

Collide - Love What Matters

Standing firm in our faith has to include a most important four-letter word: LOVE. We have to love what matters most.

The Bible talks about the importance of spend time with God in order to grow in our love of God. Because as we do, we will be drawn closer to God rather than the things of this world.

1 John 2:15-17 - *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. 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.*

John talks about a craving in this passage. We are tempted to crave the things of this world. However, The first step to loving what matters is 'Correcting the Crave.'

-John names cravings for us that have to do with our flesh.

-He next lists out a craving for everything we see around us. Another way to say this would be the "lust of the eyes."

-Then he concludes with this thought: if the first two, which are internal, become behavior, we boast about what we have done. We think we are God.

There was only one thing made to satisfy our craving for deep abiding intimacy and connection... the love of God!

God wants to correct your crave.

He wants you to hunger after something more than this world could give you, and that's His love.

And, the way in which we find God's love, is first by finding God.

God IS Love! When we find God, we find true love.

The things of the world, even the world itself, will one day pass away.

John says, *but anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.* Everything in this world, one day, will all pass away.

Luke 21:33 - *Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*

BUT, God's word will last forever.

The world's love is "conditional." Conditional love basically means that you are only showing love to those who you believe deserve it. As soon as someone wrongs you, or says something rude to you, or causes you pain in some way, they are no longer worthy of love. At least, according to the world's love.

God wants to rewrite the narrative of love. His love is "unconditional." None of us here today deserves to be loved by God. In Romans 3:23, Paul tells us we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory.

Even with this being true, God decided to show us love, grace, and mercy anyway, because we are His children. God has already made the decision to love you and me.

The only question left is: will we make the decision to love Him back?

Many people believe once you pray the sinner's prayer and invite Jesus to be the king of your heart and your life, you are good to go. The decision to follow Christ with our lives, however, has to be made every single day.

Luke 9:23-25 - *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?”*

Because every day, we will be confronted with innumerable worldly temptations to give our lives to something else. John knew that we would be confronted with these. Jesus Himself knew we would be confronted with these. But He gave us His word as a guide. Here is the question we have to ask ourselves each day:

“Do the decisions I make align with the word of God?”

“Do my actions reflect I am a disciple of Christ?”

Jesus was sent on a collision course with the world. His desire, as we see in 2 Peter 3:9, is this; *“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*

But we so easily go astray and get distracted. The negative and lifeless messaging of the world is incessant, pervasive, and enticing.

Make a conscious decision each day to say, “no” to the things of this world, and say, “yes” to the love of God and the things of God, we will be able to live the fruitful, and abundant life Jesus came to bring us. (John 10:10) If we will invest in the word, in the fellowship, in Christ-centered teaching, in prayer, etc... then we can renew our minds (Romans 12:2) with the things of the kingdom of God.

When you find that the world’s values collide with the kingdom’s values in your life, will you make the decision to choose the path of Christ?

What are some minor adjustments you can make in your life now that will have major consequences 1, 2, 5 years from now?

- Daily time in the word
- Joining a small group
- Volunteering at church
- Spending time with a mentor
- Increasing accountability with others
- Cutting off destructive habits and tendencies

The list could go on and on.

The point is, *there is space for you in the kingdom of God.* Will you make space for the kingdom in you?