

Date: December 22, 2019

Advent Theme: Love All

Text: Proverbs

Title: Love All: Justice & Mercy

Big Idea: Loving All means loving what God loves.

- **VALUING MONEY TOO HIGHLY DEVALUES RELATIONSHIPS**

1. *Money Tends to Stir Up Greed, Selfishness, and Pride*

Proverbs 19:4 & 7, James 2:2-4

2. *Greed & Selfishness Create Division in Relationships*

Proverbs 28:25a, James 4:1-2a

Proverbs talks about treasure gained by wickedness (**10:2**), violence (**11:16**), deception (**11:18; 20:17; 21:6**), oppression and injustice (**1:19; 15:27; 22:16**), and charging interest (**28:8**). These are the real-world results of greed, selfishness, and pride.

Proverbs is also clear that the unrighteous pursuit of wealth will not end well:

Proverbs 1:19, 10:2a, 10:3, 15:27a, 21:6, 22:16, 28:8

3. *Wealth-Produced Pride Creates Division in Relationships.*

Wealth tends to make a person arrogant, independent, and prideful in their estimation of their own wisdom: **Proverbs 28:11a**

Pride separates by imposing a better-than value difference between people.

Greed, Selfishness & Pride—the unholy trinity stirred up by the mysterious power of money and possessions, which end up bringing competition, division, hatred, and enmity into human relationships.

- **VALUING MONEY TOO HIGHLY DEVALUES HUMANITY**

1. *Money can impose artificial power structures*

Proverbs 22:7

2. *Money Redefines People by its Own Standards*

Consider these two verses: Proverbs 22:2 and 29:13

The point of both of these verses is that even though we tend to impose arbitrary power structures between the rich and the poor, God does not.

Proverbs 12:9, 13:7, 14:20; Luke 1:51-53, 6:20b, 9:48; James 2:5

3. *Devaluing Humanity Leads to Injustice*

Money tends to make separations between people that God does not make, redefining human persons in its own image.

Because money can buy power, those with the money set the rules for who *has* and who *doesn't*. Power and money are often connected, and oppression and injustice often result.

We shouldn't be surprised that this kind of oppression happens in our sinful world, that it devalues the humanity of whole groups of people, and that it is so often connected with the misuse and undue influence of money and power.

Proverbs 13:23, 18:23, 22:16, 28:16, 29:7

- **GOD LOVES PEOPLE & ADVOCATES FOR THE DEVALUED**

1. *God is known—unlike we are—for not showing partiality:*

“For God shows no partiality.” (**Romans 2:11; Gal 2:6; Eph 6:9; Col. 3:25**)

2. *Furthermore, God has created humans in his image.*

Therefore, humans are *not* dispensable assets:

Proverbs 17:5a

3. *God advocates and stands up for the poor and the oppressed.*

Proverbs 15:25, 22:22-23, 23:10-11

- **LOVING ALL MEANS LOVING WHAT GOD LOVES**

1. *God doesn't love money (so we shouldn't). God loves people (so we should too)!*

We put *far* too much value on money, not enough on people.

God also loves steadfast love, justice, righteousness, mercy, humility:

Jeremiah 9:23-24, Micah 6:8

2. *Loving All means not showing partiality*

Proverbs 24:23, 28:21; James 2:1,9

2. *Loving All means using our assets for the sake of others.*

It means using our power, privilege, money, wealth, and possessions *as tools* to serve, assist, lift up, empower, free, bring justice to, evangelize, and disciple those who do not have the same kind of privilege and possessions we have. (**Isaiah 41:17**)