

12 - 1 John 2:15-17 - 2018-07-15

Call to Worship: Psalm 51:14-15

Scripture Reading: Psalm 51:1-13

Sermon: "The Lust of the Flesh" 1 John 2:15-17

Benediction: Psalm 51:16-17

1 John 2:15-17

(15) 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.

(16) 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.

(17) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

INTRODUCTION

We heard our Lord's command: Do not love the world or the things in the world

We worked on understanding how the lust of the world is essentially one lust, one desire, the coveteousness forbidden in the tenth commandment.

We worked on understanding how the three aspects of this lust of the world are essentially the three aspects of the temptation by which the devil successfully tempted Eve and the first Adam in the garden, and by which the devil unsuccessfully tempted our Lord Jesus, the second Adam in the desert.

Today we dig in to work on the first of these three aspects of the lust of the world: the lust of the flesh.

TEXT

1 John 2:15-17

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(16) 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.

(17) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

BODY

- I. What the Bible Means By the Lust of the Flesh
 - A. The Lust of the Flesh Is Not Something Entirely Separate from the Other Aspects of Lust
 1. the eyes are involved
 2. pride is part of it
 3. trying to make an absolute delineation among these three does not lead to understanding what is meant
 4. being aspects of the same lust or desire or covetousness, there is commonality among all three
 - B. The lust of the flesh is more particularly the lust to please the bodily appetites
 1. God created us in such a way that the functions of our body that are necessary are also, more or less, pleasurable
 2. If you indulge in this, it feels good to the body for a few moments, or a few hours
 3. old preachers
 - a) Cotton: a corrupt inclination by which our bodies seek sensual pleasures
 - b) Henry: the humour and appetite of indulging bodily pleasures
 - c) Barnes: that which pampers the appetites, or all that is connected with the indulgence of the mere animal propensities
 - C. When the old preachers have made statements such as I just read to you, they invariably then launch into a list of vices representative of the lust of the flesh. This is biblical, because in at least four places in the bible, the term “lust of the flesh” is accompanied by a list of vices; I’ll briefly state some of the vices that appear in three of those four lists [Webster on “vice” The excessive indulgence of passions and appetites which in themselves are innocent, is a vice.]
 1. *komos* revellings, rioting, revelry, orgies
 - a) Romans 13:13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting or revelry or orgies
 2. *methe* drunkenness or *oinophlugia* wine excess
 - a) 1 Peter 4:3 we have spent enough of our past lifetime in . . . drunkenness, in excess of wine
 3. *porneia* or *koite* fornication or sexual immorality or *moicheia* adultery
 - a) Mark 7:21 from within, out of the heart of men, proceed . . . adulteries and fornications
 - D. There is one vice that appears in all four lists, and seems to me to be a very good representative of them all, which I will work on with you today

II. What One Vice Can Be Used to Represent All Lust of the Flesh

A. There is one vice that can be used to represent all lust of the flesh

1. it appears in all four lists
2. it is general enough to be descriptive of all vices
3. it is the spirit of all lust of the flesh

B. Greek *aselgeia*

1. as I try to explain to you what our Lord Jesus and His apostles meant when they spoke to us of *aselgeia*, we run into an interesting obstacle: our society has rejected, neglected, and lost its words for this biblical concept
2. translations: debauchery, sensuality, licentiousness
 - a) we don't know what those words mean
 - b) they don't really mean what *aselgeia* means, anyway
3. notice the negation
4. it means, literally, "not held," as in, "not held back" or "not held in place"

C. English *incontinence*

1. latin
 - a) *teneo* to hold - tenant is someone who holds land
 - b) *con + teneo* together hold; hold together
 - (1) continent land
2. medical term: continent
 - a) natural bodily functions
 - b) can hold bodily functions to be done at appropriate time in an appropriate place, such as the bathroom or outhouse
 - c) can do these bodily functions, then hold off from doing them until the next necessary time, then do them again in an appropriate way
3. medical term: incontinence
4. "incontinence" as a medical term is only about 200 years old; for hundreds of years before that, our society used the term "incontinence" to refer to *moral* incontinence
 - a) what is done in the marriage bed
 - b) what is done at the dinner table
 - c) sleep
 - d) play
 - e) exercise
5. the lust of the flesh shows itself in moral incontinence

D. English *wantonness*

1. Middle English, from words that go all the way back to Old English
 - a) *towen*
 - (1) lit towed or pulled
 - (2) used to mean brought up, raised, disciplined
 - b) *wan* = "un" like "wane"
 - c) *wantowen*

- (1) lit not towed or pulled
 - (2) meaning not given a disciplined upbringing
 - (3) used to describe conduct that lacked restraint
2. in our present society, the word “wanton” is used to mean that an action doesn’t seem to have a reason
 - a) wanton violence
 - b) wanton cruelty
 3. but the basic meaning is that the action shows lack of restraint, lack of being held by anything that should hold a person back from doing such things
 4. there should be a holding people’s conduct in place; it should be held by what is instilled in them during their upbringing
 - a) fear of God
 - b) love for other people
 - c) example of parents, grandparents
 - d) norms of decent society
 5. wantonness shows that none of these things is holding the person
 6. the natural use of the body, the things we do with the body, should be done while holding ourselves in check, while restraining ourselves; what we do with the
 - a) mouth
 - b) hands or fists
 - c) feet
 - d) reproductive organs
 7. think of a wagon or trailer that is supposed to be towed, but comes loose from its hitch and is not towed
 - a) damage to itself
 - b) damage to other things and people around it
 8. think of a person whose body is supposed to be held in place, held in check, restrained, but which is not
- E. One vice that is an example of the lust of the flesh, and which is, in a sense, the essence of all vices, and which shows clearly what the lust of the flesh is: *aselgeia*, wantonness, incontinence

III. How Our Lord Jesus Would Have Us Deal with the Lust of the Flesh

- A. Think of God's relationship with the lust of the flesh, God as Triune, and act accordingly
 1. this lust of the flesh is not of the Father; love the Father instead of loving this lust of the flesh
 2. our Lord Jesus Christ has never loved the lust of the flesh; He has never been incontinent or wanton; in fact, He took the incontinence of sinners upon Himself and died for it on the cross; He has died for it once for all; now He lives forevermore in all purity, with no incontinence or wantonness; so reckon yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 3. the Holy Spirit is in the believer, and is at war with the lust of the flesh, which is at war with Him; walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh
- B. Hear these imperatives
 1. Rom 13:14 make no provision for the flesh, to its lusts
 2. 1 Pe 2:11 abstain from fleshly lusts
 - a) Latin *teneo* again hold back from fleshly lusts
 3. 1 Pe 4:1 arm yourselves with the same mind as Christ; put on Christ
 4. Rom 6:12 do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts
- C. Think of the time we have wasted in incontinence, in wantonness, in the lust of the flesh, and let that bitter thought provoke you not to waste any more precious time like that
 1. Rom 13:11 it is high time to wake out of sleep
 2. 1 Pe 4:2-3 (loosely) we have spent enough of our past lifetime walking in incontinence and wantonness and the lust of the flesh; now, as Christ, let us live no more of our time living for such lusts, but instead living for God
- D. Consider this implication for the salvation of sinners
 1. 1 Peter 2:11-12 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, **abstain from fleshly lusts** which war against the soul, (12) having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, **that** when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

CONCLUSION

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) 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. (17) And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

G766 *aselgeia* literally “not held”

lewdness [G766 *aselgeia* literally “incontinence” or “wantonness”]

KJV lasciviousness, NIV debauchery; ESV sensuality; NIV debauchery; HCSB promiscuity;
RSV/NRSV licentiousness

a. incontinence

continent = con + teneo “to hold” and so “to hold together”

tenant = holder (of house or land); he doesn't own it, but he is holding it
contain; continent land; continent or incontinent

as medical term from about 200 years ago

bodily functions

hold until can be done at an appropriate time in an appropriate place

discretion

should be able to do this, then stop

mess, disgrace

as moral term from about 500 years ago

from 15th century: "He was incontynent, and with fleschely lustes he consumyd alle his tyme."

should be able to do things when and where appropriate, then stop
-eat, drink, relax and sleep, play, exercise

b. wantonness "wan-towen" "lit. not towed, not pulled" meaning "not given a good upbringing" and used to describe those who act unrestrained

"wane"

this is, apparently, the only word in which "wan" has survived as the negation prefix (still present in Dutch)

JRY: Their conduct is by unrestrained impulse of the fleshly desires.

should be held in place by
-fear of God
-love for other people
-example of parents, grandparents
-norms of society

fists, mouth, feet, etc.

JRY:

all these vices are corruptions of what God has made; the Christian should not mistake the wholesome enjoyment for the sinful love of lusts

Categories (from Cotton)

1. intemperance
2. incontinence
3. voluptuousness (addictedness to pleasure or sensual gratification)

Jesus Christ

Romans 13:11-14 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. (12) The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. (13) Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. (14) But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

1 Peter 4:1-2 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, (2) that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

Ephesians 2:1-5 And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, (2) in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, (3) among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. (4) But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, (5) even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

The Holy Spirit

Galatians 5:16-17 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (17) For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Imperatives

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision** for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

Galatians 5:16 I say then: **Walk in the Spirit**, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

1 Peter 2:11-12 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, **abstain** from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, (12) having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

abstain Latin *abstineo* from *abs* and *teneo*

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Romans 6:10-12 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. (11) Likewise you also, **reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (12) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.**

Implications

1 Peter 2:11-12 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, **abstain from fleshly lusts** which war against the soul, (12) having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

JRY:

It might or might not be helpful to participate in various evangelistic enterprises. But look here at the connection between lust of the flesh and salvation of sinners.

the lust [ESV desires] of the flesh

see "Vices Chart"

Cotton:

such as are stirred up by the flesh and promise our bodies comfort
It is a corrupt inclination by which our bodies seek sensual lusts and sensual objects; as meat and drink, which is intemperance; or women, which is incontinence; or pastimes and pleasures, which is voluptuousness.

Candlish:

the appetite of sense out of order, or in excess . . . gluttony, drunkenness, uncleanness . . .
the ball, the theater, the gaming table

Calvin:

see Romans 13:14
flesh in this place = the body and all that belongs to it
when worldly men, seeking to live softly and delicately, are intent only on their own advantages

Poole:

more grossly sensual: gluttony, drunkenness, whoredom
see Romans 13:13-14

Henry:

being distinguished here from the eyes and the life means "the body"

the humour and appetite of indulging fleshly pleasures; all those things that excite and inflame the pleasures of the flesh; usually called “luxury”

Gill:

not lust in general . . . but some particular one, a lust of the body
either the lust of uncleanness
-all unchaste desires, thoughts, words, and actions
-fornication, adultery, rape, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts
or else intemperance in eating and drinking
-gluttony and drunkenness
-excess of wine and surfeitings
-rioting and revellings
and all the sensual pleasures of life, by which the carnal mind, and the lusts of it, are gratified

Clarke:

sensual and impure desires which seek their gratification in women, strong drink, delicious viands, and the like

Barnes:

that which pampers the appetites, or all that is connected with the indulgence of the mere animal propensities

JFB:

[on Gal 5:19] This passage shows that “the flesh” does not mean merely sensuality, as opposed to spirituality: for “divisions” in the catalogue here do not flow from sensuality. The identification of “the natural (Greek, ‘animal-souled’) man,” with the “carnal” or fleshly man (1Co_2:14), shows that “the flesh” expresses *human nature as estranged from God*.

Prelude: Grace 92 "Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken"

Camille: flute

Noah: trumpet - see attached in E

Anna: clarinet - see attached in E

Sarah: piano 1

Grace 99 "Jesus, Your Name"

Camille: flute

Noah: trumpet - see attached in B

Anna: piano 1

Sarah: piano 2

Trinity 197 "The Day of Resurrection" (tune of "Lead On, O King Eternal")

Camille: piano 1 - see attached in C

Noah: trumpet - play from hymnal in D

Anna: clarinet - play from hymnal in D

Sarah: piano 2 - see attached in C

Trinity 413 "Psalm 51" (tune of "When I Survey")

Camille: piano 1

Noah: sing

Anna: sing

Sarah: piano 2

Trinity 676 "More About Jesus"

Camille: sing

Noah: direct

Anna: piano 1

Sarah: sing

From Sarah:

Hymns of Grace:

Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken

Jesus, Priceless Treasure

Seek Him First

Blessed Assurance

Be Thou My Vision

Trinity Hymnal:

Man of Sorrows(what a name)

Jesus!what a Friend for Sinners

Crown Him With Many Crowns