give any rest pardon me, no one ought to give any rest to his spirit until he feels quite sure about the matter of such vital importance, we ought not to be satisfied with the superficial hope that Jesus loves us and with the bare trust that we love him, the saints of old did not generally speak with buts and ifs and hopes and trusts they spoke positively and plainly I know whom I believe in said Paul, I know that my redeemer liveth said Job, get positive knowledge of your love for Jesus and be not satisfied till you can speak of your interest in him as a reality with which you have made sure of having received

the witness of the Holy Spirit and his seal is upon your soul by faith, true love to Christ is in every case the Holy Spirit's work and it must be wrought in the heart by him, he is the efficient cause of it, but the logical reason why we love Jesus lies in himself, why do we love Jesus? because he first loved us, why do we love Jesus? because he gave himself for us, we have his, we have his life through his death, we have peace through his blood though he was rich he became poor for our sake why do we love Jesus? because of the excellency of his person, we are filled with a sense of his beauty, an admiration of his charms, a consciousness of his infinite perfection his greatness, his goodness, his loveliness in one day, in one replacent ray combined to enchant the soul until it is so

ravished that it exclaims, yea he is altogether lovely, blessed love this, a love which binds the heart with chains more soft than silk and yet more firm than adamant, and when we look there and we realize God I need your love, how much I love anybody else to me just ought to be something that if it's do we have a selfish love and if we look in there and realize yes that's my love, there's an answer for it, it's the crucified life, it's saying Jesus come I'm tired of me, my, myself, I I want, I'll have, I want you to reign fill me with your love if we're looking there and struggling in our relationships with each other God's designed life to me in such a way as we'll never go deeper with a human being than we will with God we'll never know a greater, deeper relationship but out of the

depths of his love, the depths of all other loves come, out of the purity of our love for him, the purity of our love for each other is refined and when I look there and say Lord you're my only Lord then I also find it easy to find a greater love in him and when I look at my mate and say you're my only love also it's refined and becomes all the deeper and richer than all, and when we just say Lord give me this love, the issue isn't today are we humans and carnally, yes we are the issue today is do I want an exchange that's the Christian life, hopefully we're here today to say Lord give me more of this love, amen

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