



Love Not the World

- ❖ Do not love the world nor the things in the world, if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him. (1 John 2:15)
- ❖ The daughters of Zion an illustration of this
 - but it didn't start with them
 - however, they loved the world



Love Not the World

- ❖ Some reasons for this that we see in their lives
 - it is a misplaced affection
 - it is an insult to God
 - it is a dead end – it passes away
- ❖ Application – this applies to us, too!

A. Introduction

1. our message this morning
 - a. is from the last verses of that chapter we read from Isaiah
 - b. describing the daughters of Zion strutting about Jerusalem
 - c. verses foretelling what lay in store for these proud beauties
 - d. now, a number of themes could come out of this passage

2. E.g., How should women dress in church?
 - a. I am sure that with a little work
 - b. I could lay down all sorts of rules on this subject
 - c. and even find Bible verses to back them up as to what is and what is not permissible clothing – ignoring the fact that western dress is entirely different from that of the east
 - d. but if I were not careful, I could leave here this morning with my neck in a sling!

3. Or, Should Christians wear jewellery?
 - a. John Wesley, founder of Methodism, on one occasion was invited for dinner, along with a fellow preacher, to the house of a rich man whose beautiful daughter had been impressed by his message.
 - b. His fellow preacher was a man of plain manners, and not given to polite restraint, so when he noticed that the young lady wore a number of rings, he had to call attention to it. During a pause in the meal, he took hold of the young lady's hand, and, raising it in the air showing the sparkling jewels, asked Wesley, "What do you think of this, sir, for a Methodist hand?" The girl turned crimson.
 - c. For Wesley, with his known and expressed aversion to finery, the question was a peculiarly awkward one. But the aged evangelist showed great tact, looked up with a quiet, benevolent smile, and simply said, "The hand is very beautiful."
 - d. The young lady had the good sense to say nothing; but when, a few hours later, she again appeared in Wesley's presence the beautiful hand was stripped of every ornament except those which nature had given.—{2}.

- e. so the daughters of Zion and their behaviour could lead us to the theme of Peter's words to wives: 'Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewellery, or putting on dresses; but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.' (1 Peter 3:3-4) – which is a very worthwhile lesson
 - f. but, to preach this would be a little unfair to the ladies – and it isn't even Mother's Day!
4. Or, we could look at this passage as a satire
- a. a satire on the fashions of Isaiah's day
 - b. and apply that as a satire on today's fashions
 - c. because, in these verses, by the very way that the list is constructed, Isaiah draws out how useless, ridiculous, and inappropriate such fashions and behaviours are
 - d. in the Hebrew, the sound of the words enforces the word picture that is presented, so that you can almost hear the footsteps of these daughters of Zion, the tinkling and clinking of their chains, and the rustle of their robes
 - e. just one example, in the word for tripping or mincing, we hear the clack of their sandals on the hard pavement – taph-oph, taph-oph, taph-oph – as they went along
 - f. so we could use this as God's denunciation of fashion
5. but all of these applications are externals
- a. and the lesson to be taken from these verses
 - b. has to do with the internal attitudes that these externals showed existed in the lives of these daughters of Zion
 - c. because these verses reveal that these people loved the world rather than the Lord their God, and so we have a secondary text, from which we got our message title
 - d. *Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* (1 John 2:15) – and you will see the pertinence of this verse when you read the verses that follow:
 - e. *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.* (1 John 2:16-17)

- f. this was a people that was given over to sin
 - (A) to the lust of the flesh
 - (B) to the lust of the eyes
 - (C) to the boastful pride of life
- g. it is for these things that judgement is coming upon Judah
- h. it is these things that describe the world we live in today just as clearly as it did in John's and in Isaiah's day
- i. and sadly, all far too often, it describes the church
- j. so, our message is, 'love not the world.'

B. This Situation Didn't Start with the Women

1. it is all too easy for myself as a man
 - a. to pick out a passage such as this that brings a word of warning and judgement against women
 - b. and focus my message on those of that gender
 - c. but that is not what the lesson is to be found here
 - d. Isaiah has written 2½ chapters before the attention of God has been turned to the daughters of Zion
 - e. Amos, preaching to the northern tribes, called Ephraim or Israel, preaches for 3 chapters before writing in Amos 4:1, 'Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, Who say to your husbands, "Bring now, that we may drink!"' (Amos 4:1)
 - f. and, again, I better not use that terminology if I want to walk out of here in one piece!
2. no, in Isaiah 1 we find that sin has infected the whole nation
 - a. it has started with the rulers, the head of the nation
 - b. it has descended to the feet, to the common people of the land, to the rank and file
 - c. it is found in their religious practices
 - d. so that there remains only a remnant of faithful in the land
 - e. and the extent of this decay is to that it is evidenced in the women of the nation, who follow their men
 - f. Geoffrey W. Grogan comments, 'If there is still some moral fibre in the women of a rapidly deteriorating society, the situation is not without hope; for it is the women who, through the home, have the most formative influence on the younger generation. The arrogant pride seen in the rulers of Judah was,

however, just as evident in its women. ¹⁻³.

g. men, women who had every reason to love the Lord their God; but rather loved the world, and things of the world

C. They Loved the World

1. besides the obvious, why do I say that?

a. well, consider the list of things given by Isaiah

(A) we do not know exactly what these all were

(B) but the general idea is certainly clear enough

b. first, there seems to be, at least to us men, a good deal of repetition – veils and head-dresses and turbans and veils – dangling ear-rings and finger-rings and nose-rings

(A) there was a Mrs Marcos, wife of the Filipino dictator, who apparently had hundreds of pairs of shoes; one possession is not enough if you love the world: you need many varieties and many of each

(B) the goal of the daughters of Jerusalem was having large wardrobes, attention catching raiment

c. secondly, the things given in this list were exotic

(A) if you read more than one translation of this list, you will find some significant differences

(B) that is because many of the words are not primarily Hebrew words but rather of foreign origin

(C) one example is found in verse 23 where a word is variously translate as 'fine linen,' 'linen garments,' 'linen wrappers' and 'undergarments' which some understand as 'Sindu-cloths,' the fine linen which came from the Sindh region in India⁻⁴.

(D) religious liberals say that Isaiah could not have known all these technical words – but they ignore that Isaiah had his wife the prophetess to instruct him!

(E) fashion likes the exotic: Gucci accessories, Dior dresses, Chanel perfume – the knowledgeable among you will know how dated and out of fashion I am! – so it was in Judah: they loved the things of the world

d. thirdly, the list contains some items inappropriate to Judah

(A) as an aside, here is a thought provoking question: would we like a public list of our home's contents?

(B) in verse 20 the final item is 'ear-rings,' 'amulets' or 'charms' which we are told were 'Gems or

metal plates with an inscription on them which were worn as protection as well as an ornament. ¹⁻⁵.

- (C) and verse 18 talks about their 'cauls and their round tires like the moon' (AV) or 'headbands, crescent ornaments' (NAS) and recent Semitic language studies indicate that these were decorations in forms of images of the sun and moon – objects which the Bible reveals were forbidden objects of worship of the pagan nations surrounding Judah and out of place for a Jewish girl.
- e. Calvin: 'It is enough if we understand the general import and design of the prophet, namely, that he heaps up and enumerates these trifles in order that the prodigious variety of them may disclose their luxury and ambitions, so as to leave them without any excuse.' ¹⁻⁶.

D. Love Not the World

1. Because loving the world is misplaced affection

a. the daughters of Jerusalem were concerned women

- (A) they walked with stretched out necks
- (B) they held their heads high
- (C) they wore chains on the ankles

(1) anklets, often fitted with bells, clinking, tinkling and ringing as they walked

(2) chains which restricted them to short, mincing steps – steps imitative of a child's (but these were far from being innocent children), putting their heel to their toe, drawing attention to themselves

(D) yes, they were concerned women, concerned about their appearance and the attention given to them

(E) but they were not concerned with the injustice and the apostasy – falling away from God – of their country

(F) that is misplaced affection, loving the world

b. it was misplaced affection, arising from the lust of the eyes

(A) what they saw was what they wanted

(B) this is a such problem of our times

(C) this is what keeps the people who write advertisements in a job – why our Thursday newspaper

is so heavy

- (D) but it is misplaced because the things of this world are transient and passing – they soon disappear
- (E) so we have the words of Jesus Christ, 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;' (Matthew 6:19-20).

c. so 'love not the world'

2. Because loving the world is an affront, an insult to God

a. it is an insult because it caters to sin, and sin is against God

- (A) verse 16 has been rendered many ways, all of which reveal 'the lust of the flesh' of these women
 - (1) AV: they 'walk with ... wanton eyes' or, in margin of older AV Bibles, 'deceiving with their eyes'
 - (2) NIV: 'flirting with their eyes'
 - (3) NAS: 'with seductive eyes'
 - (4) EJV: 'ogling with their eyes'
 - (5) K&D: 'winking, casting voluptuous and amatory glances with affected innocence'

(B) this, too, is descriptive of the world in which we live – 2,700 years have not changed it

b. it is an insult, because pride insults God

- (A) the 'boastful pride of life' displaces God from the throne he should rightfully possess in my life
- (B) the first and foremost fact of the prancing in the streets of the daughters of Zion that brings God's judgement is 'because the daughters of Zion are haughty'
- (C) in John's words, 'If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him,' or her
- (D) when I love this world, and its things, I am saying to God, I don't need you, I don't want you, I have better things to do with my time and money than honour you

c. so 'love not the world'

3. Because loving the world is a dead end – it passes away

a. 'All the things that you love,' says the Lord God through Isaiah, 'I am going to completely strip away from you.'

b. The heads you hold so high, with the crowning glory of your hair – it will be diseased and fall out, a

shame to you

- c. Instead of you sweet boxes of scent, you will smell, stink
- d. Your forehead, now adorned with head-dresses or diadem will be bare; its beauty replaced by a burnt branding mark of a slave
- e. Your decorated girdle or sash will be replaced by a rent – or better, by a rope – a rope leading you into captivity
- f. So you will be glad to wear sackcloth to hide the shame of your nakedness (a practice of the conquering Assyrians and Chaldeans) as you are taken out of the land that God has given you into exile
- g. And if you should remain in the land, you who now have your suitors, your admirers upon whom you now cast your flirtatious eyes – the day will come when you will plead along with others like you for a share of one man but to give you his name so you may escape the reproach of widowhood or childlessness
- h. Your pride will be completely humbled
- i. so 'love not the world'

E. Conclusion

1. the state of the daughters of Zion
 - a. are not related to us as a matter of historical interest
 - b. but as a warning, whereby we can be reprovved
 - c. when our values get out of whack
 - d. so that we may take heed of those words: **Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.** (1 John 2:15)
2. and with that thought in mind we will sing our closing hymn, which is both a prayer and declaration, 'Nothing Between'

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Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in {braces}. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
ERV	The Revised Version of 1885
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, www.holwick.com. Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. William Moses Tidwell, "Effective Illustrations" – Kerux illustrations #9774
3. EBC, *infra* Isaiah 3:16
4. Delitzsch in K&D, *in loc*
5. K&D, *in loc*
6. EJY, *infra* Isaiah 3:23