

14 - 1 John 2:15-17 - 2018-07-29 - The Pride of Life

Call to Worship: Psalm 34:1-3

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 9:23-24

Sermon: "The Pride of Life" 1 John 2:15-17

Benediction: Psalm 34:22

INTRODUCTION

What have we learned so far regarding this passage we are studying in the word of God?

By "the world," the bible means, in this place, mankind as in rebellion to God, the system of self-love and self-indulgence practiced by sinful mankind; all of man's not doing the will of God on earth as it is in heaven. To love the world is to esteem it highly, to treasure it, to have an attachment to it, to be devoted to it, to want to be like it, to be friends or allies with it.

Just as matters of good and evil can be understood in two categories: love for God and love for our neighbor; and can be understood in ten categories: the ten commandments; so they can be understood in three categories, as three aspects of lust or desire or covetousness: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. These three aspects of lust seem to be the same three things with which the devil tempted Eve and with which the devil tempted our Lord Jesus.

Those three things are distinguished from each other, but are all essentially aspects of one and the same lust, the desire for things not lawfully ours, which is the very thing forbidden in the tenth commandment. Lusting after something, desiring it, is not itself wrong, as known from the fact that even the angels desire things, and even our Lord Jesus desired to eat the passover with his disciples. You may righteously lust for or desire something, as for your own wife, or your own appropriate portion of your own food, or the needed amount of sleep at night. The sinfulness of lust or desire comes when you lust for something you do not have the right to have, such as your neighbor's wife or stolen food or sleep that lasts all through the work day.

The first of the three aspects of lust about which John has written to us is the lust of the flesh, the inordinate desire for things that give their pleasure primarily through actual physical contact with your body, to be enjoyed by your senses of taste and touch. This lust is seen in the sin of *aselgeia*, that is, wantonness, or incontinence: not holding back your exercise of bodily functions until they can be done appropriately, but starting them when they should not be done, or continuing to do them when they should be stopped.

The second of the three aspects of lust is the lust of the eye, the inordinate desire for things that give their pleasure primarily through looking at them with the eyes. These things usually take the form of riches, wealth, money, jewelry, clothes, and other things that could be considered under the general term, "treasure."

Recall that, at the beginning, I urged you

Come to this passage with a willingness to have love for the world exposed.

Come to this passage with a hope to have love for God increased.

Come to this passage as a possible remedy to chronic problems you are having with sin.

Come to this passage with thankfulness for it.

Come to this passage with prayer for God to work in us through it.

I exhort you today to the same.

I further exhort you to have this study point you to our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Him is the prime example of resisting all temptation of loving the lust of the world, in favor of maintaining love toward God and toward other men.

In Him is forgiveness of sins committed in love for the world.

In Him is forgiveness of sins committed as lust of the flesh and lust of the eye.

Reminded of those things we already have been learning, we now go on to consider the third aspect of the lust of the world, put to us as “the pride of life.”

TEXT

1 John 2:15-17

BODY

I. What “The Pride of Life” Means

A. From the terms

1. life G979 *bios*

- a) the things of this life; the things you have and do in this life
- b) RWP: *bios* (life) as in 1 John 3:17 is the external aspect, not the inward principle (*zoe*).
- c) 1 John 3:16-18 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (17) But whoever has this world's **goods [G979 *bios*]**, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? (18) My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.
- d) Calvin, Gill: way or manner of living
- e) JRY: lifestyle

2. pride G212 *alazoneia* = boasting, bragging, being arrogant;
 - a) not the normal word for “pride;” that is used to translate, being close in meaning, but it is not merely or exactly pride
 - b) RWP: old word for braggart talk
 - c) JRY: thinking only of yourself and too highly of yourself; thinking of others only as to what you want them to think of you;
 - d) note these words used in trying to give a definition
 - (1) boasting or bragging
 - (2) ostentation
 - (3) arrogance
 - (4) pride
- B. From the difference in wording between this and the other two; the others say, “lust of,” then where the main enjoyment lies; whereas this says, “pride of” and then “the world”
1. “pride” or “boasting” or “bragging” or “being arrogant” are not descriptions of the lust itself, but of behavior characteristic of it; it still is lust: lust for other people’s praise or attention or notice or respect; the lust for glory from men, which shows itself in pride or boasting or bragging or being arrogant
 2. “life,” does not refer to where the main enjoyment lies, as with the flesh or the eyes, but where the main effort lies in trying to get the desired thing
 3. one scholar I read commented that if John had kept the pattern of the first two, it would have been “the lust of the ear,” since it is primarily a lust to hear people praise you; but I don’t mean that would have been better---this is the perfect way to say it
- C. From some classic formulations
1. Trapp: pleasure, profit, **preferment**
 - a) the lust of have pleasure
 - b) the lust to have profit
 - c) the lust of have preferment of yourself over others
 2. Candlish: the show, the shadow, the semblance
- D. From its place in a list of sins: Romans 1:28-31
1. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (29) being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, (30) backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, **boasters [G213 *alazon*]**, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, (31) undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;
 2. note this is not some mild thing, but a severe evil on par with violence, disobedience to parents, and being unforgiving

- E. From the only other place in the bible where this exact word is used: James 4:13-16 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; (14) whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life [G2222 *zoe*]? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. (15) Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live [G2198 *zao*] and do this or that." (16) But now you boast in your **arrogance** [G212 *alazoneia*]. All such boasting is evil.
1. it is a certain kind of talk, which reveals the presence of a certain desire or lust; it reflects an effort to impress other people with a combination of what you will do and what you will have, out of desire to have them think highly of you
 2. it reveals too high a view of yourself in regards to God
 - a) He is not the only one who can know the future; you can, too!
 - b) He is not the only one who can be sure He will be alive tomorrow; you can, too!
 - c) He is not the one whose will determines what happens; yours does, too!
- F. From what it is a perversion of: the righteous desire for every person to be honored with what honor is due him; the desire to be honored with what honor you are due by your position, your accomplishments, your character
1. there are those to whom honor is due
 - a) e.g. a man who has travelled to another city, worked hard at business, and made a profit, may desire to have his boss or business partners or employees realize that and give him due honor for it
 - b) e.g. a woman who is so hospitable that she willingly draws water for a traveler and his ten camels; a woman who gets up early and works hard all day so that her whole household is well provided for; a woman who is well known for good works, such as taking care of children, showing hospitality to people she only just met, washing dishes, doing laundry, cleaning bathrooms, for the benefit of the saints, relieving the afflicted, and consistently doing good; a woman who marries, bears children, and manages the house; a woman who pours out her expensive jar of perfume on the Lord Jesus, who is not consumed with much serving, but knows also to sit at Jesus' feet hearing His words
 - (1) such a woman deserves to be honored; she deserves to be noticed and admired; honor is due her
 - (2) to desire such honor for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to work as unto the Lord to be worthy of such honor, is not sinful, but righteous

- c) e.g. a man who legitimately occupies a position in which he is over others: a husband, a father, an employer, a pastor, a governor, especially if he faithfully executes his duties in such a position; a man who occupies a position in which he is not a master or supervisor, but a servant, and he works hard for the benefit of those he is serving, showing himself agreeable, faithful, trustworthy; a man who excels in his field of work because he has been working hard at it for a long time; a man who, year-in and year-out, is honest, trustworthy, kind, just, generous, hard-working, cheerful, patient; a Christian whose behavior shows that, by the work of God in him, he is putting to death the flesh and walking by the Spirit, because as time goes by, graces are growing in him, and old vices are fading away
 - (1) such a man deserves to be honored; he deserves to have people take note of him and admire him; honor is due him
 - (2) to desire such honor for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to work as unto the Lord to be worthy of such honor, is not sinful, but righteous
- 2. pride of life is a perversion of that wholesome desire for honor; pride of life comes when a person desires to be honored with honor that is not due him, that he has not earned, and does not deserve
 - a) pride of life is when a man has not travelled to another city, done business, and made a profit, but wants to boast about how sure he is that he is going to do so, and have others honor him as if he had done so
 - b) pride of life is when a woman wants to be noticed, wants to be admired, wants to be honored, wants to be thought well of, without it coming by her hard work and good character; so she makes a show of herself by much talking, much flirting, much jewelry, much show of skin, much glamour, perhaps a premature giving of her affections, seeking to gain admiration she does not deserve; to receive honor that is not due her, this pride of life often occurs in young women, but certainly is not absent among older women, as well
 - c) pride of life is when a man wants to be admired, wants to be honored, wants to be thought well of, without it coming by his hard work and good character; the right to genuine honor comes with difficulty, slowly over time, but he wants to get it easily, quickly, immediately; so he seeks to put on a show, and gain admiration that way; he chooses a hair style and way of dressing that is unconventional, so as to stand out and be noticed; he gets tattoos for people to see; he wears flashy jewelry, and even gets piercings to wear more jewelry in; he chooses a car or truck for the

sake of its appearance, to be noticed for that; he talks too much, or too little, trying to come across as cool; he talks all about the great things he has done or the expensive things he has had in the past, how he has excelled others in many ways; he talks about what he is going to do or what he is going to buy in the future; he buys a house more expensive and showy that he can afford, and borrows money to furnish it; he entertains people richly, lavishing them with gifts; he never seems to stop adding to his possessions: boat, motorcycle, convertible, and on and on; if he wants to be respected in the church, he even puts on religious airs to seem to excel others in devotion to Christ; this pride of life seems common among young men, but certainly is not absent from among older men, also

d) Note: It is much easier to get honor from those who are your peers, or who are below you, than it is to get it from those above you. You can't get honor from your betters by pride of life. You can often get it from your peers or from those below you.

(1) Webster 1828: BETTER, n. A superior; one who has a claim to precedence on account of his rank, age, or office; as, give place to your betters. It is generally or always used in the plural.

(2) you are much better off doing what will gain you honor among your betters, than what will gain you honor among those beside you or below you

(3) you are much better off doing what your betters do, and refraining from doing what your betters do not do

3. this perversion of the righteous desire for honor that is due, into a lusting after honor that is not due, is the pride of life

G. From one of the looser bible translations; the newer, revised NIV says, "pride of life," but the old, original NIV was more a paraphrase than a translation; it reads, "the boasting of what he has and does;" in all the reading I've done, I think that is the gist of what the James passage shows, what all the old pastors wrote, and what we observe in ourselves and others

1. Boasting in what you have had or what you have done
2. Boasting in what you presently do or what you have
3. Boasting in what you plan to do or plan to have in the future

H. Summary: Pride of life is the arrogant show you put on in boastful words and actions because you desire to have people praise you, notice you, honor you, and admire you.

II. How Not to Love the Pride of Life

- A. Understand that when you are loving the pride of life, you are not loving God and not loving other people (1 John 2:15)
 - 1. you probably already want to love God and to love other people; or at least you already know that the overarching principle in all right conduct is love for God and for other people
 - 2. but you might not have it perfectly clear in your mind that to love the pride of life is not to love God and others, but to hate them
 - 3. so be clear in your mind on that point; then, when temptation comes to love the things in the world, such as pride of life, you can see it for what it is, and turn from it in favor of the love of God
- B. Be clear where the pride of life comes from
 - 1. not from God the Father (1 John 2:16)
 - 2. but from the world
- C. Consider the passing nature of the world (1 John 2:17)
 - 1. we value things that last, don't we?
 - 2. why, then would we assign so much value to praise from men, which praise passes away?
 - 3. but seeking the praise of God, by doing His will, this is acquiring rewards in heaven that will last forever; e.g. "Well done, though good and faithful servant"
- D. Look to our Lord Jesus
 - 1. in His resistance to temptation by the devil: Luke 4:9
 - a) there are things it was the will of God the Father for our Lord Jesus to do, to show His greatness: miraculous signs
 - b) but here is temptation to show His greatness in ways not the will of God the Father
 - 2. in His humbling Himself: Philippians 2:1-8

III. How to Be Forgiven Your Sins In the Pride of Life

- A. Own yourself a sinner, full of all kinds of lust, and guilty of all kinds of sins done by those lusts; turn from those sins to follow the Lord Jesus Christ as His disciple
- B. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ
 - 1. as the one who did not give in to such lusts, but maintained all love and righteousness
 - 2. as the one who died on the cross to take the penalty sinners deserved for their pride of life
 - 3. as the one who rose again the third day
 - 4. as the one who sits on the throne of heaven today, rightly receiving all honor
 - 5. as the one who will come back one day, to raise us up incapable of being corrupted any more by any kind of lust

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.

from sermon 9 on June 17

- I. The pride of life: essentially vanity; the elevated view of oneself that comes from showing off for other people
 - A. note: ESV “pride in possessions”
 1. 2001, 2007; changed in 2011 revisions
 2. distinctive of William Mounce
 3. picked up by CSB 2016

1 John 2:15-17 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. (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.

JRY:

Boasting in what you have had or done.

Boasting in what you presently do or have.

Boasting in what you plan to do or have in the future.

pride G212 *alazoneia* from G213 *alazon*

James 4:13-16 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; (14) whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life [G2222 *zoe*]? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. (15) Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live [G2198 *zao*] and do this or that." (16) But now you boast in your **arrogance** [G212 *alazoneia*]. All such boasting is evil.

Wycliffe ye maken ful out ioye in youre pridis; euery siche ioye is wickyd.

Tyndale (GB, BB, Gen, KJV): ye reioyce in youre bostinges. All soche reioysynge is evyll.

RV, ASV: ye glory in your vauntings: all such glorying is evil

RSV, NASB, NKJV, ESV: you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil

RWP: Old word for braggart talk (from *alazoneuomai*, to act the *alazon* empty boaster (Rom 1:30)

JRY:

you who say --- you ought to say
tomorrow --- you do not know what will happen tomorrow

Romans 1:28-31 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (29) being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, (30) backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, **boasters [G213 alazon]**, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, (31) undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

Tyndale, GB, BB, Gen, KJV, NKJV: bosters

RV, ASV, RSV, NASB, ESV: boastful

2 Timothy 3:1-5 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: (2) For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, **boasters [G213 alazon]**, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, (3) unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, (4) traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, (5) having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Proverbs 21:24 Proud and haughty **scorner [H3887 luts G213 alazon]** is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.

ESV "Scoffer" is the name of the arrogant, haughty man who acts with arrogant pride.

NKJV A proud and haughty man--"Scoffer" is his name; He acts with arrogant pride.

RWP:

see note on James 4:16

life [G979 bios]

RWP:

bios (life) as in 1 John 3:17 is the external aspect (Luke 8:14), not the inward principle (*zoe*).

Gill:

the word signifies not so much life as living

the pride of life

Calvin:

life = way or manner of living

pride, haughtiness, ambition, boasting, contempt of others, blind love of self, headstrong self-confidence

Cotton:

seeking after one's own carnal excellency when he looks only at himself and has a high conceit of himself

seeking our own carnal excellency, looking at ourselves only. Whether we do it in heart by conceit, or in speech by worldly boastings, or in conduct by a high attitude, it is the pride of life.

Poole:

the ambitious affectation of the pomp and glory of the world; vain applause; the unmerited and overvalued praise and observance of other men, with power over them, affected for undue ends, or only with a self-exalting design

Henry:

a vain mind craves all the grandeur, equipage, and pomp of a vain-glorious life; this is ambition, and thirst after honour and applause. This is, in part, the disease of the ear; it must be flattered with admiration and praise.

Candlish:

the show, the shadow, the semblance

Ellicott:

The phrase means a boastful, ostentatious attitude in regard to the good things of this life allotted by God to be spent in His service. All living up to a supposed social position instead of as the responsible steward of undeserved bounties, is hereby condemned. Of this any social organism existing for pleasure instead of for moral or religious ends might be considered illustrative.

Barnes:

The word here used means, properly, ostentation or boasting, and then arrogance or pride. - Robinson. It refers to whatever there is that tends to promote pride, or that is an index of pride, such as the ostentatious display of dress, equipage, furniture, etc.

JRY:

There is one other place in the New Testament where this word is used: James 4:-13-17
It is when a person boasts about himself, forgetting that he is always subject to God's will.

-only by His will do we even live

-only by His will might we do what we plan to do

Talking as if you willing something means it shall happen; which is tantamount to claiming you can know the future.

This shows itself when your dress includes styles or items not general among your betters.

Webster 1828: BETTER, n. A superior; one who has a claim to precedence on account of his rank, age, or office; as, give place to your betters. It is generally or always used in the plural.

Prelude: Grace 16 "Be Thou My Vision"

Camille: flute

Noah: trumpet - see attached in F

Sarah: piano

Dale - see attached in Eb for bass clef notes

Grace 23 "Blessed Assurance"

Camille: flute - see attached in C

Noah: trumpet - from hymnal in D

Sarah: piano - play in D and transpose or see attached in C

Trinity 432 "Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners"

Camille: sing

Noah: trumpet - see attached in G (Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus)

Sarah: piano

Trinity 270 "The Church's One Foundation"

Camille: piano

Noah: trumpet - see attached in F

Sarah: sing

Trinity 675 "A Wonderful Savior"

Camille: piano

Noah: sing

Sarah: sing