

WORSHIP

Sermon | 7.26.2020



God's Love Is

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John 3:16-18

It is necessary that at the very beginning of this series we understand what God's love isn't. Why is this necessary? Well, I am of the opinion that the average individual's understanding of love is as far away from the love that scripture advocates, even commands, as blue is from red. That is, they look nothing alike. Human love, the love we often reference is defined as an intense feeling of deep affection. The problem with this love is linked to the word feeling, and this is where we tend to place emphasis. How I feel. Feelings come and go. Feelings are prompted. Feelings cannot be commanded only managed. And the love that scriptures speaks of is a love that can be commanded. It is a possession; it is a force. It is not based on how one feels, neither is it prompted, nor does it have to be provoked. Who naturally possesses feelings of love for his or her enemies? Matt 5:44, "But, I tell you, love your enemies". Who naturally loves those who continually sin against them? 1 Peter 4:8, "Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sin". God's love is not human love. It is a supernatural love, a divine love, a love that we have the ability to possess and



administer. John 13:34, “love one another as I have loved you”. It is the only force that has the ability to transform the heart of man. Church, it is our greatest weapon! With this said, how are we to understand God’s love, for we must have correct understanding if we are to possess this love and administer this love. Our text this morning provides the key to properly understanding God’s love. And I believe it is the source text for all other NT texts on love. That is to say we cannot properly understand other NT texts on the matter part from correct understanding of love in this text. So, I want to share three truths this morning about God’s love.

First, God’s love is active. And its foremost activity is reconciliation. God’s love is the only force that brings about peace between God and man. This is extremely important because there can be no lasting peace shared among mankind until mankind is at peace with God. Protest can’t do it, and legislation can’t achieve. Only love. God’s love, agape. The highest form of love, charity, the love of God for man and of man for of God. A sacrificial love, an unconditional love. I want us to know that this love is still active in the world regardless of what is happening around us. And it is this love that we must administer in effort to change the dynamics between friend and foe, black and white, the have and the have nots, the oppressed and the oppressor. And church it starts with and in the community of faith. How can we ever hope for love out there when it does not reign in here? Church, first things first. Acting



Romans 13:8 “Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.”

1 John 4:11 “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

Second, God’s love is all-encompassing. Now there has been much debate on how we are to interpret the word “world” in this text. Some have argued it is not inclusive of all men. Some argue it is inclusive of all men. I understand the debate considering the human nature is to exclude others. Certainly, this declaration would have been astounding to the original audience, considering the Pharisaic understanding of the time which excluded all other nations from the promises of God. We love to exclude people, hence the popularity of clubs and the like. As it concerns God’s love God has excluded no one though man may exclude man’s self. God so loved the world, the destitute, the lost, the sinful, the liar, the backbiter, the murderer, the oppressed and the oppressor, the moral and the immoral, the self-righteous, the Jew and the gentile, etc. This is how the word “world” in this text is to be understood. No one has been overlooked by God! No one has been left out and since God has excluded no one, neither should we.

1 Tim 2:1-4 “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.³ This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”



2 Peter 3:9 “9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

2 Cor 5:18-21 “18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Finally, God’s love is exclusive. That whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. As I have thoroughly made clear, God excludes no one from His love, then what am I saying with this point. I am saying what the texts says and expounds upon in verses 17-18. “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” Christ does not condemn anyone, one condemns him/herself when one rejects Jesus Christ, the full and perfect expression of God’s love. That is, God’s love is Jesus. And I am very aware this truth is not popular nor politically correct but nonetheless it is true. It is what scripture emphatically declares.



(repeat text) If we have put our trust, our faith, our very lives in Jesus we possess God's love and God's love possesses us. Share this love for only this love has the power to change the human condition. Church, it is our greatest weapon. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

