

ALPHA COUNSELING SERVICES

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Dear Valentines,

I don't remember ever doing this before but I want to share with you what has gone on this week at Alpha.

It is Valentine's week and you would expect this to be a week building up to sharing LOVE and RESPECT for people in your life. Right?

When I came into the office Monday morning the phone messages were from people in distress! The word suicide was mentioned in two of the calls and a third clearly stated "my wife left yesterday with the kids." Add to that two mothers worried about their adult children in difficult possibly deadly situations. A couple came yesterday who are working to rekindle a relationship wounded by an affair. Another couple is coming in today to talk about their desire to divorce after lengthy counseling to save their marriage. Oh, I forgot the adult children frustrated with working with older uncooperative parents with failing health and mental problems. Then this morning I was asked if I would counsel an eight year old with possible ADHD issues and my response was only if both parents were also in counseling. That didn't go over too well.

Now please understand I am talking about people who chose to come to Alpha because of their Christian beliefs. The world around us is having a powerful effect on Christians living in a world turning upside down!

2 Timothy 3:1-4 ...understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money,

proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power...ESV

Sadly, I see all of these traits in our society today and it is heavily effecting us Christians. 1John 3 starts *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it does not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is....*The chapter ends with verses 23 and 24. *And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps His commandments abides in God and God in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.*

My Valentine gift to you is this thought!

Jesus says indirectly that you won't/can't love your neighbor, even the one using the pillow next to yours, if you don't love God first and foremost. So why not make God your Valentine this year! I think you will find that your other relationships will fall into proper perspective as you spend time adoring, relating to, and falling in love with Jesus.