

THE LOVE OF GOD

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture texts: Ephesians 3:14-19; Isaiah 43:1-7. From Roy H. Enoch (07-24-1994).
- B. We can study no grander theme than God's love for us.
 - 1. The greatest single fact in the history of the world is that God loves mankind and has provided for our best life here and eternal life with Him forever (Jn. 3:16; 1Jn. 4:10; Rom. 5:8; Eph. 5:25; 1Jn. 3:1).
 - 2. God's love for us should cause us to love Him (1Jn. 5:3; 2Cor. 5:14; Gal. 2:20).
 - 3. Since there is no greater gift or service known to man, there is no greater motivating force than the love of God.
 - a. Sometimes brethren say that the preacher should motivate them so that they want to serve God.
 - b. It is our love for X that compels us out of gratitude for what He has done for us.
 - c. Anyone who is not motivated by the gospel, does not have the love of God in them.
- C. This lesson: evidences of God's love as reasons to be grateful and to love Him.
 - 1. God showed His love by making us.
 - 2. God showed His love by redeeming us when we deserved to be lost.
 - 3. He showed His love by calling us by His own name.
 - 4. We can see His love by the suffering on the Cross.

I. GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE BY MAKING US.

- A. Humans love things they invest time and effort in.
 - 1. When I was four or five, my older sister had dolls, and I wanted a little black one.
 - 2. For Xmas that year I got a little black doll and named him Nicodemus.
 - 3. We fell down the stairs at Grandmother's and Nicodemus broke his head--to pieces.
 - 4. Grandmother got the white "adhesive tape" and put Nicodemus back together again.
 - 5. But he looked so sick with the bandage that she got some dark green yarn and crocheted him a cap.
 - 6. The next spring when mother cut the sleeves off my long sleeved shirts, I took a sleeve, cut out holes in the cuff and made Nicodemus a dress.
 - 7. Some of you have seen Nicodemus when you have visited us--I love Nicodemus because we have had many experiences together.
 - 8. Grandmother showed her love by taking time to comfort me by taking care of Nicodemus. (She died when I was six and that makes Nicodemus' bandage and cap even more special to me.)
- B. I heard when William Howard Taft was running for president on the Republican ticket, he had little support in some areas.
 - 1. In Kansas he was not having much success among the farmers.
 - 2. He got stuck on a muddy country road, and walked in the mud to a farm house for help.
 - 3. The old farmer harnessed the mules and pulled him out and Taft told him that he was running for president and invited him to a political rally.
 - 4. The farmer had been opposed to everything he had heard about the big city Easterner, but now got on his horse and visited every farm in the area inviting them to the rally.
 - 5. We feel a personal interest in those we help.
- C. God made us and has a special interest in us.
 - 1. He made us in His own image which is a special favor.
 - 2. He made us vulnerable and is even more concerned about us.
 - 3. Some live in fear thinking that God is looking for an opportunity to cast them into hell.
 - 4. But He has shown great patience and love by seeking our salvation and happiness.

II. GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE BY REDEEMING US WHEN WE DESERVE TO BE LOST.

- A. We have all sinned and deserved to die and cannot save ourselves.
 - 1. In the city of New Orleans there stands an old slave market.
 - 2. An auctioneer was selling humans for slaves.
 - 3. A traveler stood watching a line of slaves being sold w/most of them not seeming to care.
 - 4. But one poor girl sobbed bitterly every time the hammer came down on the block.
 - 5. The traveler asked her why she was crying and she said that she had a kind a good master who became bankrupt and now she didn't know what would become of her.
 - 6. The traveler considered the large sum demanded for her ransom, paid it, and thrust the bill of sale into her hands and said, "You are freed."
 - 7. She fell down at his feet and said, "I will go with you to the ends of the earth."
 - 8. She served him through all the years voluntarily, because, as she said, "He redeemed me--he saved me."
- B. We have been redeemed from far worst fate at a much greater cost--do we need to be motivated to serve our Savior? (1Pet. 1:18-19).
- C. He saw something in us worth saving because He loves us.
 - 1. Oliver Cromwell once condemned a deserter to be hanged at twilight.
 - a. The condemned man's sweetheart begged for his life.
 - b. Cromwell said, "He must die when the curfew rings tonight.
 - c. She tried to get the old sexton not to ring the bell, but he refused.
 - d. Then she climbed the old bell tower and swung onto the iron clapper, muffling it so it could not ring.
 - e. Cromwell sent soldiers to see why the curfew bell did not ring.
 - f. They brought the girl w/bleeding, mangled hands.
 - g. Cromwell said, "Your love has saved this worthless deserter. Take him, your love has redeemed him."
 - 2. X has loved us and redeemed us at far greater suffering and for, it seems, less reason.

III. HE SHOWED HIS LOVE BY CALLING US BY HIS NAME.

- A. A person's name is dear to him.
 - 1. He does not want anyone making light of his name.
 - 2. He does not want to disgrace his family name.
 - 3. He wants to give his family name to his children.
 - 4. One is pleased when someone is named after them.
- B. God calls His children by His name.
 - 1. Those who love him want to honor and treasure His name.
 - 2. They do not want to bring disgrace on His name.
 - 3. A wife and children are proud to have their father's name.
 - 4. The Lord's Church is married to X and wear His name (Ac. 11:26; 1Pet. 4:15-16).
- C. Those who wear the names of men disgrace X and reject Him.

IV. WE SEE GOD'S LOVE BY HIS SUFFERING ON THE CROSS.

- A. In heaven He was equal with God (Phil. 2:5-8).
He became a son in the form of flesh to redeem us.
- B. He showed tender love and compassion for others.
 - 1. At the tomb of Lazarus, "Jesus wept" (Jn. 11:35).
 - 2. He often had compassion and healed the multitudes and fed them.
 - 3. He grieved over the lost (Lk. 13:34).

4. X still weeps over the cities of mankind. Yet, somehow, mankind finds it possible to reflect His love.
- C. No character is more despised than the one which rejects love and suffering on his behalf.
 1. In 1916, a California court sent Tom Mooney to prison for his part in a bombing and massacre in that state.
 2. For thirty years he languished in prison and during that time, his wife worked as a scrubwoman and slaved for his release.
 3. She spent her meager earnings appearing before lawyers, judges and governors--suffering rebuffs without end.
 4. Finally a benevolent governor pardoned Tom Mooney.
 5. Now how will he repay his faithful wife whose callused hands and bent form bear evidence of her sacrifice for him?
 6. In less than a year he left her for another woman.
- D. There is ingratitude greater than that.
 1. It is the person who rejects X after he went to the cross for our sins rejects greater love and suffering.
 2. There is no sin greater than rejecting God's love.

CONCLUSION.

- A. See 2Th. 1:7-9.
- B. A diamond and a lump of coal are both almost pure carbon.
 1. One has great endurance and reflects light, the other doesn't.
 2. One has many valuable uses, the other fit to be burned.
- C. Which represents your life this morning?
 1. Are you redeemed by the blood of X to shine in the kingdom of the Lord?
 2. Or are you centered on yourself to do as you please?
- D. Will you accept the love of X by trusting Him enough to do what he commands you?
 1. Turn from sin.
 2. Accept Him as your complete Lord and Master.
 3. Confess before men that you believe that He is God's Son.
 4. Be buried in Baptism that you might rise to walk a new life as a new creature--a child of God.