

OUR GREATEST NEED

Mark 12:28-31

Introduction: What is the greatest need of the church today? It is no secret that many churches are "lukewarm." Also it is obvious that many churches are unconcerned about anybody else but themselves. Our youth and young adults are not attending services. There is an emptiness in many churches today. Pretense and make believe are evident everywhere. Looking at our churches today, what is seen in so many of them is nauseating and disgusting. Hypocrisy attends the 11:00 service as many say they have come to worship, yet as soon as they can, they hurry out of the services to go somewhere to spend the rest of the day not keeping the Lord's day holy. The rest of the week the Church cannot be found. "Christians" leave their Church at the Church. Where is the Church the rest of the week? You do not hear the members speaking out against profanity or anything else contrary to what the Church stands for.

What is our greatest need? To tithe? To witness more? To be more faithful? To visit? To support the Church programs? To be obedient? To pray more? To read the Bible more? All of these are great and needed but none of them are our greatest need. So what is our greatest need?

I. OUR GREATEST NEED IS TO LOVE JESUS MORE

1. It is your greatest need and it is my greatest need, it is every Christian's greatest need.
2. It is our Church's greatest need.
3. It isn't easy to love Jesus as you should.
 - Just deciding to love Jesus more won't work.
 - Deciding to be more faithful in serving Him doesn't create more love for Him.
 - The shallow love which most have for Jesus will not mature and grow for there is a coldness in our hearts toward Jesus - Be Honest with yourself - Jesus is not first in your life is He?

II. THE REASON WE CAN'T LOVE JESUS MORE IS BECAUSE OF SIN IN OUR LIVES

1. *1 John 1:6-7*
2. In every one of our lives the chief sin is S E L F
 - Self rules our lives.
 - Self is on the throne.
 - Everything we do, we do to bring recognition to ourselves.
 - We want the credit for everything we do, even for God.
 - If we tithe, we want the credit and people to know about it.
 - If we witness, we want people to know that we witnessed.
 - If we are faithful once in a while, we want everybody to know that we have been faithful.
 - Self doesn't want anything to go to anybody else, even to Jesus.
 - Self isn't willing to move over and make room for Jesus.

3. Jesus once said that "*self must be crucified...*" Have you ever really tried to crucify self? Have you ever tried to pull self off the throne of your life and put Jesus there?
 - We can't do it.
 - Self runs the show.
 - Even with our desire to make Jesus first, He isn't because SELF rules our lives.

4. Our chief sin is - SELF.
 - Self rule - self reign - self desire - self centeredness - self pride - selfishness - self joy - self pleasure - self pleasing, self, self, self....etc.
 - All the sins of self destroy our testimony and our witness. The sin of self destroys our ability to love the Lord.

III. WE MUST CONFESS OUR SINS TO JESUS CHRIST

1. *1 John 1:9*

2. It is a major operation to rid our livers of SELF and all the sins connected to it.
 - They are so big, so important, so powerful.

3. We cannot do it by ourselves. Jesus Christ must do it for us.
 - It is one by one - blow by blow - bit by bit.
 - We must make room for Jesus.
 - As it was with John the Baptist, so it also must be with us: "*..I must decrease and Jesus increase...*"

IV. TO LOVE JESUS MORE WILL CHANGE OUR LIVES

1. *1 John 2:3-6*

2. First of all we must have a desire to love Jesus Christ more.
 - There will be great resistance by SELF.
 - A tremendous battle will rage.
 - Satan and sin will fight every inch of the way.

3. When we begin to confess our sins, the Lord will remove them and make room for Himself.
 - We won't need all kinds of programs in our Church to create interest.
 - We won't have to have sermons and Sunday school lessons on tithing for when Jesus is first in one's life, tithing is automatic.
 - We won't have to have revivals to reach the lost for when Jesus is first in His people's lives, they will witness and be soul winners.
 - The same thing applies to Sunday School attendance and faithfulness. When people love Jesus and He is first in their lives, they will be faithful in attending all services.
 - When people love Jesus they will read God's Word, be obedient and will pray.

CONCLUSION:

1. The greatest need of our Churches today is to love Jesus more.
2. Jesus being first in His people's lives is not something new for Jesus, Himself, taught this truth.
3. We must preach about Jesus, teach about Jesus, sing about Jesus, make Jesus the center of all that we do.
4. If we will do this, love Jesus more and let Him be the center of our lives, our own lives as well as the life of our Church will be changed.
5. Do you really want Jesus to be first in your life? Do you want Jesus to take the place of SELF in your life?
- It won't be easy and you can't help, Jesus has to do this but you have to let go and let Him go to work in your life.
6. If you have never believed in Jesus, now is the time to do so. He will give to you eternal life and give your life meaning. Give yourself to Him right now.