COMMITMENT (2)

Loved Yet Lacking

Mark 10:17-31

INTRODUCTION

1. Commitment is a word that we all understand. It is a word that a coach will use to bring out the best in his or her player. It is a word that our Sunday-School teachers try to instill in the youth; it is a word that our school-room teachers try to instill in their students; it is a word that a doctor tries to instill in his patients; it is a word that the preacher says much about because the Lord does.

2. We live in a society that teaches that if one has more good to be said for him (her) than not, then surely that bodes well for the person as they stand before the Judge of all. “The spiritual life is not a matter of bookkeeping, in which good acts are entered on the credit side of some celestial ledger” (IB, vol. 7, p. 801).

3. This morning’s lesson will focus its attention on why the Lord said this is not enough.

ILLUSTRATION: “Same Old Lang Syne” (emphasis on the word emptiness)

DISCUSSION

I. HE POSSESSED MANY THINGS.
   A. His worldly possessions (10:22).
   B. His character (10:20).
   C. His reverence for Jesus (10:17).
   D. His desire for eternal life (10:17).

II. HE WAS LOVED AND TESTED BY CHRIST.
   A. Jesus loved him (10:21).
      1. Of course, Jesus loves all, but His love demands a response – and not just any response!
      2. Though this young seemed to have much going for him, Jesus’ love for him was no greater than His love for one wallowing in the mire of sin.
   B. Jesus tested him (10:21).
      1. Jesus tested him, but he did so out of a measure of love.
      2. Paul declared to the Galatians something about telling them the truth (Galatians 4:16).
      3. Love is not an emotion that allows one to leap off an eternal cliff; love is not strictly an emotion, but it is also an action. Jesus tested the young man’s love and devotion.
   C. Was the young man prepared to give it all up?
III. **HE LACKED ONE THING.**

A. Jesus called for *complete surrender*. “A hard test, a stern requirement; yet most necessary “to prove the sincerity of his love” (Pulpit, Volume 16, p. 69).

B. Next, he called upon the young man to follow Him.
   1. “The *young ruler’s failure under trial*. The saying was too hard; the test was too severe; the world was too strong!” (ibid).
   2. The one thing he lacked was the surrender of self.

**CONCLUSION** “Christ will be satisfied with nothing less than our heart, our all. We may have many things, and yet lack the spirit of perfect surrender and consecration. The test is certain to be applied; how shall we endure it?” (Pulpit)
Same Old Lang Syne Lyrics (Songwriters: FOGELBERG, DAN)

Met my old lover in the grocery store
The snow was falling Christmas Eve
I stole behind her in the frozen foods
And I touched her on the sleeve
She didn't recognize the face at first
But then her eyes flew open wide
She went to hug me and she spilled her purse
And we laughed until we cried.

We took her groceries to the checkout stand
The food was totalled up and bagged
We stood there lost in our embarrassment
As the conversation dragged.
We went to have ourselves a drink or two
But couldn't find an open bar
We bought a six-pack at the liquor store
And we drank it in her car.

We drank a toast to innocence
We drank a toast to now
And tried to reach beyond the emptiness
But neither one knew how.

She said she'd married her an architect
Who kept her warm and safe and dry
She would have liked to say she loved the man
But she didn't like to lie.
I said the years had been a friend to her
And that her eyes were still as blue
But in those eyes I wasn't sure if I saw
Doubt or gratitude.
She said she saw me in the record stores
And that I must be doing well
I said the audience was heavenly
But the traveling was hell.

We drank a toast to innocence
We drank a toast to now
And tried to reach beyond the **emptiness**
But neither one knew how.
We drank a toast to innocence
We drank a toast to time
Reliving in our eloquence
Another 'auld lang syne'...

The beer was empty and our tongues were tired
And running out of things to say
She gave a kiss to me as I got out
And I watched her drive away.
Just for a moment I was back at school
And felt that old familiar pain
And as I turned to make my way back home
The snow turned into rain --