

1 John 3:17

by John Gill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of compassion and generosity towards those in need as a reflection of God's love in our lives.

Scripture: James 2:15, 1 John 3:17

Topics: "Compassion", "Love for Neighbors"

Description

John Gill emphasizes the moral responsibility of those who possess worldly goods to show compassion towards those in need. He explains that true love for God is demonstrated through our actions towards our neighbors, particularly those who are less fortunate. Gill highlights that having the means to help others obligates one to act with kindness and generosity, as withholding assistance reflects a lack of God's love within. He stresses that love should be accompanied by genuine compassion and not given begrudgingly. Ultimately, the sermon calls believers to reflect on their hearts and actions in relation to their brothers and sisters in need.

Transcript

Ver. 17. But whoso hath this world's good,... The possessions of this world, worldly substance, the temporal good things of it; for there are some things in it, which are honestly, pleasantly, and profitably good, when used lawfully, and not abused, otherwise they are to the owner's hurt: or "the living of this world"; that which the men of the world give up themselves to, are bent upon, and pursue after; or on which men live, and by which life is maintained, and preserved, and made comfortable in the present state of things; such as meat, drink, apparel, money, houses, lands, &c. The Ethiopic version renders it, "he that hath the government of this world"; as if it pointed at a person that is in some high office of worldly honour and profit, and is both great and rich; but the words are not to be restrained to such an one only, but refer to any man that has any share of the outward enjoyments of life; that has not only a competency for himself and family, but something to spare, and especially that has an affluence of worldly substance; but of him that has not, it is not required; for what a man distributes ought to be his own, and not another's, and in proportion to what he has, or according to his ability:

and seeth his brother have need; meaning, not merely a brother in that strict and natural relation, or bond of consanguinity; though such an one in distress ought to be, in the first place, regarded, for no man should hide himself from, overlook and neglect his own flesh and blood; but any, and every man, "his neighbour", as the Ethiopic version reads, whom he ought to love as himself; and especially a brother in a

spiritual relation, or one that is of the household of faith: if he has need; that is, is naked and destitute of daily food, has not the common supplies of life, and what nature requires; and also, whose circumstances are low and mean, though not reduced to the utmost extremity; and if he sees him in this distress with his own eyes, or if he knows it, hears of it, and is made acquainted with it, otherwise he cannot be blameworthy for not relieving him.

And shutteth up his bowels [of compassion] from him; hardens his heart, turns away his eyes, and shuts his hand; has no tenderness in him for, nor sympathy with his distressed brother, nor gives him any succour: and this shows, that when relief is given, it should be not in a morose and churlish manner, with reflection and reproach, but with affection and pity; and where there is neither one nor the other,

how dwelleth the love of God in him? neither the love with which God loves men; for if this was shed abroad in him, and had a place, and dwelt in him, and he was properly affected with it, it would warm his heart, and loosen his affections, and cause his bowels to move to his poor brother: nor the love with which God is loved; for if he does not love his brother whom he sees in distress, how should he love the invisible God? 1Jo 4:20; nor that love which God requires of him, which is to love his neighbour as himself.

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