

The Wicked Way of Worldliness

by Richard Siple

The sermon calls Christians to reject worldliness and prioritize their relationship with God to facilitate revival in their lives and communities.

Duration: 48:03

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 6:33, John 16:33, 1 John 2:15-17, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "Worldliness", "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of the world as mentioned in the Bible. He emphasizes that the world refers to the present form of this world with all that is in it, and it includes the principles and systems that govern society. The preacher highlights the importance of not loving the world and instead focusing on following Jesus and denying oneself. He also mentions the need for revival in the church and the importance of experiencing a spiritual awakening in order to continue the missionary work around the world. The sermon is based on Matthew 16:24-27 and 1 John 2:15-17.

Transcript

I have really a major text this morning, but I have also an introductory text, so it's a little different. One is in the Old Testament. If you'll open your Bibles to 2 Chronicles 7.14, 2 Chronicles 7.14, I'm going to read that, and that's going to be an introduction, and then I'll come to the real text, okay? And the real text for the message is 1 John, that's the epistle of John, not the gospel, but 1 John in the back of your Bible, chapter 2, and verses 15 to 17.

First John 2, verses 15 to 17. Those will be the major texts. The first one's really just an introductory text, but the second one is the major text for the message.

Now, our friends that are here from the Netherlands, some of them aren't as familiar with our language, so one of the gentlemen's going to come and read these two scripture texts from the Dutch Bible. Where are you? There you are. Yes.

Wait, wait, maybe this is not. Ooh. All right, now I'll start again.

We're going to read from 2 Chronicles, chapter 7, verse 14. That's what the sermon is about this morning, so this is the introductory verse that the gentleman is going to use, and I think that the main sermon is going to be about the second letter from John. So we're going to read first 2 Chronicles 7, verse 14, and

my people, about whom my name is called, are discouraged, and they pray, and seek my face, and turn away from their evil ways.

Then I will hear from heaven, and forgive their sin, and restore their land. Well, it's a lot longer than my English translation. All right, first John, chapter 2, verses 15 through 17.

Chapter 2, 15 through 17. The second part is from the New Testament, in John 2, the letter from John, chapter 2, verses 15 through 17. And on top of that is this pericope, the worldliness.

Do not love the world, and that which is in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the fathers is not in him, for all that is in the world, the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and a noble life, is not from the father, but from the world. And the world goes by, and its desires, but whoever does the will of God, remains forever.

Thank you very much. Let's bow for a word of prayer. Father, we are so aware this morning that this particular subject is the kind of subject that, in a special way, only your Holy Spirit can make clear to our hearts.

You know that I'm gonna do my best to do that, but I pray that your Holy Spirit will do what I cannot do, and that you will reveal the truth to us, and reveal to the hearts of your people what it is you want to say to them this morning, from this word. We pray in Jesus' name, amen. 2 Chronicles 7, 14.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now, our land, the land of Canada, desperately needs the healing touch of God, amen? Both Canada and the United States, all of North America, desperately need a great revival. They desperately need to have the Spirit of God poured out in such power that there will bring healing to our land, because culturally, socially, and in almost every way, politically, business-wise, almost any direction you wish to look, our countries are becoming more and more corrupt, and farther and farther from God, and more and more spiritually sick.

And desperately need healing. And God has promised in this passage to heal the land. Now, I'm fully aware of this passage and its setting.

I know it was a promise made to Israel in a certain situation, I understand that. But what it does present, regardless of its setting, and for whom it was intended, it does present something about God and His people and the land in which they live. And those are principles that do not change, regardless of the setting.

So what we see here about God, and what we see here about God's people, and what we see here about His power to heal a land, that remains, those principles remain true, regardless of the situation. So they are true for our beloved country of Canada, and our hearts yearn to see God, in His great love and tenderness, pour out His spirit upon us, and bring healing to the United States and Canada. A great revival like none of us have ever experienced in our lifetime.

If we are to carry on the missionary work around the world, that is the burden of the church, there must be revival in the home church. Because eventually the home church will run out of steam, it will run out of people, it will run out of money, it will be unable to go and do what God has told to do. Amen? And so you can only have it get so big at the top, and remain small at the bottom.

And so God needs to work in great power. Now in this scripture, it says, it's talking about my people, God is talking about His people, if my people, so they're God's people that He's talking about, which are called, He says, by my name. So they're the people of God called by the name of God, and that certainly pictures us, doesn't it? We are the people of God, Christians, Christ ones, we're called by His name, right? Christ ones, Christians, that's what we're called.

And so we're the people of God, we're called by His name, and we are the people that God is speaking to. And He is not speaking to the world. He is not speaking to unbelievers, He is not speaking to the lost, He is not speaking to our national leaders, He is not speaking to any of the people away from God, all around us.

He's not speaking at the moment in this scripture to the 322,000 people in Victoria on their way to hell, who do not know God. He is not, He is speaking to me, and He's speaking to you as one of His children, as one called by His name as a Christian. Now there's some things there He says that are necessary to humble ourselves, to pray, to seek His face.

I've done quite a bit of preaching on that since I've been here. And then He says to turn from their wicked ways. And then He says, I will forgive their sin, that is the sins of God's people, not the sins of the world.

He will forgive the sins of the world when they repent, right? But now He's talking about the sins of God's people called by His name, and He's saying, I'll forgive their sins, and I will heal the land in which they live, their land. So this is a very, very important statement from God to us. Now, is it true as some Christians think, and now listen to me carefully, is it true that the atrocious wickedness of unbelievers in our world is what hinders revival? No.

See, what's amazing to me is that most Christians will say immediately, no, that's not it. And of course, especially if we've just read this verse, no, it is not. Our text tells us clearly that it is God's people who have the responsibility.

It's always that way. Like it's not new, this isn't a new message. It's always been true that it's God's people that have the responsibility for what happens.

And we tend to look at all the wickedness around us, say, oh, what can you do with all this wickedness? It has nothing to do with anything. It's us, always. We who are the people of God, we are the ones to which God is speaking.

And so he says, we must turn from our wicked ways if he's to forgive our sin and to heal our land. So I have to ask, do God's people have wicked ways? Well, they must, or God wouldn't tell them to turn from them. God says that his people must turn from their wicked ways.

So I take it for granted, his people must have wicked ways. Agree with me or if not, just say, no, I don't think so. Whatever.

Oh, it's quite clear that what God is saying. So a person then may be truly born of God, saved by God's grace, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and on his way to heaven and still have some wicked ways. Is that possible? I wonder if there's anyone here this morning who would say, thank God, there's not a wicked way in my life.

Be a big question, wouldn't it? So what are the wicked ways in the lives of God's people in our day that are hindering revival? Now I've been a pastor for over 57 years and have been in revival ministries since 1972, though I attempted it many years before that. But since that time, been involved deeply with it. Over those years, I have become familiar with the things that seem to hinder revival.

So I wanna share with you what I consider, this is only what I consider to be the principal wicked way in the lives of God's people today that I believe is hindering revival. Now there are other wicked ways, at least two other major ones, but just the one this morning that I believe to be the principal wicked way in the lives of God's people. It is the wicked way of worldliness.

The wicked way of worldliness. And now I come to my major text for this message in 1 John 2, 15 to 17. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love 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 with all its desires, but he who does the will of God shall abide forever.

Now my subject is four simple words. The beginning of that passage, the command of God, love not the world, love not the world. Now I grew up in a church setting in Western Pennsylvania where we were constantly exhorted not to be worldly.

And I thought I understood what they meant. In that group, those who were considered worldly were those who wore lipstick and possibly earrings. Don't duck.

Some of them attended the theater. Some of them even went to dances, played cards, possibly even smoked, though that would be a stretching it. If anyone drank alcoholic beverages, well, they weren't worldly, they just weren't a Christian.

I refrained from all those things and thought that I was not worldly. Many years later, I discovered that such an artificial list did not really deal with the true problem of worldliness at all. For instance, Jesus said, I came into the world.

Well, he came from another world, didn't he? Right? Surely after all the years of Star Trek, that's not hard to imagine. Jesus came from another world, the heavenly world. He said, I came into the world, this world.

He said, I am going out of the world. He's going to leave. He did leave.

He said, I am not of this world, which he was not. He said, the world hates me. He's talking about the world.

Again, Jesus said in John 15, 18 and 19, if the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belong to the world, it would love you as its own. So take a good thought about that one.

James said, friendship with the world is enmity with God. You adulterers and adulteresses, and he's talking to people who love the world, but who belong to God, he calls it spiritual adultery. He said, as it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.

That is why the world hates you. The call to come to Christ is a call to come out of the world and out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear son, amen. That's what it is.

Then again, in John 17, verses 13 to 18, Jesus said, he's praying now. He says, holy father, I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world. Now, in a minute, I'm gonna ask, what is the world? So think about these scriptures.

He's still here in the world. They're gonna see him go up and disappear into the clouds so that they may have the full assurance measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them for they are not of the world anymore than I am of the world.

Did you know this was in the Bible? My prayer is not that you take them out of the world. He doesn't want us to go away somewhere in a monastery or be a hermit, but that you keep them from the evil in the world. They are not of the world as I am not of it.

Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

And that's just in a few short verses. Look how much Jesus is talking about the world. And he said, I came into the world.

I'm not of the world. I'm from another world. Now these people that I have called, I have called out of the world.

Now they're not of the world. They've been born of a different world, born of God. They're still in the world.

And I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but I want you to keep them from the evil that's in the world, because I want them to stay here in the world. And I wanna send them into this world to do my work and build my kingdom. This scripture and a lot more is so clear on this subject.

And you know what I would like to do for my last message here before I leave for the summer? I'd like to preach you a nice, happy, encouraging, pat on the back, faith building message. And God, you know, I had another one that I was going to preach entitled, how to get through the summer and all that kind of thing. And God said, no, don't preach that.

He wasn't interested in it, so I had to change. So now I wanna ask three questions quickly this morning. First of all, what is the world that Jesus is talking about and that others in scripture are talking about that John is talking about when he says love, not the world? What is he talking about? The world is simply this world with all that is in it.

Somebody says, no, no, he's talking about this world kingdom or this world principle or this world. No, no, no, no. That's not taught in the scriptures anywhere.

All you gotta do is read the statements of Jesus and you see very simply what he's talking about. He is simply talking about this earth, this world and everything that's here. And he's saying, don't love it.

Clear? I tell you, if you wanna argue the question, go back and argue with these scriptures. They are crystal clear. So he's simply talking about this world.

John 17, five, it makes it simple now, not easy, just simple. And now father glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. Saying, I had a place of glory with you before you created the world.

Now coming back, give me back that place that I had with you in the heavenly world before you created this earthly world. See, that's what it is. He's talking about this world.

John one, this is the gospel of John one, verses 10 to 14, he was in the world that is Jesus was in the world. And though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

Yet to all who received him, he gave the right or privilege or authority to be called the sons of God and to them that believe on his name. You see, did you know the Bible said this much about the world? There it is. John 13, one.

Now you're getting down close to the time of his crucifixion. It was just before the Passover feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the father.

Is that clear? That's simple. What is he talking about? He said, he knew it was time. He was gonna be leaving this world and going back to heaven.

So he's talking about this world, this planet, this earth with everything that's on it. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. John 17 is a great high priestly prayer of Jesus praying for his own, for his followers, for Christians, believers, children of God.

It's filled with references to the two worlds. And I'm just going to give the verse and the little phrase out of it. Now, if you've got it open to John 17, you can walk with me or you can just listen, but I'm gonna just run down through it because this is astounding.

Okay, here we go. Five, before the world began. Six, those you gave me out of the world.

Nine, I am not praying for the world. 11, I will remain no longer in the world. 13, while I am still in the world.

14, the world has hated them for they are not of the world any more than I am not of the world. 15, I do not pray for you to take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil. 16, they are not of the world even as I am not of it.

18, as you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 21, so that the world may believe. 23, complete unity to let the world know.

24, you love me before the creation of the world. 25, the world does not know you. And Jesus in his high priestly prayer just had it filled with this subject.

And he's praying for us, praying for me, praying for you. Jesus was a being from another world, absolutely. He had sat in the throne of the glory eternal, the most high God, and created all the worlds of the universe.

And he came down and focused himself in a woman's womb and was born with a human nature and lived here. But then he left here after his death and resurrection and went back to the world from which he came. And eventually he's coming back to get us and take us to be with him.

You're aliens. You've been born from above. Now you were born from beneath, that which is born of the flesh is flesh.

You were born of this world, right? Born in this world, of this world, of the flesh of this world. But the Holy Spirit came to your heart and revealed Jesus to you and your need of a savior. And you've been born again, born from above, born from that other world, born of God.

And now you are a child of God, really an alien in a world where you don't exactly fit. I hope some of you are so comfortable you can hardly imagine what I'm talking about. But this is what the word of God says.

Number two, what is worldliness then? Very simple, it is to give priority to the things and matters of this world rather than the kingdom of God. That's all. I mean, it's not complicated.

You say, give me a list. You know, a list and say, that's worldly and that's worldly. No, no, no, no, no, no.

That's not the point. That misses the point. You could have a list as long as your arm and still be worldly.

To be worldly is to give priority to the things and matters of this world rather than the kingdom of God. Jesus said, but seek first, we sang it this morning, but seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things that you need. He knows, your heavenly father knows you have need of these things will be added unto you.

You can live in this world, but seek the kingdom of God ahead of the things of this world. You say, well, come on preacher, I have to live in this world. I have to make a living in this world.

I have to have a home in this world and clothes and food and all that. Yeah, that's right, sure. Absolutely.

You say, well, isn't that a terrible conflict? Not necessarily. It depends on how you see it and how you look at it. It's a whole matter of direction.

It's a matter of priority. It's a matter of the love of your heart. Love, not the world.

These are the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him. You see, if we, there's only one way to be actually free from it.

And that's to love God more than you love the world. And the love of God can set you free from the love of the world. And nothing else really that can.

The typical Canadian. It's all right, I'll get to the US in a minute. It's worse.

Typical Canadian is someone preoccupied with sports, material things, retirement, and fun. Does that think that's accurate? I think so. United Press Survey.

United Press found that the typical American is a 27-year-old who does not read one book a year. He is materialistic, satisfied with small pleasures, bored with theological disputations. Although he may attend church 27 times a year, he is concerned with neither heaven or hell.

In fact, he has no interest whatever in immortality. His principal interests are football, fishing, and car tinkering. He is completely worldly.

Let's have a test this morning. I hate tests, don't you? It'll be a short one. Just, you can grade yourself.

Which disturbs me most? That'll help you. My neighbor dying without Christ or a scratch on my new car? That'll tell you something. Which disturbs me most? Missing a Sunday church service or my favorite TV

program? Good grief, I won't know whether John married Betty or not.

He's only been married three times. Which disturbs me most? A sermon 10 minutes too long or lunch 30 minutes too late? Which disturbs me most? My church not growing or my garden not growing? Which disturbs me most? My Bible unopened or the newspaper unread? I still can't understand how people read all the way through that great big thing. The average newspaper has a newspaper that has as much printed as a full-size novel.

Which disturbs me most? My tithes decreasing or my income decreasing? Which disturbs me most? My children late for Sunday school or late for public school? And the list could go on and on, couldn't it? Long ago, William Law warned that the world is now a greater enemy to the Christian than it was in apostolic times. It is a greater enemy, he said, because it has greater power over Christians by its favors, riches, honors, rewards, and protection than it had by the fire and fury of its persecutions. Interesting.

It is a more dangerous enemy, he said, by having lost its appearance of enmity. Its outward profession of Christianity makes it no longer considered as an enemy. Therefore, people are easily persuaded to resign themselves up to be governed and directed by it.

And what he's saying is that in apostolic times, the world was not as much of an enemy or danger to Christians because they all knew that it was a danger. It was out to kill them. And now we have, our Christian culture has so influenced the culture in which we live that we can live quite comfortable, protected lives.

And nobody really cares if we're Christian or not. Now that could change. And maybe God will let it change to wake us up.

I don't know. When they were trying to pass a bill here in parliament that you would not be able to counsel people unless you had a certain degrees in psychology and were professionally approved and licensed. I wrote a letter and I suppose others did too.

I wrote a letter to parliament and said, if you pass that law, come and get me because I'll break it the first day. You don't have to wonder who's gonna break it, I'll tell you. So I don't know what all will happen in both of our countries with the things that are being pushed at our seat of government.

But I do know that the average Christian is not concerned about the world. Now, what's the solution? There's only two ways to get from this world to the next one, either by death or translation. Hmm, it's like somebody says, I hate getting old, but I hate worse the only solution for it.

The only solution is the cross of Christ and the Christ of the cross. Paul said in Galatians 6, 14, great verse, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. Did you know that was in the Bible? Galatians 2, 20, he said, I have been crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live yet not I, but Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. So when we come to Jesus and we accept him as our savior and we go down in the waters of baptism, we identify with Christ in his death on the cross, in his burial and in his resurrection. And we say, I am dead to the old life.

I am dead to the old ways. I'm dead to the old past. I am dead to the world and alive unto God.

I'm going to live now my life for God. There it is. I mean, that's what the Bible teaches clearly.

Colossians 3, 1 to 3, if you then have been raised with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ is seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth, for you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. Paul's saying, if you've accepted Jesus as your savior, you've entered into his cross and you have died with him in the mind of God and you've been buried with him and you've risen with him to live a new life entirely to God in his kingdom.

And that's the way God sees it. May God help us to see it the same way. When a man is crucified, he's through with the world, right? When they take him out on the hill and throw him down on that cross and get the nails, he's through with this world.

There's a great passage about this in Hebrews 11. I'm going to read verses 8 to 10 and then 13 to 16. Hebrews 11.

By faith, Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. He left his home, his city, his culture, his family, everything, and he just went, obeying God. By faith, he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country.

Yes, he lived in tents as did Isaac and Jacob who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations whose architect and builder is God. I tell you, once you give your heart to Jesus Christ to receive him as your savior and enter into his kingdom, you're headed for a different place with a different city and a different glory that is eternal.

And God's going to burn this whole business up. Absolutely, he's going to burn it up. That's what he said.

Even the elements will melt with fervent heat. So don't hang on, you get your fingers burned. All these people were still living by faith when they died.

They did not receive the things promised. They only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.

That's the attitude of God's people. Our citizenship is in heaven. So while we're here, we use this world, but we don't abuse it.

We live in it, but we're not of it. We're not taken out of it yet, but we're kept from the evil in it. People who say such things show that they're looking for a country of their own, amen.

If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

I'm headed for the celestial city. I dropped my burdens at the cross, and I'm headed for the celestial city. When I sang in a quartet, we used to sing, this world is not my home, I am just a passin' through.

We sang it better than that. Oh Lord, you know I have no friend like you. Oh my, so where are you headed? John 16, 33, Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, "that in me you may have peace.

"In the world you will have tribulation, "but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." A great evangelist of the past century wrote, I remember one night in Stockton, California. I had preached about the second coming of Jesus. As I was closing in prayer, I was conscious of a woman getting up and going out, for in those days, the skirts would swish whenever a lady walked.

It seemed to me that this lady must have gone out in a hurry. When I finished my prayer and went to greet the friends at the door, I found a woman pacing back and forth in the lobby. The moment I came, she said to me, "How would you dare to pray like that? "Come Lord Jesus, I don't want him to come.

"It would break in on all my plans, how dare you?' I said, my dear young woman, "Jesus is coming whether you want it or not. "Oh, if you know him and love him, "surely your heart says, come Lord Jesus." But the fact is, we might not be as open and honest as she was, but the fact is there may be some listening to me this morning who would say, I hope he doesn't come too soon because I've got lots of plans that I want to carry out and I sure don't want him messing it up. Bud Robinson, love to read his old sermons.

He had a speech impediment. God called him and he went anyway and preached, stuttered. Well-known holiness preacher was taken by friends to New York City and shown around the city.

That night in his prayers, he said, "Lord, I thank you for letting me see "all the sights of New York. "And I thank you most of all "that I didn't see a thing that I wanted." I love it. Could you say that? Oh, I didn't see a thing I wanted.

"All the water in the world, however hard it tried, "could never sink a ship unless it got inside. "All the evil in the world, the wickedness and sin "could never sink the Christian's life "unless it gets within." And my friends were supposed to be in the world, but not of it. And God sends us into it.

First Corinthians 7.31 says, "Those who use the things of this world "as if not engrossed in them." Why? For this world in its present form is passing away. Matthew 16, 24 to 27. Then Jesus said to his disciples, if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

We're all very familiar with that. But the next verses are just as important. For whoever wants to save his life.

Now we're talking about our life that we live in this world. Whoever wants to save that life, wants to hang on to it, wants to live it for himself will lose it. But whoever loses his life for me will find it.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world yet loses not his soul, that's ridiculous, his life. It's the same Greek word exactly. Or what can a man give in exchange for his life? For the son of man is going to come in his father's glory with his angels.

And then he will reward each person according to what he has done. You can be a Christian and born again and saved by God's grace and make it to heaven. But still live your life in this world with your heart fixed on this world and get to heaven having lived your life for this world and having lost the whole thing, not lost your soul, but lost your life.

Or you can throw away your life to God here, give it to him, let him do whatever he wishes with it at any cost. And then when you get there, you've got it all. Your whole life has been saved, it's there to greet you.

One more passage of scripture and I'm going to close. 1 Corinthians 3, 11 to 15, a great passage. For no man can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

He's talking about the church. And Jesus is the foundation, of course. And we're built upon that foundation in the church.

If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, or wood, hay, or straw, his work will be shown for what it is because the day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.

If it is burned up, he will suffer loss. He himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. You say, well, listen, when I go to heaven, everything will be joy.

Don't you believe it? It's not what the Bible teaches. Do you know that the Bible doesn't say that God wipes away all tears from our eyes till we get right now to the very end of the book of Revelation and everything is about completed and finished. And I tell you what, I believe there are going to be many Christians who are going to arrive in heaven, saved by God's grace, and all their works of a lifetime are going to be burned up and they're going to get there just barely through God's grace.

And they're going to shed bitter tears when they look back and see how they could have lived for Jesus Christ and his kingdom, but they have lived for this world. It's interesting. I talk to so many Christians, know so many Christians.

It's interesting to see what they're excited about. Love, not the world. There are lots of God's people who are so involved in this world, so deeply involved in it, so totally involved in it.

All their hours and time and efforts and energy and strength, they're taking up with this world. And they have to say, if I asked them, I have never in my entire life led anybody to Christ. And I've been a Christian 30 years, 40 years, 50 years, and I've never led a soul to Jesus Christ.

That is awful. One of the things that Paul looked forward to was getting to heaven and meeting the people that he had led to Christ. He said, what is my joy or crown of rejoicing in his presence? Are not you, you Thessalonians that I led to the Lord, aren't you my joy? And my crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I tell you, I want to have people come up to me in heaven and say, thank God for you. Love, not the world. That's God's challenge to us this morning.

And I pray, as you look even at the summer, I pray, you know, people just do things they don't ask God whether they should do it. They don't ask God whether it's what he wants in their life. They decide where they want to go, what they want to do.

Everything, they make all their own decisions strictly on the basis of what they want. They don't think of God as having anything to do with the normal things of life. Sure, God doesn't care whether you wear a red tie or a blue one.

I'm not talking about foolish stuff like that. I'm just talking about our life. And he says, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man loves the world, the love of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and 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 with all of its passions and desires.

But he who does the will of God will abide forever. Amen. Let's bow in prayer.

Again, Father, I pray that you will seal this word because you love your people so much that you will seal this word in the hearts of your people that it may bring forth fruit to your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

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