

Eternity Daily Bible Study

The Importance Of Love

Number: 10

Verses: Romans 12:9, Ezekiel 33:31-32, Psalms 55:21

Topic: Avoid Fake Love

Date: 29th July 2011

Romans 12:9 *Let love be without hypocrisy, shrinking from evil, cleaving to good;*

Ezekiel 33:31-32 *And they come to you as the people come, and they sit before you as My people, and they hear your words. But they will not do them. For with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goes after their unjust gain. (32) And lo, you are to them as a singer of love songs with a beautiful voice, and able to play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them.*

Psalms 55:21 *His speech was smooth as butter, yet war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords.*

There are some very dangerous and manipulative people out there and some of them are attracted to the power and prestige of ministry. These people are very good at producing "fake love" and are technically called psychopaths or sociopaths (not as a in ax-murderers but as in people without any conscience or empathy). The Bible calls them "wolves" (as in wolves in sheep's clothing) and some of their main characteristics are:

- 1) Glib and superficial
- 2) Egocentric and grandiose
- 3) Lack of remorse or guilt
- 4) Lack of empathy
- 5) Deceitful and manipulative
- 6) Shallow emotions
- 8) Impulsive / Poor behavior controls
- 9) Need for excitement
- 10) Lack of responsibility
- 11) Early behavior problems
- 12) Adult anti-social behavior

Herod the Great most certainly as a psychopath, as were Annas and Caiaphas, some of the Pharisees, the wizard Simon Magus (Acts 8) and many false teachers. Today the complete lack of real empathy of some (a minority of) senior pastors and missions leaders for their staff/volunteers etc is cause for deep concern. The manipulative, completely uncaring, and ruthless Christian visionary who burns out all those around him is a common problem in many ministry circles. When this is compounded with lying and deception you need to put on your running shoes! You won't hurt their feelings because they have no real feelings to hurt. Their "feelings" are just masks for power!

These “wolves in sheep's clothing” have made a lifetime study of how to press people's buttons in order to gain followers (who are often good, but gullible Christian believers).

Acts 20:29-30 *I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; (30) and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.*

These 'wolves’ do not just manipulate the Scriptures, they twist words and emotions, playing on people's minds. They are like whitewashed tombs, outwardly righteous but inwardly “full of dead men's bones” (Matt 23:27)! Jesus tells us that we can discern them by their fruits – that is by the fruits of the Spirit and the fruits of their actions:

Matthew 7:15-23 *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. (16) You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? (17) So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. (18) A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. (19) Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (20) Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.*

Jesus also tells us in Matthew 7 that these people are “lawless” which indicates that they set themselves as rebellious independent authorities, doing their own thing, not fearing God or truly reverencing Him, and with no true knowledge of the God who is love:

(21) "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (22) On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' (23) And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

These wolves had “mighty miracles” but they did not have true agape love or righteousness. Their works were void of the Holy Spirit and were done in the flesh or perhaps by hypnotism or even in the power of Satan:

2 Thessalonians 2:8-12 *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming, (9) whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10) and with all deceit of unrighteousness in those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved. (11) And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, (12) so that all those who do not believe the truth, but delight in unrighteousness, might be condemned.*

The End Times will see the world's best con-artists in operation. These evil workers will have charm and charisma, they will be wonderful story-tellers, convincing liars, glib, exciting, grandiose, shallow and manipulative, as described at the commencement of this study.

The Scriptures even calls it “all deception” and a “strong delusion”. So strong will be this wickedness that it will almost be possible to deceive the elect:

Matthew 24:23-24 *Then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ! Or, There! Do not believe it. (24) For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders; so much so that, if it were possible, they would deceive even the elect.*

These terrible people will make you “feel great” and show you signs and wonders but will, in fact, be wolves who aim to devour (if possible) your very eternal soul!

I believe we are now fast approaching, or are even in, a time of deep and masterful deception, of Madison Avenue Christianity, of mind-control cults, of false miracles, of many a false anointing and even of false Christs!

2 Corinthians 11:4 *For if, indeed, the one coming proclaims another Jesus, whom we have not proclaimed, or if you receive another spirit, which you did not receive, or another gospel, which you never accepted, you might well endure these .*

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 *For such ones are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. (14) Did not even Satan marvelously transform himself into an angel of light? (15) Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.*

2 Timothy 3:1-5 *Know this also, that in the last days grievous times will be at hand. (2) For men will be self-lovers, money-lovers, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, (3) without natural affection, unyielding, false accusers, without self-control, savage, despisers of good, (4) traitors, reckless, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, (5) having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it; even turn away from these.*

One of the signs of these 'wolves' is that they are “without natural affection”. They have no empathy, no real feelings. They do not really “care about” anyone except how they will fit into their cause, program, or church. They pretend to be warm but are actually cold and hostile.

False apostles will have false love. They will make us feel fantastic but their words will be empty of genuine practical sacrificial action. They will always call on you to sacrifice for them, but they will never sacrifice for you! Remember Jesus gave His life for us, and did not first ask us to give our lives for Him! Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10).

True love is demonstrated by true action, good fruits, faith in Christ Jesus, and by dwelling in righteousness. We need to have a clear understanding of what true love looks like or we will be cleverly manipulated by those who want to devour us (especially if we are emotionally needy or undiscerning).

Let love be without hypocrisy (the wearing of masks). Let us be true to one another, shrinking from evil and cleaving to the good!

Blessings,

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