

Set Your Affection

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[0:00] I'm talking today about affection. Colossians 3 verses 1-2 it says, That familiar scripture, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Affection, what is it? Set your affection. Set your affection it says. Affection has that sense of thinking of the mind, of what we set our mind upon.

Firstly it says, set your affection on heaven. The Bible says, Love not the world nor the things that are in the world. That's going to pass away.

Set your affection rather on the things of heaven. Set your affection on things above. Set your mind on things above, on heavenly things, on higher things, on things above.

Where Christ is, Christ is there. He has gone to heaven and he is waiting for us. We look to him, we are waiting for him. The person of Christ, we watch for him. He's coming back.

[1:24] Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

We set our affection on heaven. We have our affection for righteousness. In Matthew 5 verse 6 our Lord says, Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

God will fill us with his righteousness. He is our righteousness. As it was prophesied of our Lord Jesus in Jeremiah 23 verse 6, In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely.

And this is his name whereby he shall be called the Lord our righteousness. Yahweh our righteousness. It's speaking of Christ, prophesying of his coming and using the very name of the Almighty.

The Lord our righteousness. He is our righteousness. Is he your righteousness? 2 Corinthians 5 verse 21 it says, For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

[2:35] Are we hungry and thirsting for it, righteousness? Does pleasing God matter? Does it move us? Does it drive us?

Does it attract us? Does it inspire us? Does it change us? Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Does pleasing God factor much in our thinking?

Are we yielding the fruits of righteousness in our life? There was a farmer showing off his fine orchard to a friend one day, who was admiring its neat and regular appearance.

But, said his friend, pointing to a peculiarly shaped tree, if that were my tree, I'd uproot it and throw it away in order to preserve the uniformity of the orchard.

And the farmer smiled and said that he was more interested in the fruit than in the form. He said, this tree has yielded more fruit to me than any of those trees that conform to the regular pattern.

[3:36] And it's the same for Christians, isn't it? God uses people of all shapes and sizes. God chooses different folks and from different places, different ways, different personalities.

What matters is the fruit, not the form. And are you a fruit-bearing Christian? That's the point. Do people see God's righteousness coming out of your life? Is heaven's best our goal, our aim, our love, our desire?

Have we that love, that first love? Will we be motivated by it? Will it change us? Will it impel us? We see an affection for heaven, an affection for righteousness.

Also we see an affection for service. For serving God. Daniel 11.32 says, The people that do know their God shall be strong and shall do exploits.

God wants us to know Him, to be strong in Him and to do exploits for Him. God's people shall take action. God's people have action, an active faith.

[4:47] Faith without works is dead, it says. Living faith is a lifestyle. It's working, it's breathing, it's going, it's alive. Are we such that we have a living faith in our love for Him?

We serve Him. We are His servants. Servants don't do as they would. They don't serve on their own terms. They don't serve as in choosing their own tasks.

Our call is to obey, to go, to be. And this affection, it drives us, it shapes us, it moves us. For the love of Christ constraineth us, it says.

We are constrained. It's got that sense of we're activated, we're energized, we're moved, we're urged, we're driven to action. Where it says constrains. The old Geneva Bible, which predates our King James, says this love of Christ that wholly possesses us.

I think that's a good place to be, isn't it? To be a God-possessed woman, a God-possessed man, that God would so possess us. That we would be such His absolute possession. That we would be led by Him.

[5:56] We'd be held by Him. We'd be captured by Him. We'd be captivated by Him. We'd be devoted and turned over to His control. Constrained. What a picture of the love of Christ.

It prompts us to love Him. It prompts us to witness more, to pray more, to fellowship more, to give more, to study more. The love of Christ constrains us.

God's love in our hearts urges us to reach out, to support the soul-winning work of the church, to put aside the fancies and the distractions, and to be more devoted, more faithful.

Constrained. Constrained. God is a jealous God, it says. He wants our faithfulness, our devotion. Our love for Christ, it presses us, it compels us. It masters us, it controls us, it guides us. Heaven guides our footsteps upon earth.

[6:56] That's how it ought to be. Heaven prompts us, it provokes us. Where is your affection today? A young man asked his minister to officiate at his brother's funeral.

Let me see, said the minister. Your brother was 32 years old. Yes, said the man. He worked hard for 20 years, didn't he?

Yes. Well, what did he get out of it? He left 80 acres of fine land, money in the bank, thousands of dollars in insurance. Yes, that's what you get out of it.

But what did he get out of it? Oh, we are going to buy him an expensive oak casket. What will it be? At the close of your life, what will there be to show for your life lived upon earth?

Will there be riches in heaven? Will there be some eternal difference because of your life you've lived? Is it the gift of your life that you have made on earth?

[8:04] God's love in Christ fills us with compassion. It fills us with action, with determination. Have you His love? Is your affection right?

Is your first love as sure, as sweet, as tender, as true as it used to be? How is your affection today? Your devotion to Christ, is it directed towards Christ, your Saviour?

A wife who is 85% faithful to her husband is not faithful at all. There is no such thing as a part-time loyalty to Jesus Christ.

Does Jesus Christ have your all? Is He your all in all? How is your affection? How is your faithfulness? Does His love press you to obey Him?

To be yielded to Him? To follow Him? To trust Him? Let's consider, are there affection drainers, if you like, that are taking away His place in our lives today?

[9:08] Things that divert our love away from Him, have other things taken His place? Are you rich towards God?

Or does He take a secondary place for your activity and energy, your application of time? Let's develop an affection for things above.

For heaven's best, for righteousness, pleasing God, for service. Let this love master and compel you to exploits, to action.