

Place: Lurgan Baptist 4:9:2011

Readings: Exodus 8:25-32 10:1-11 24-26

GRAPPLING WITH THE GIANTS

7. THE GIANT OF WORLDLINESS

I heard the story about a certain hunter. Winter was coming and he went out into the forest to shoot a bear out of which he planned to make fur coat. By and by he saw a bear coming toward him and he raised his gun and took aim.

“Wait,” said the bear, “*why do you want to shoot me?*”

“Because I am cold,” said the hunter. “But I am

hungry,” the bear replied, “*so maybe we can reach an agreement.*” In the end the bear waddled off with a smile on his face. He had a full stomach and the hunter had his warm coat of fur, if you know what I mean. When it comes to dealing with the devil there is no agreement to reach. ***Compromise is not an option.*** However, the devil is always trying to get us to make compromises. When he sees that open hostility is useless he changes tactic’s and suggests compromise. He therefore hopes to achieve by guile what he fails to do by violence. Is this not how the enemy works? In the New Testament he is revealed in two characters. Firstly as a roaring lion he seeks to terrorise

(1 Pet 5:8) second, as an angel of light he seeks to deceive (2 Cor 11:4) And what better weapon can he use than worldliness? Are you grappling with the giant of worldliness?

But what is worldliness? John Wesley says “*anything that cools my love for Christ is the world.*” John the apostle says, “*Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the father is not in him.*” (1 Jn 2:15) John is using this word to refer to the invisible spiritual system of evil. So what is worldliness? It’s living for this world instead of the world to come. What is worldliness? It is anything that keeps me from loving the Lord as I ought to love Him, and from doing the will of God as I ought to do it.

Worldliness is not so much a matter of activity as of attitude. You see, it’s possible for a Christian to stay away from questionable amusements and doubtful places and still love the world, for worldliness is a matter of the heart. You may say, “*I don’t do worldly things but I sure would like to.*” Worldliness is primarily living to experience the world’s passing pleasures. Now where do you stand in relation all of this? In your thinking, speaking, dressing, standards, scheming, do you reveal your affection for the world and your likeness to the world?

Now you may be wondering, “*What does all this have to do with the book of Exodus?*” Well, in the Bible there are types and symbols, where one thing stands for another. (1 Cor 10:6, 11) Pharaoh is a classic type of the Devil, Egypt is a type of the world and the Children of Israel is a picture of those who are saved by grace. When the Lord saved He also called us to leave this world and our old master, the Devil behind. (2 Cor 5:17) That’s sounds easy enough but the Devil and the World are always ready to cut a deal with the Christian and the Church. My

worldliness is the end result of cutting a deal with the world and the god of this world the Devil himself. I want you to notice from Pharaoh's offers how this giant of worldliness will attack us. Notice the 4 things that Pharaoh said to the Children of Israel.

(1) STAY IN: DON'T BE SEPERATED

Look if you will at (8:25) Pharaoh is saying, “ *Let's make a deal Moses, you can serve your God, but you don't have to leave Egypt to do it. Serve the Lord but do it here.* ” Can you see here,

(a) A STRATEGY THAT WAS DECEPTIVE:

For this, was calculated to deceive anyone who was not acquainted with the character of God. At first sight it seems very reasonable and gracious, but if you look closer at these words, you will notice that they are different from God's demand. God's command was couched in no uncertain terms. It called for a complete separation of His people unto Himself. (5:1) The Lord spoke about a “ *three days journey into the desert,* ” (5:3) Out of the land of Pharaoh as well as out of the hand of Pharaoh. (3:8) But Pharaoh said, “ *don't be so extreme, sacrifice to God in the land. Surely you can carry on your religion here as well as other people. There is room for all. Why this demand for separation ? Why not take common ground with your neighbours ? There is no need, surely for such extreme narrowness.* ” And is this not what the devil whispers in our ears ? “ *Sacrifice to God in the land.* ” That is, in the world.

My Satan is the Prince of this world (Jn 14:30) the lost are the children of this world (Lk 16:8) the Christian has been delivered from this evil world (Gal 1:4) and as children of God we are in the world physically, but not of the world spiritually. (Jn 17:11-16) Indeed, we are sent into the world to win others to Christ (Jn 17:18) but it's only as we maintain our separation from this world that we can serve others. Now the world system is committed to at least four major objectives.

1. Fortune:

Money, the world system is driven by money, it thrives on materialism.

2. Fame:

Another word for popularity. Fame is the longing to be known to be somebody in someone else's eyes.

3. Power:

That is, having influence, maintaining control over individuals, groups, companies, whatever.

4. Pleasure:

At its basic level, pleasure has to do with fulfilling one's sensual desires. it's the same mindset that's behind the slogan, “ *if it feels good do it.* ” My do you see that worldliness is a tremendous danger to us all ? Do you see that Pharaoh, the devil hates out and out separation to God. He whispers “ *stay in.* ” (a) But notice,

(b) A STAND THAT WAS EFFECIVE:

For Moses was uncompromising in his stand. He says,

1. It is not PROPER to stay in:

Look at (8:26) It's not proper to worship the Lord in the midst of His enemies. God's desire has ever been that His people be holy and separate. That's why Paul writes, "*Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord.*" (2 Cor 6:14-18) The popular cry in most religious circles today is "Get with it." God says, "Get out of it." 1.

2. It is not WISE to stay in:

Look at (8:26) You see, what was obligatory for the Israelites was objectionable to the Egyptians. The animals they intended to sacrifice such as bulls and rams were sacred in Egypt. The bull represented their god Apis and the cow their goddess Hathor. What Moses was saying to Pharaoh was, "*your compromise would be a political disaster.*" (Gen 46:34) To present a lamb in sacrifice to God would be offensive to the Egyptians. The Egyptians would never have understood the worship of the Israelites. My have things changed from then to now ? Does the world understand the worship of redeemed people ? Is the cross for them not a symbol of scandal and foolishness ?

(1 Cor 1:18) Oh, there are many who are trying to blend the sights, sounds and feel of the world with the message of the cross. The problem is this. ***The message of the***

cross and the music, methods, and means of the world are like oil and water they don't mix.

3. It is not BIBLICAL to stay in:

Look at (8:27) Was this not the real point of the enemy's attack ? He was seeking to neutralise the Word of God. The Lord had said "*in the wilderness.*" To have worshipped God in the land would have been total disobedience. God had spoken, the matter was settled. What is the significance of the three days journey ? Well, from Genesis (Ch 1) onwards the third day speaks of resurrection. You see, our place is in resurrection with our Lord. (Rom 6:11 Col 3:1) My take that journey and the world will call you a fanatic, stay where you are and it will call you a hypocrite. (1)

(2) STAY NEAR: DON'T BE ANTIQUATED

Did you notice Pharaoh's response in (8:28) ? If he could not keep them in the land, he would keep them near it. You see, he knew that the music and siren voices of Egypt would soon woo them back to the place which they had left. "*Don't go very far away,*" is one of the devils favourite and most successful temptations. Avoid extremes, do not be fanatical, be sane and sensible in your spiritual life. If you really must be a Christian, don't let it spoil your life. Be a Christian but not a "***narrow,***" one. Be a borderline believer. Straddle the fence. Is this not exactly how the devil tempts us ? "*Sure you can be a Christian believer but don't deny yourself the odd drink, or dance or disco. There are many Christians who*

do that and see no harm in it, don't be so peculiar. Be saved but don't stand out too much. Try not to be different from the world around you. Go to church on Sunday morning but no more than that. Be saved if you want to, but don't talk about Christ at work or school. Listen to the same music. Do the same things. Dress the same. Girls you keep the skirts short. Just dress immodestly so you can tempt all the fellows of the day." "Don't go too far away." Have you ever thought about,

(a) THE TROUBLE THIS BRINGS:

For “*not very far away*,” is a dangerous place in which to live. In the time of the old border wars between England and Scotland, the people living in the border counties had a terrible time of it. First, the Scotch came pouring down devastating the northern counties of England, then the English would invade the southern counties of Scotland, and those who lived in between, on the border lands they were scarcely free from trouble. My it will be the same with you if you heed the Devil's advice and “*not go very far away*.” I read about a little girl who fell out of bed one night. When her mother asked why, she replied, “*I went to sleep too close to where I got in*.” Is that not the sad condition of many professing Christians today ? Although the whole New Testament can be read aloud in less than twenty four hours, there are many who claim membership in a local church for decades who have never read it through once. Do you know something ? They have gone to sleep too close to where they got in. Is that you ? Are you a borderland believer ? Then beware of,

(b) THE TESTIMONY THIS RUINS:

An old English proverb says, “*You can't have both the penny and the bun*.” Lot wanted both. That's why “*he pitched his tent toward Sodom*.” (Gen 13:12) “*Dwelt in Sodom*,” and “*sat in the gate of Sodom*.” (Gen 14:12 19:1) He probably became an Alderman, he was a V.I.P in Sodom. He may have said “*If old Abraham wants to live in tents, let him do it, I've got it made in Sodom. I am an M.L.A. in Sodom*.” My he so identified himself with the ways of Sodom that whenever he eventually tried to speak about the things of the Lord to his family, he seemed as one that mocked. Sure, he was a big person socially, politically, materially, but he lost his testimony and family in the process. Do you know what Paul said about Demas ? “*Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world*.” (2 Tim 4:10) He had no intention in ceasing to be a Christian, all he wanted was that he should be no longer an out and out Christian. What was it that enticed Demas back into the world ?

Was it love of possessions ? Pleasure ? Pride ? Popularity ? My what has enticed you back into the world ? Materialism ? Sensual pleasure. Fear of losing friends. Climbing the social ladder ? What is it ? What is it that has cooled your love for the Master ? Has the devil just whispered, “**Stay near.**” (1) (2)

(3) STAY PART: DON'T BE DOMESTICATED

Look if you will at (10:8-11) Do you see what's happening ? He will now let them go the three days journey, but he wants the little ones left behind. You see,

old Pharaoh knew that if the little ones were left behind, the parents would soon return. Pharaoh says, “ *Let’s make a deal Moses. You can take the men and go and serve God, but leave the rest of the family out of it.* ” Now how would you, as a parent have responded to this proposal ? Would you not have been indignant and angry ? “ *What,* ” you say “ *consent to leave my family in the land of Egypt, while I myself escape, never.* ” Yet there is not a sense in which we have all yielded to this Satanic suggestion ? You see, we have left Egypt by the blood of the Lamb, and the hand of the Lord, but how much effort have we made to bring our children out with us ? “ *be a Christian,* ” says Satan “ *but do not force it down your children’s throat, time enough for these serious things when they grow up.* ” Is that not how the Devil tempts us ? “ *If you press the claims of Christ upon you’ll drive them away, you’ll turn them off for life.* ” Is that not how the Devils argues ? And how many of us listen to him ? The result ? Family discipline is relaxed, the Scriptures are not given their proper place in the home, the children are allowed to do what they like, when they like, with whom they like. My do you realise,

(a) The ATTACK of Satan On the Family:

I don’t know if you have realized it or not, but Satan wants your family. He wants to devastate it, destroy it and doom it to Hell. He does not want you to have a godly, Christian home. He does not want you to control your children. He wants you to let them run wild. He wants you to leave all of life’s decisions up to them. He wants you to let them find their own way. But, you have better understand this truth. ***If you give your sweet children to***

the world, the world will give you back sinful pagans. By the same token, Satan does not want you husbands and wives to get along. Men, he wants you to cast a wandering eye at another woman. Ladies, he wants you to desire another man. He wants to drive a wedge between the two of you, causing you to fight one another and see one another as enemies, instead of friends and partners. My the Devil wants to divide you, and in some cases, he has. I wonder today, do you need to take one another by the hand, get down before the Lord together and heal what’s broken in your home ?

(b) The ADMONITION of Scripture to the Family:

Did you ever read the book of Proverbs in relation to training children? Do you know what it says ? “ *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* ” (22:6) In the very same chapter it says, “ *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.* ” (22:15) Does that mean using discipline when necessary ? (23:13-14) Does that mean being influential in the choice of their company ? Does that mean seeking to conform then to the ways of God ? Paul writing not to Sunday School teachers, not to Good News Club leaders, not to C.E.F. workers but to Christian fathers says “ *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* ” (Eph 6:4)

Fathers, do you realise that God has made you a prophet, priest and king in your own home ? A prophet to teach

them the Word of God, a priest to bring them to the throne of grace and a king to exercise godly discipline over them ? Did you ever think of the contrast that is brought before us between Abraham and Eli ? Of Abraham the Lord said, “ *I know Abraham that he will command his children and they shall keep the way of the Lord.* ”

(Gen 18:19) But of Eli we read that he and his home experienced the judgement of God. Why ? “ *because his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not.* ”

(1 Sam 3:13) Now tell me, which are you like ?

Abraham or Eli ? As parents are you doing your utmost to bring your children out of Egypt ? (1) (2) (3)

(4) STAY SOME: DON'T BE CONSECRATED

Look at the final compromise in (10:24) He first sought to keep them in the land, then to keep them near the land, next, to keep part of themselves in the land, and finally when he could not succeed in any of these, Pharaoh sought to send them forth without any ability to serve the Lord.

If he could not keep the servants, he would seek to keep their ability to serve, which would answer much the same end. If he could not induce them to sacrifice in the land, he would send them out of the land without a sacrifice.

Pharaoh says, “ *Let's make a deal Moses. If you must serve the Lord, go ahead but leave your possessions behind. Take yourself out of Egypt but leave your money here.* ”

You see,

(a) PARTIAL Consecration is Suggested:

Will you underscore the word “ *only,* ” in (10:24) Do you see what Pharaoh and the Devil suggest ? The distraction of a divided heart, the attempt to make the best of both worlds, that's what he is suggesting. The flocks and herds of this pastoral people constituted the principle part of what they owned down here. They speak of our earthly possessions. Is it not right here that many of us fail ?

“ *Gave yourselves to God,* ” if you must says the Devil, “ *but do not consecrate your possessions to His service.* ” Tell me, are you heeding him ? Are you using your wealth to gratify yourself or do you see it as a sacred trust for Christ ? My are you investing in this world or are you investing in the world to come ? Its sad but true that many believers have fallen for this compromise of the Devil. They have so tied up their wealth and resources in this world that they have practically nothing to give to the Lord. Do you recall what God charged His people with in the days of Malachi ? He charged them with robbery. My are you robbing God ? (Mal 3:8) Has God to say to you this “ *Yet ye have robbed me.* ” Are you refusing to give Him even a tenth of your income ? We sing so easily,

***Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.***

Rubbish. For some of you are only tipping the Lord. Do you not realise that its not yours in the first place ? Its all His. And,

(b) TOTAL Consecration is Required:

Look at the response of Moses. (10:25-26) I like that.

“ *Not a hoof shall be left behind.* ” In other words, all that we are and have is going to be given over to the Lord. My God demands it all, deserves it all, and desires it all. He wants out time, our talents, and our tithes. He does not just want the tenth. He wants it all. He wants the ten percent and He wants to tell us what to do with the ninety percent. In the final analysis, the Lord wants you, lock, stock and barrel. When He has you and all you have and are, He is satisfied.

***All that I am and have
Thy gifts so free
In joy, in grief, through life
O, Lord for Thee***

My don't let the world and the devil and the coming Antichrist have your money, your time, your talents, your attention, your children. Nothing. “ *Not a hoof shall be left behind.* ” Are you grappling with the giant of worldliness ? Is the Devil and the World saying ?

- 1. Stay In: Don't be Seperated:**
- 2. Stay Near: Don't be Antiquated:**
- 3. Stay Part: Don't be Domesticated:**
- 4. Stay Some: Don't be Consecrated:**

How can we overcome worldliness ? Well, listen to what John says, “ *And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.* ”

(1 Jn 2:17) The only sure thing about this world system is that it's not going to be here for ever. (Rev Ch 6-19) One day the system will be gone and the pleasant attractions within it will be gone, all are passing away.

That is why this world cannot permanently satisfy anyone, it is not lasting. You know the clamour of the world is always saying “ *look at me, try me, buy me, watch me, experience me, wear me, taste me, drive me, fly me,* ” but the things of this old world will never satisfy for they are transient. The great holiness preacher in the U.S.A. Buddy Robinson once went to New York and was shown the sights by some of his friends. When he got back to his motel room he knelt down and prayed, “ *Thank you, Lord for letting me see New York, and most of all I thank you that I didn't see anything that I wanted.* ” My ... why are we living for that which is temporary, that which is transient, that which is passing ? Is it not better to live with eternity's values in view ? “ *But he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.* ” (2:17) Do you see the contrast ? A life lived for time, and a life lived for eternity. That which is passing, and that, which is permanent.

***The stars shine over the land, the stars shine over sea
The stars look up to God above, the stars look down on
me:
The stars will live for a million years, for a million years
and a day:
But God and I shall live and love when the stars have
passed away.***

Today in this country and other lands, the name D.L. Moody will be used in illustration after illustration. Moody was a man who shook two continents for God. On the tombstone of D.L. Moody they put these words, “ *But he that doeth will of God abideth for ever.* ” Will you say and mean it this ?

*Only one life twill soon be past
Only what's done for Jesus will last
Lord at Thy feet myself I cast
Help me run well for Thee*