

Reference: [ROM 5:8](#)

Church: GRACE

Date: 1/23/00

## God's Love

Purpose: To show the characteristics of God's love for His people and to show sinners the way to enter into a knowledge of that love.

### 1. Introduction

This morning, looked at Ephesus  
 A church which had a lot of good qualities outwardly  
 But when Christ turned His gaze upon it  
 Saw departure from first love  
 Cold formalism, going through motions  
 We were challenged to examine ourselves  
 Tonight – look at a topic which should stir us up to love:  
 God's love for His people

Need to look at this for many reasons  
 "Love" used very loosely today  
 I could say, "I love strawberry ice cream"  
 I could say, "I love to watch a good game of baseball"  
 I could say, "I love my wife"  
 Do I really feel the same about my wife & a bowl of ice cream?  
 Movies & TV - in & out of love

We are beginning to define life from what we see on TV  
 We have "soap-opera syndrome" - YP, watch out for this  
 Is love really like this?

Not many people know what real love is any more  
 Does love stop when we stop getting anything out of it?  
 Let's look to see what real love is – because GOD IS LOVE!

Romans 5:6-8 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Look especially at vs 8.

### 2. Demonstrated Love

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

God didn't just say "I love you" - He showed it

Actions speak louder than words - easy to say "I love you"

Unless someone shows they love you, can you really be sure?

Many say they love another person

But it's hard to believe them when we see how they act.

God's love isn't just a matter of words - He has fully shown it.

He STILL shows it - present tense - DEMONSTRATES

See how later

### 3. Directed Love

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

Who is the "us" whom God loves? IMPORTANT TO KNOW

Look at 5:1 – "we" have been justified – declared not guilty

It is Christians that Christ died to save from sin

In one sense, God shows love to all

Matthew 5:44-45 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

But He has a special love for His own people - His elect

He chose to love them before He created the earth

Ephesians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. (NIV)

He has loved them from eternity.

Psalm 103:17 But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children,

It is them for whom God has demonstrated this special love.

Upon them He has lavished His love - "POURED OUT" in 5:5

Upon you, if you are a believer tonight

Pause and think on this – don't be coldly familiar with this truth!

1 John 3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

Different from worldly love - directed and fixed from eternity.

Faithful & loyal - not in & out

That's why hope does not disappoint the Christian 5:5

Note - this special love is not for everyone.

Jesus did not die to save all. If He did, then He failed

#### **4. Gracious Love**

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us

What is grace? e.g. Boys and Girls –

Did you get Christmas presents? Did you deserve them?

We love those we are first attracted to.

We like what we see so we talk

We like what we hear

We decide that he or she is worth loving

Something in them draws out our love

What did God see in those He chose that made Him love them specially and not others?

Absolutely nothing!

We were in a totally powerless position - ungodly 5:6

We could do nothing to escape our sin

We were dead, totally filthy in God's sight

This is one of the things that sets apart the love of God

Paul makes the comparison vs 6 cf vs 7-8

God chose to love His enemies

Romans 5:10 For if **while we were enemies** we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

God saw nothing in His people to cause Him to love them

They were sinners - Their sin repelled Him

Yet He set His love on them

Love so gracious that even the worst of sinners is shown mercy

1 Timothy 1:15-16 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. 16 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

No wonder He compares His love with ours here!

What does God's gracious love do for His people?

It changes them: Death to life, Darkness to Light,

Shame to Glory, Enemies to friends, Beggars to Princes,

Orphans to Sons and heirs, Poor to rich

#### **5. Costly Love**

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us**.

Just how much did God love His fallen people?

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, **that He gave His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

He saw that they were in a desperate state - **HELPLESS** - vs 6

The only way to save was for Jesus (GOD) to die in their place

How shall we measure the cost of this love?

How much does God love Jesus?

Together in love from all eternity.

Isaiah 42:1 "**Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights.** I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.

Matthew 3:17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "**This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.**"

1 Peter 2:4 And coming to Him (Jesus) as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, **but is choice and precious in the sight of God**,

**YET** He sent this same Jesus from heaven to a cruel death on the cross

He turned His back on the Son He loved

He poured out His fierce anger on His dearly beloved Son

It pleased God to crush Him & cause Him to suffer for His people

**That** is the measure of His love for His people

1 John 4:9-10 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

How much does Jesus love His people and His Father?

Was He an unwilling victim of His Father's plan? NO!

He laid aside His glory – willingly became a man

Came from glory to a world of shame

From bliss to agony

Endured hatred & contempt of sinners that were His own creation

Endured the torment of living in a sinful world – LOT in Sodom

Wept over sin  
Rejected by men  
Forsaken by disciples  
Beaten, spat upon, mocked; Nailed to the cross  
Forsaken by His own Father  
Plunged into darkness of sin which was not his own  
Attacked by all the forces of Hell

Was it a few nails that kept the Creator of the universe there?

John 10:17-18 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 18 **No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative.** I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

Matthew 26:53-54 Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?"

John 18:4-6 So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and \*said to them, "Whom do you seek?" 5 They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He \*said to them, "I am He." And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. 6 So when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

No - His Love!

*Was it the nails, O Savior, that bound Thee to the tree?*

*No! 'Twas thine everlasting love, Thy love for me, for me.*

Was taunted to come down from the cross

HE COULD HAVE DONE IT! But He didn't

**That** is the measure of His love for His people and for His Father

Ephesians 3:17-19 I ask..... that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

Wide: all may come

Long: He is patient

High & Deep: Heaven to Hell spanned.

And God has accepted the death of Christ on behalf of His people:

Jesus rose again! Death couldn't hold Him

He lives forever and is now at His Father's right hand.

## **6. Conclusions**

How can we tell what true love is?

1 John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Love which is shown in action - **demonstrated love**

Love for His own which lasts forever and never changes –  
**directed, unchanging love**  
Love which doesn't first look for something lovely - **gracious love**  
Love which is prepared to make great sacrifices - **costly love**;  
If you are His tonight, stir yourself up to love Him more!

**But** are you one of the "US"? One of God's chosen?

Do you know this special love of God in your life?

Do you know this special love of God for you?

Which are you?

How can I tell?

John 15:13-14 Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do what I command you.

His command is that you repent and believe

Have you obeyed this command?

Have you turned from sin?

Have you trusted in what Jesus did on the cross?

You can know this special love now - why reject it?

You can be changed now - you need it!

Come to God now - why delay it?

Repent and believe - He will save you.

Then you will know what love really is!