I. Slide1 Announce:
A. Slide2 Easter Services - 7, 8:30, & 10am in Sanct/gym.
C. Slide4a Aspire Women’s Conf - Mark Calendars. Conf here May1st, 7:30pm. Tickets on sale soon
D. Slide4b Children at Risk - 3-5pm in new room.

I. Slide5 Intro: A Community of Mutual Love
A. The Christian’s life seems to be sketched out in its bearing on the believer’s relations with other people. Wycliffe
   1. Slide6 Picture a Child’s coloring book. With a black & white outline of a person on the page. Each of the topics he’s about to mention are like different crayon colors filling in the picture.
   2. As we go through these make a mental note, how filled in your picture is, or what colors are missing?

B. Slide7a Here the writer starts his Epilogue (vs.1-17).
   1. He moves from general admonitions to specific ones. Then he covers his personal comments & his farewell (18-25).
   2. The specific admonitions are broken up into 2 categories:
      a) Moral Directions (1-6). Religious Directions (7-17).
      b) Duties to God & duties to humanity.
   3. How are you & I going to influence a secularized society w/the value & power of Christian truth?
      a) Not w/our teachings necessarily…but by our lives.
      b) Where does the lackadaisical attitude come from that promotes, “as long as I’m saved” or “belong to a church”…I’m fine? What happened to divine duty?
      c) Who said, How we live doesn’t matter?
C. Slide7b We’ll start ch.13 from its launch from 12:28 (read).
   1. How do we serve/worship/lutreo God acceptably?
      a) W/reverence & godly fear & the reminder that our God is a consuming fire.
2. Again, if we **1st** have a proper **love for God** *then* we’ll have a proper **love for His church & His world**.
   a) **Slide8a** The life of *brotherly love* constitutes an essential aspect of the *worship* which Christians must render to *God*; *without* brotherly love, *there is no authentic worship*. This connection is confirmed explicitly in v.16.

D. **Slide8b Outline: Loving, Caring, & Valuing People not Things.**

II. **Slide9 LOVING (1)**
   A. Important points of morality & ethics.
      1. **Slide10a** *Morals* describe what people **do**; *Ethics* describe what people **ought to do**.¹
      2. So he starts with giving us *moral* directions: we are to show personal kindness to our *brothers, strangers, & prisoners*. Then he reminds us of *sexual purity*. Lastly, teaches us *we might have a little on the monetary level...but we have The Lord...and His help*.

B. **Slide10b BROTHERS (1) [φιλαδελφία - brotherly love]**

C. Jesus Himself said *this* would be the *mark* by which true Christians would be able to be identified...*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*
   1. Not a love based on *personal liking*, but based on *shared relationship*. All Christians are *members of one another* because we *share the life of Christ*.
   2. Practically, Christians can check on other members to see if they are *in need*, & see to it their *basic needs* of food, shelter & clothing are provided.

III. **Slide11 CARING (2,3)**
   A. **Slide12a STRANGERS (2)**

B. Not only Philadelphía but also Philoxenia. [φιλοξενία - hospitality]
   1. Not only a love for the *brethren* but also a love for *strangers*.

C. Inns were often times miserable places.

¹ R.C.Sproul
1. **Slide12b** Aristophanēs (446-386 BC) a comic playwright of ancient Athens, wrote *The Frogs*, *Dionysus asks Hercules if he can tell him, which Inn has the fewest fleas.*

   *Theophrastus* puts inn-keeping on the level of *running a brothel.*

   a) Thus inns were not friendly or healthy places for Christians. Thus the need for Christian hospitality.

D. **Slide12c** Some OT saints were rewarded for their warm hospitable ways who ended up entertaining angels w/o knowing it.

1. Like Abraham who extended hospitality to 3 strangers.
2. Like Gideon who encountered an angel under the oak of Ophrah.
3. Like Manoah who extended hospitality to the man who brought his wife wonderful tidings about the birth of a boy/Samson.
4. The writer was showing how God prizes hospitality not saying, *you might luck out & get an angel.* Paul said, to be *given to hospitality.*

E. This isn’t our modern practice of *repaying entertainment by one’s friends,* which isn’t wrong, it just isn’t what this is speaking of.

1. It’s more like what Jesus said in *Lk.14:13,14* But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

F. Personal Application: God places a great premium on opening our homes & lives to others.

1. In someone’s home is where you really get to know them. How they treat their kids; pets; guests; each other. How their siblings get along…or don’t. And, whether Christ is in their home…or what place He is given in their home.
2. If one of your pastors made a drop by visit, what temperature would he feel when he stepped into your home? [Icy? Warm? Hot? Nuclear?]

G. **Slide12d** PRISONERS (3a)

H. This verse contains 2 further exhortations, each followed by a motive for action.

I. This was referring to the believers like Paul that found himself in prison often.

   1. This is to feel empathy for them. Feel what the prisoner or the mistreated would feel. (i.e. Shame, hurt, loneliness, hopelessness)
   2. Identifying with them as if you were bound right to them.
   3. **Slide13-15** Christian persecution is taking place in 40 countries right now.

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2 Kent Hughes; pg.209
J. VOM - A widow in India who was imprisoned for 15 days because of her evangelistic work has died of an apparent heart attack, leaving behind an 8-year-old daughter.

Vani, 31, accused of kidnapping a teenage girl and forcing her to convert to Christianity. While in jail, Vani witnessed to more than 70 women, 14 of whom became Christians. She returned to the jail every two months for a regular court appearance, using her afternoons there to pray for the police officers and prisoners. A guard at the jail came to faith in Christ and invited Vani to her house to pray for her.

1. Pastor Umar Mulinde, who was severely burned in a Christmas Eve 2011 acid attack by radical Muslims. He continues to wear specialized bandages on his face and will require more follow-up treatment and surgeries at a hospital in Israel. Pastor Umar lost his right eye in the attack and underwent extensive facial reconstruction.

K. Slide16a MISTREATED/ABUSED (3b)

L. Physically abused, knocked around, assaulted. Emotionally harmed, injured, wounded. Sexually taken advantage of, molested, abused. [some trafficked, some prisoner in their own home]

1. You have a body, you can empathize with them.

M. Slide16b Even the enemies of Christianity have noticed the practice of these virtues among Christians.

IV. Slide17 VALUING PEOPLE NOT THINGS (4-6)

A. Slide18a MARRIAGE (4)

B. They were in a society in which chastity & honor in marriage were commonly disregarded. (no different today)

C. Marriage was dishonored in 2 extremes: Celibacy & New Morality.

1. The idea that Celibacy is better than marriage. (regarding holiness)
   a) We’ve seen in our worlds headlines far too many times that Celibacy is not a safeguard against immorality.

2. Traditional Marriage is Archaic, thus the New Morality is in vogue, which is no morality at all.
   a) Termed now…recreational or casual sex, or friends w/benefits.

D. Slide18b Remember, God was the One who conceived of sexual intimacy not Hugh Hefner.
1. God created it for the marriage bed...and it was good.
2. The Father gave it to Adam, Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
3. The Son honored marriage by performing His 1st miracle at a wedding.
4. The Holy Spirit furthered honored it in Eph. 5 by using it to portray the relationship of Christ & His church.
   a) Thus marriage should be honored by ALL.
   b) The marriage bed, the sexual relationship should be an altar, where a pure offering of a couple’s lives is made to each other & to God.
      (1) The bed undefiled: Its not just for procreation but also pleasure.
      (2) Anything that is a loving act, a giving act, an agreed upon act is thus pleasing & acceptable to God.
         (a) If you have sexual relation issues, may it become an altar of prayer for you & your spouse.

E. Slide19 Sexual purity is one of God’s absolutes.
   1. (msg) Honor marriage, and guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between wife and husband. God draws a firm line against casual and illicit sex.
   2. God views infidelity as serious. [Note: He covers ALL immorality in 4b]
   3. We Christians are to be outrageously pure.
   4. Christian sexual morality was unique in the pagan world, it made it a source of wonder. May it become that again today.

F. God will judge…both now & later.
   1. Make no mistake…to take up an adulterous lifestyle & remain unrepentant is to secure ultimate judgment.
      a) Judgment in the Future at the white throne.
      b) Judgment in the Present: Physically w/potential diseases. Mentally/emotionally w/guilt, shame & remorse. Relationally w/alienation, estrangement, hatred. And, Societally as it degrades a society, it’s jungle ethics, it often results in illegitimate children, or worse abortion.

G. Slide20a MONEY (5,6) (or not money loving)

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3 Ibid; pg.218,219 adapted
H. Creflo Augustus Dollar, Jr. An American televangelist, pastor, and the founder of the non-denominational World Changers Church International based in Fulton County, Georgia. Last year, Dollar’s private jet ran off the runway while landing in a UK airport. Fortunately, nobody was seriously hurt. But to replace the old jet, Dollar launched a fundraising campaign to get his followers to pay approximately $60 million for a new Gulfstream G650 jet. The jet he wants is the “fastest plane ever built in civilian aviation.” But after receiving immediate and intense backlash, Dollar ended his fundraising campaign.4 [By Carlos Rodriguez, Happy Sonship blog, God is in a good mood, let’s join Him]

1. The problem is not wealth. The problem is the love of money. I love money. So I have a problem with wealth.

2. But I still want to judge him (and I have Bible verses to support those judgments) Yet, to judge him is to bring judgement on myself.
   a) It might sound ridiculous that Creflo “needs” a 65 million dollar airplane to preach the gospel. But it might also seem ridiculous to a father of 12 in Niger that I would “need” an iPad to preach my sermons, or an iMac to write my blog, or shoes to go for a walk.
   b) I don’t know where the line is, but it might be somewhere between people going to bed hungry and pastors going to bed inside their own aeroplanes.

I. The writer here is not forbidding wealth, but the love of $. Covetousness.
J. Wealth has its disadvantages: If it possess you, instead of you possessing it.
   If you trust in it. If you focus your thoughts & interests on it.
   1. Slide20b Eccl 5:10 Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income.
K. Slide21a True contentment comes from resting in God’s care.
   1. Which spills us into vs.5b...which can be interpreted, never, under any circumstances ever, will I leave you.
   2. Which pours us into the praise of vs.6.
   3. So what facts about God help to keep you from loving money?
      a) Slide21b God has promised never to forsake us(5b) God has promised to be our helper(6)
L. So, Christian be content...because you...have...God.
M. Next section, after Moral directions, is Religious directions.

4 http://www.happysonship.com/judging-creflo-dollar-for-being-just-like-me/#more-4032