



Loving God His Way

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Unless otherwise stated Scripture quotes are from the NLT

Introduction:

1 Jn.2:15-17- Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you, for when you love the world, you show that you do not have the love of the Father in you. 16 For the world offers only the lust for physical pleasure, the lust for everything we see, and pride in our possessions. These are not from the Father. They are from this evil world. 17 And this world is fading away, along with everything it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will live forever.

I want us to look at "loving God" in the context of Revival! Revivals throughout Church history, without exception, involves the raising of spiritual standards. We desperately need to experience and live in a spiritual standard that more accurately represents the full person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Loving God is one of those standards that needs to be raised in the Church of our generation in the nation of Canada.

When asked what was the greatest commandment, Jesus replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." (Mt. 22:37) Loving God! It's certainly the major theme of the Bible and is central in God's plan of New Covenant redemption. The love God is expecting from His people embraces the whole person, body, soul and spirit.

Without stretching things it's very honest to say that, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son so that we could love God." Prior to salvation every person born into this natural, physical world is born with the Adamic sin nature, which is hostile towards God. Without Jesus in our lives we are in fact called the enemies of God. Col.1:21 - This includes you who were once so far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. At times it's difficult to believe that the unsaved are actually considered God's enemies yet this is confirmed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 5:10 - For since we were restored to friendship with God by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be delivered from eternal punishment by his life. Pre-salvation people are not in love with God but rather are separated from Him by their thoughts and actions. This is what sin does! It puts us in a very hostile position with God. The shed blood of Jesus Christ purchased redemption for all people, yet only those who turn to God in repentance of sin, asking His forgiveness and fully accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior will reap the benefits of Jesus death, burial and resurrection! With the "Born Again" experience comes the capacity to love God in a way that is meaningful to Him. Rom. 5:5 - ... For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. Every "Born Again Believer" is given the ability to love God. It's a part of the salvation package.

Love is at the center of New Covenant salvation! Salvation brings about a dynamic change in relationship with God. It is through the Lord Jesus Christ that sinners, are able to be forgiven and cleansed from sin. It is through the Lord Jesus Christ that a love relationship with Almighty God is established. God loves us and we love Him. Anything short of this is not New Covenant salvation.

Transformation & Change

If a measurable change is not realized in a person's life after having "been saved", then one must question the validity of the experience. Jesus taught us about a changed life! He said "A tree is identified by its fruit. Make a tree good, and its fruit will be good. Make a tree bad, and its fruit will be bad. (Mt 12:33) Being "Born Again" is being spiritually created by the power of God into a whole new person. God takes the bad trees and creates them into good trees. 2Cor. 5:17 - What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun! This "new life" will display the fruit that originates in the power and virtues of God.

How can you tell if what you are looking at is an apple tree? The way you tell is by the kind of fruit it bears. If

what you see being produced by the tree looks like pears then it's not an apple tree you've got, it's a pear tree. The same holds true with people! It's possible for people to think they're a Christian! They may even go to church on Sundays! Maybe they even sing in the choir! Maybe they're even in a leadership position! But when their life is held up to the Word of God, the fruit being displayed is not consistent with that of a "tree of righteousness".

It's a right and a good thing for us to examine ourselves to see if we really do have the life of Christ within us! 2Co 13:5 - Examine yourselves to see if your faith is really genuine. Test yourselves. If you cannot tell that Jesus Christ is among (in) you, it means you have failed the test. To the Ephesian Believers the Apostle Paul said these words. Eph 4:24 - **You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God's likeness-righteous, holy, and true.** To the Galatians he said, **"It doesn't make any difference now whether we have been -circumcised or not. What counts is whether we really have been changed into new and different people."** Clearly it doesn't really matter what denomination you belong to or how many times you go to church! It doesn't matter so much if you're a part of the latest move of God or not! What really matters to God is "have you been changed into a new person". What really matters is are you growing in Christ likeness! Are you maturing and bearing fruit produced in your life by the power of God. Oh someone might say "well I'm filled with the Spirit and speak in other tongues". Well, great, but is your life changed! Are you growing in the fruit of the Holy Spirit? The spiritual rubber must meet the road of practical living in such a way that God is being glorified through our actions. This is how our love for is manifest. Love, like faith, requires actions to verify its quantity and quality.

How Much Should We Love God?

The answer to the question, "How much should we love God?" must come from the Lord Himself. If the God we believe in is the result of fashioning Him after our own image then we can very easily be misled and ultimately spiritually shipwrecked! We MUST always allow God to be fully who He is and at the same time be fully prepared to make any necessary changes in order reassure our love relationship with Him. Let's never forget that He's the One who is calling the shots. We need to find from Scripture what love God is expecting of us.

Most of us in the "West" have grown up in a society where "absolutes" are seriously challenged. We've now come to the place where some would have us to believe there are no absolutes. This kind of humanistic thinking is bad enough outside Christianity, however this concept seeks to corrupt God's people today! The Bible is full of absolutes because it's the absolute Word of the Absolute God. We dare not turn a deaf ear to truths of God's Word regarding how absolute He is regarding our love for Him. God is so absolute about this subject that it can seem to be extreme. **"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind."** (Mt. 22:37) How much of our heart does He want? All of it! How much of our soul does He require? All of it! How much of our mind does He demand? All of it! Without trying to sound too simplistic can I ask the question, "How much is all?" Absolutely everything! 100%! Is that too much to ask? If it seems to be, then we need to ask ourselves the question, "who is it we're dealing with?" This kind of demand is absolutely reasonable because it comes from Him, our Creator and Savior!

Let's listen to the words of Jesus. Mt. 10: 37-39 - **If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine. 38 If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine. 39 If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give it up for me, you will find it.** We need to stop right here and seriously think about what we've just read. In fact, it's a good place to stop and pray about what we have just read. "Lord grant us the spiritual courage to receive what you are saying here".

Does God really mean what He's saying here? Have the Bible translators got it wrong? Let's go back to the original Greek! In this verse we get exactly what we see. God means exactly what He said. Make no mistake, as a Christian, God is making an absolute demand on the love He has placed in your heart. He is not prepared to share it with anyone or anything. The old King James Version of the Bible makes this revelation about God in Ex 34:14 - **For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:** The NLT says the same thing in different wording. **Ex 34:14 - You must worship no other gods, but only the LORD, for he is a God who is Ex 34:14 - You must worship no other gods, but only the LORD, for he is a God who is passionate about his relationship with you.** What we can glean from these verses is the fact that the God of the New Testament is making the same love demands as the God of the Old Testament. Why? Because He's the same God and He never changes. He is passionate about His relationship with His people. He does not treat this relationship as glib or casual. His is a serious relationship that has been established through the precious life blood of Jesus Christ. God doesn't treat it lightly and He doesn't expect us to either!

No Place For Shared Love

We are in serious error if we think for a minute that God is prepared to share our love with the things of this world. God is very extreme and yes demanding when it comes to shared love. He simply will not tolerate it! At salvation God takes us out of Satan's kingdom of darkness and places us in Jesus' Kingdom of light. Like Jesus, the true Born Again Believer is not of this world. We live in it but only as pilgrims on our way to Jesus' country. In His "High Priestly Prayer" Jesus said to His disciples, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of it." (Jn 17:16) The child of God has been spiritually birthed by the Power of another Kingdom, the power of Almighty God! When salvation comes into our lives we exit the kingdom of this temporal earthly world and enter the eternal world of God's spiritual Kingdom. We have been radically repositioned in Christ. Things are very different now!

Few of God's people leave this earth for heaven immediately following their salvation experience. The vast majority of us are required to live in this world while not being apart of it. Clarifying what true religion looks like James said, "Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles, and refuse to let the world corrupt us." (Jms.1:27) **Nt. This is one of the major areas that needs to be seriously and courageously dealt with right now!** Worldliness has so infiltrated the Church in Canada that some of its corruption is now normal to us. We run our denominations, organizations, local church and even our homes using the same "measuring stick" of success that the world does. Big and popular mixed with religious politics is far too common. That which is wrong in the site of God is now being considered right. We are in danger here! Seriously it's time to stop and rethink our religious activities. Remember what Jesus warned in Mt.7:21 - "Not all people who sound religious are really godly. They may refer to me as 'Lord,' but they still won't enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The decisive issue is whether they obey my Father in heaven. 22 On judgment day many will tell me, 'Lord, Lord, we prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name. 23 But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Go away; the things you did were unauthorized.' We need to be found doing God's work God's way and living our lives with an undivided love for the Lord.

Shared love is where the nation of Israel had major difficulties. Throughout their Old Covenant relationship with God they were often warned, rebuked and even punished by the Lord for their spiritual adulatory. They seemed prone to idolatry, and worshipped numerous other gods. Scripture doesn't hide from us the severity of God. He dealt very harshly with idolatry. From this we learn how intolerable "shared love" is with God. This is a very sensitive area with Him and we well to learn from Bible history on this subject. Gal.6:7 - Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow!

In Love With The World

From birth the world has been our home! That changes when we give our lives to Christ! We are now children of the Most High God! His home is our home! To live in this world and yet not be apart of it continues to be a major challenge for Christians, especially here in the western world! We have so much and our society has become strongly commodity driven. Maybe you've heard the slogan, "He who has the most toys when he dies, wins"! That seems to sum up the general attitude of society here in the western world. The problem we have is that this same attitude is very prevalent in the Church.

There is so much wonderful truth in the "Word Faith Movement" that has impacted western Christianity! The down side is the extreme promotion of materialism to the point where we gage our spiritual success by our financial and material prosperity! Let's not forget that the Bible has clear examples of godly people who have had great material wealth. The problem is not really the wealth but the human heart. Where is the heart? That's the real issue! Jesus said it this way, "Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be." (Mt 6:2) If our treasures are here on earth then that is where our heart will be also.

Like us, Moses was a man with a divine destiny yet he still was required to make quality decisions along the way. He could have been a major player in the political arena of Egypt, however, he chose God instead! In the short term this decision cost him a lot but in the long run he gained relationship with God and secured his eternal life! Heb.11:24-27 - It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of the Messiah than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him. 27 It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt. He was not afraid of the king. Moses kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible.

Moses spent his life living in this world while his heart was fully fixed on the Kingdom of God. It would appear he refused to be distracted by materialism!

Jesus taught us about the dangers of being distracted by things of this world in the parable of "Sowing the Seed". [Mk.4:1,19](#) - [The thorny ground represents those who hear and accept the Good News, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for nice things, so no crop is produced.](#) The major point is, "no crop was produced". These people clearly have come into the knowledge of the truth but the lure for the things of this world distract them from their relationship with Christ and their real spiritual purposes. The tragedy is, "They lose"! It doesn't have to be!

Worldliness among God's people is not a new phenomena. This has always been a problem to Christians and more so when times of prosperity are abounding as they have been in our western society. The Apostle John addresses this issue with great clarity in his first epistle. [1Jn.2:15-17](#) - [Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you, for when you love the world, you show that you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only the lust for physical pleasure, the lust for everything we see, and pride in our possessions. These are not from the Father. They are from this evil world. And this world is fading away, along with everything it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will live forever.](#) Do we really understand God's perspective of the world? To Him it's evil! That can seem a bit harsh and extreme to us but that is how He views it. For us to see it any other way simply means we are not living in full agreement with the Savior.

James steps into this issue with guns blazing! We should remember that what he says isn't just a personal opinion or the result of some hobby horse he's riding. What he has to say comes right from the heart of God by means of the Holy Spirit. What James has to say is inspired by God! [Jms. 4:4](#) - [You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with this world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again, that if your aim is to enjoy this world, you can't be a friend of God.](#) It doesn't come much clearer than this! Are we in a position to hear what the Spirit is saying? Do we really want what God wants! Are we willing to make the same quality decision Moses made so many years ago? The Mt. of Transfiguration proves to us that the decision he made was the right one. He was there with Jesus and Elijah! Clearly he is considered to be a friend of God! At the heart of worldliness is the love for things more than a love for God! This shared love is intolerable to the One who give His only Son to be the ransom paid for the sin of the world.

Covetousness Is The Culprit

I'm quite certain that we're not clearly understanding just how evil and wicked greed is! Are we forgetting that God is a Jealous God? Do we really appreciate the fact that God is not willing to share us with anyone or anything else? He not only wants our love He demands all our love. He will not settle for being second in our life. [Col 3:5](#) - [So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual sin, impurity, lust, and shameful desires. Don't be greedy for the good things of this life, for that is idolatry.](#)

The pursuit of the "good things" of this life is, in the eyes of God, idolatry. He must then see covetousness, the love for things, as a god! This love for the things of this world robs from ones total love and devotion to the Lord. It's a sharing of ones affections. We are told that it's not possible to have two masters. When push comes to shove you will love the one and hate the over. You can't serve God and money. [Lk. 16:13](#) - ["No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."](#)

Interesting how the love for money is classified as the root of all, evil. Covetousness or greed has many faces! It can appear as dollar bills, as trophies, as a career, as a passion to get ahead in the world. The list goes on! This greed becomes what we serve and therefore becomes a god. The Apostle Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit when he addressed this issue with the Ephesian Believers. This is what he said to them in [Eph 5:5](#) - [You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is really an idolater who worships the things of this world.](#) In other words, the idolater is guilty of loving the world or the things of this world more than the Lord.

The pursuit of temporal things will rob us of God's best in our lives. [Gal.6:7-9](#) - [Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow! Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get](#)

discouraged and give up, for **we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time.** The principal of sowing and reaping is extremely important to factor into our lifestyle. This principal cannot be avoided. It is in continual operation. If we love this world and all it offers more than we love the Lord then we will reap what we have sown. If there was ever a time we needed to take to heart the wise words of Solomon it's now. **Pr.1:17-19 When a bird sees a trap being set, it stays away. 18 But not these people! They set an ambush for themselves; they booby-trap their own lives! 19 Such is the fate of all who are greedy for gain. It ends up robbing them of life.** If we are having a problem in this area we need to turn whole heartedly to God in repentance and ask Him to help us see eternal things as more real and lasting than the temporal things of this life.

How did Moses get through this life to be with Jesus on the Mt. of Transfiguration? By having his spiritual eyes fixed on the invisible God. This is also how it works in the New Covenant. **Heb.12:1,2 -Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. 2 We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish.**

Heavenly Minded

A person was once described to me as being "so heavenly minded they were no earthly good". I thought it to be an interesting description. It was being used in quite a derogatory way! What is it to be heavenly minded? Seems to me to state of mind where as person is thinking a lot about heaven. Sounds a lot like what the Holy Spirit instructs us in **Col.3:1,2 - Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. 2 Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth.** It's very clear what God instructs us to do! This requires faith in action!

The natural or earthly self relates more readily to this temporal world. That's why it's not difficult to make the things of this life our goals and objectives. That's why it's so easy to get all tangled up in the pursuit of bigger and better houses, the latest vehicles, the better paying jobs. It's when these things become the major priority in our lives that we are guilty of spiritual adultery. They become idols of worship because of the value we place on them. After this the world's measuring stick of success isn't it?

From Scripture we find a special place in the heart of God reserved for those, who like Moses have chosen the spiritual world over the natural world. It means something to the Lord when we give up the pursuit of earthly things to follow hard after Him. It doesn't go unnoticed when we seek first the Kingdom of God throughout our pilgrimage here on earth! Here what the Lord has to say about former saints of God who chose the spiritual over the natural. **Heb. 12:13-16 - All these faithful ones died without receiving what God had promised them, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed the promises of God. They agreed that they were no more than foreigners and nomads here on earth. 14 And obviously people who talk like that are looking forward to a country they can call their own. 15 If they had meant the country they came from, they would have found a way to go back. 16 But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a heavenly city for them.** These Old Testament saints were looking forward the same place Moses was but they never got to experience here on earth. That promise of God would have to wait for another day, but they died with that hope still ringing in their hearts. They chose to live as pilgrim here on earth. They were in the world but they were not of the world. A major point here for us to fully embrace is God's attitude towards these people. They may have looked like fools to the world but God is not ashamed to be called their God!

It's a progressive challenge to maintain right priorities in the Christian life. Others seem to "get ahead" quicker than we do. Others have newer cars and homes, they go on more frequent holidays than we do. The list can go on. Being consistently spiritually focused is easier to say than do! But do it me must! Jesus said that if we would concentrate our efforts on seeking Him and His spiritual Kingdom then He would look after the temporal things for us. **Mt.6:33 - and He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.**

Right Spiritual Focus Is Rewarded:

We don't do what is right in the sight of God for rewards, we do it because we love Him and we're grateful for all He's done for us, however God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Heb.11:6)

Jesus taught about spiritual rewards as a result of faithful service! In fact He boldly and emphatically declares in

Rev.22:12 "See, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me, to repay all according to their deeds. What we do in the "here and now" is important! The choices we make to love, serve and honor the Lord through our lifestyle do not go unnoticed or unrewarded. Jesus told his disciples in Mr 8:35 "If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will find true life." The sacrifices that are made to do things God's way while here on earth are rewarded. Maintaining Godly spiritual priority and focus pays off in this life as well as in the future.

Our true love for God is made very evident through our thoughts and actions. What we really believe about the Lord, His Kingdom and our future will be exposed by our priorities! God requires that we love Him with all our heart, soul and body. Every part of life should be and needs to fully yielded and surrendered to the Lord. His goal and objectives must be your's as well. We must live in agreement with the desires of God's heart. If we're not then we need to turn to Him in repentance, seeking His grace, power, and courage to make and maintain quality decisions that the Lord is pleased to honor! God loves to bless His people. Jude 1:21 **Live in such a way that God's love can bless you as you wait for the eternal life that our Lord Jesus Christ in his mercy is going to give you.**

Rewards didn't motivate Moses to live for God, however they did factor in to his decision making and it's only wisdom to allow this truth to effect our decisions as well! Heb.11:24-26 - **It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of the Messiah than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him.** Choosing God over Egypt cost Moses everything. He chose love for God over love for this world. Life might have been easier for him had he decided to reap the benefits of his political connections. As son of Pharaoh's daughter he was set for life. There's nothing he couldn't have enjoyed in life but instead chose to suffer the loss of physical temporal things to gain the spiritual eternal things! The writer of Hebrews takes this concept out of the Old Testament and brings it down to our generation. This concept applies to us now! Heb. 12:26-28 - **When God spoke from Mount Sinai his voice shook the earth, but now he makes another promise: "Once again I will shake not only the earth but the heavens also." 27 This means that the things on earth will be shaken, so that only eternal things will be left. 28 Since we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be destroyed, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe.**

The things of this physical world are temporal. They will pass away! We need to be asking ourselves, "What of my life and living will remain?" Here's what Jesus taught us: Mt.6:19-21 - **"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** As we live a yielded, devoted and fully surrendered life to the Lord Jesus Christ, obeying the Word and doing those things that please the Lord we'll be establishing a spiritual and eternal RRSP fund that will never be depleted throughout all eternity. God is encouraging us to invest wisely during our pilgrimage here on earth! **It's never too late** to start investing heavily in the eternal things of God!

Loving His Appearing:

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is a very prominent New Testament teaching! Jesus taught! Clearly from the writings of Peter and Paul this great future event had a very dominant place in their lives and teaching! You might want to ask, "What does this have to do with loving God?" It has quite a bit to do with it really! How we live bears witness to our believing! If we really believe in the soon return of the Lord Jesus then it will effect how we live today. Notice what John says in 1Jn.3:1-3 - **See how very much our heavenly Father loves us, for he allows us to be called his children, and we really are! But the people who belong to this world don't know God, so they don't understand that we are his children. 2 Yes, dear friends, we are already God's children, and we can't even imagine what we will be like when Christ returns. But we do know that when he comes we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. 3 And all who believe this will keep themselves pure, just as Christ is pure.**

Paul very much believed in the Jesus' return and it effected how he lived. Just prior to his physical death he wrote something to Timothy that reveals Paul's personal beliefs about his living for Jesus, the rewards he would receive and the fact of Jesus return to earth. 2Tim. 4:7 **I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. 8 And now the prize awaits me-the crown of righteousness that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that great day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his glorious return.** The NKJV translates this verse in such a way as to bring out the motivation behind

the "eager looking" for Jesus' Second Coming. 2Tim 4:8 **Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.** To all who have loved His appearing! Are we loving Jesus appearing today? Can we hardly wait until He returns or do we still have some unfinished business to look after? Do we still have thing we're personally striving for in this life? When ever we hear a sermon about Jesus soon return are we secretly hoping it doesn't happen for quite some time? How we receive the message of Jesus Second Coming can be a strong indicator as to where our heart really is. We don't always know the secrets of our own hearts but God has His ways of graciously exposing them to us so we can address these issues at His throne of grace in prayer.

If there was ever a time That Christians needed to learn how to live life in love with Jesus appearing it is now! His return is at hand and we need to be making ever effort to spiritually position ourselves in such a way that we will not be ashamed when Jesus does appear. 1Jo 2:28 ¶ **And now, dear children, continue to live in fellowship with Christ so that when he returns, you will be full of courage and not shrink back from him in shame.** The return of Jesus is to be an event we look forward to not something we're afraid of. It's a glorious event! One to be anticipated and lovingly looked forward to! After all it the long await meeting of the Bride and Groom! Tit 2:11-14 - **For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. 12 And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God, 13 while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. 14 He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing what is right.**

The return of Jesus finalizes our salvation! It is then we receive our glorified bodies. It is then that the marriage of Lamb and the Bride (the Church) will take place. Think of it the marriage of two great lovers! What an event! There has never been nor will ever be such an event in the creation of God. Jesus looks forward to this day and so should we!

Love Obeys:

Most of us in this generation have grown up in a secular society that says, "If it feels good do it!" Good feelings are definitely a positive element of our human existence, however to use feelings as a gauge of right and wrong is very unwise. Human feelings and especially those of the unsaved will often run foul of God's laws. To the fallen Adamic nature some sin is even pleasurable. Heb 11:25 **He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin.** So we can't always go on feelings. The Born Again Believer must not depend on feelings for spiritual direction. Feelings can and will disappoint us and cause us to live in error!

The only solid foundation we have for knowing the will of God is His Word! It remains the truth when we feel great and when we feel distressed and confused. There are a great number of divorces taking place based on simple human feelings! "Well we just don't feel the love for each other like we used to"! Feelings of deep affectionate emotional caring are great in relationships but this is not what determines love. Love is much more than emotion. Love is commitment! This absolutely true of our relationship with God. The Word is absolutely clear that if we really do love God then we will obey Him. Obedience is not based on feelings. We obey the Word of God when we feel good and when we don't. We obey the Word of God when it makes us feel good and when it doesn't. Let's face it, it not always the easiest must comfortable, or most convenient thing to obey the Lord! For Jesus obedience to the will of the Father cost Him His physical life. He suffered severely when beaten by the Roman soldiers. The Bible lets us that Jesus was so badly beaten, prior to His crucifixion, that he wasn't even recognizable! Isa 52:14 - **Many were amazed when they saw him-beaten and bloodied, so disfigured one would scarcely know he was a person.** Let's not forget, the Lord doesn't exaggerate. Jesus learned obedience through the things He suffered. (Heb.5:8) Jesus love for the Father superceded human emotion and feelings. This is how it must be with us!

Jn. 14:21 - **Those who obey my commandments are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them, and I will love them. And I will reveal myself to each one of them."**

Jn. 15:10 - **When you obey me, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father and remain in his love.**

Jn. 15:14 - **You are my friends if you obey me.**

Jesus' purpose driven life was fueled by "love obedience". Jn. 4:34 - Then Jesus explained: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. Jesus lived His earthly life for His Father in Heaven! Jn. 6:38 - For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do what I want. How do we know Jesus loved the Father? Because He obeyed Him! How do we know if we really love God? If we love Him we'll obey Him at all cost!

There might not be any hoopla, bright lights or fan fare to our daily "love obedience" but in the end it pays off. Jesus said it was the wise man who obeyed the Word of God. It's like building your house on the solid foundation and when the storms of life are over the house is still standing firm. (Mt.7:24-26) To down play the significance and importance of obedience to God's Word and say well God's grace will cover our our disobedience is wrong and will end up robbing God's people of God's best. Jesus said, "Not all people who sound religious are really godly. They may refer to me as 'Lord,' but they still won't enter the Kingdom of Heaven. **The decisive issue is whether they obey my Father in heaven.**" The decisive issue is not based on our feelings it's based on obedience to the will of God. We need to hear this in our day and we need to respond in a positive way towards what we've heard from God's Word.

Conclusion:

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, (1Jn.3:8) The works of devil have various appearances but they can all be put in the same pot, sin! The devil will seek to distract God's people from Jesus' full intentions for their lives. Let's not forget he tempted Jesus with all the glory of the earthly nations. Mt.4:8-10 - Next the Devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him the nations of the world and all their glory. 9 "I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will only kneel down and worship me." 10 "Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God; serve only him.'" This was check on where the heart of Jesus was, here on earth or with the Father in heaven! Jesus response serves as an example for us to follow, "Get out of here Satan, the Scriptures say You must worship the Lord your God; serve only Him." The key points here are "worship and serve" the Lord.

Jesus said the Father is presently seeking worshipers! We error if we think this means people who will go to a church worship serve, sing songs and raise hands. Oh that can be apart of it but worshipping God in spirit and in truth. For example we're told in Romans 12:1 that offering our physical bodies as holy to the is an act of worship. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God- this is your spiritual act of worship." (NIV) We be our physical bodies holy to the Lord because of His "**worship**" (*this is not spelling mistake*) to us, because of the value we place on His divine and holy person, because we value what He has done for us through the Lord Jesus Christ!

We love God because He first loved us.(1Jn. 4:19) Why choose to worship God though spiritual lifestyle living? Because God loves us, has forgiven and cleansed us and given us eternal life through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is worthy to be loved and in closing lets not forget that He's put His love in our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit. We can love God in a way that is meaningful to Him. Let's stop right here and take the time to recommit our lives to Christ in a full surrender to His will! He is inviting us right now and will answer us as He sees the sincerity of our heart!

Thanks for your time. God bless you richly! If you have any questions or comments email john@revivalcanada.ca

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