

Not A Loner

Psalm 62; 1 John 2:15-17

David began our Call to Worship this morning singing, *“For God alone my soul waits in silence ...He alone is my rock and my salvation.”* And when you combine that with the words of John today, *“Do not love the world nor the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him...”*. When we hear words like these in church, I think that modern ears and modern minds attach to them a severity that goes beyond what David and John really meant to say.

“Do not love the world nor the things of the world...For all that is in the world, the lusts of the flesh and the lusts of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the Father but from the world...”. When we hear words like these, we tend to think that God is telling us not to love anything or anyone, we hear him telling us to become monks or become nuns and to keep all life and all motion at arm’s length, which would be odd coming from these two authors because both David and John come across in Scripture as warm hearted men, tender and giving and joyful in the words we have from them.

David was not by any definition a loner. He was a man who repeatedly gave his heart away, often nobly as was the case in his friendship with Jonathan. Jonathan was the son of Saul, the king who turned on David and hunted him across hill and dale for years and years. David and Jonathan had every reason to be hateful and jealous of one another, but their common devotion to God and his people knit their hearts together in a friendship stronger and more noble than most of us will ever see.

The love David and Jonathan shared only caused them both to love God and to love what is right all the more in the face of tragedy. But not all of David’s loves worked out to deepen and strengthen his love toward God. David married Jonathan’s sister, Michal. So a princess from Saul’s family became the first love of David’s life. But when old King Saul turned on David the whipsaw cross currents of the conflict bent and eventually broke what love David and Michal were able to build with one another. They became estranged over time and drifted beyond one another’s reach.

David extended his heart uncountable times in his long reign with a wide variety of outcomes and the conclusion he comes to by the time he sings our Call to Worship this morning is that love can only ever work if we make up our mind to love God first and most: *“For God alone my soul waits in silence ...He alone is my rock and my salvation...Trust in him at all times O people; pour out your heart before him.”*

By the time Psalm 62 overflows from David's heart, he has long been king himself and he has long seen how unpredictable and unreliable are the affections of the men and women in his court. Friends he had long admired and trusted had turned on him and tried to bring him down. Scoundrels for whom he had no respect had somehow proved indispensable to him, he didn't love them but he needed them to hold his kingdom together. And the point of what David sings is that none of us will ever make sense of our affections and relationships until we learn to love and trust God first.

"Men of low estate are but a breath; men of high estate are a delusion.", David sings. *"Once God has spoken, twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love."* The point being that we ought to love people. We ought to extend our hearts to each other and trust and work with each other to build God's kingdom. But we can only do that safely to the extent that each of us is grounded in a love relationship with that one Person whose *"steadfast love"* can be absolutely trusted. Only God can redeem every other relationship from the sin and corruption that still lives in our hearts until we learn from God how to be and do better.

So when John says to us, *"Do not love the world nor the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him..."*, he's not saying don't ever love what God puts around us or the people who cross our paths. He's saying that there's a first love that belongs to God, and we owe God that love and shouldn't give that love to anything or anyone else. Melissa Swan quoted Jesus in her stewardship message last week, *"You cannot love God and money!"* Jesus was saying, "Don't marry your money. Don't love anything in disobedience to God."