

The Meaning of the Love of God

Introduction

- A. The most important product in all the world is not that which can be bought. It can only be given and received. It is love.
- B. No one can be a whole person and succeed in life without love# We have been made and life has been arranged so that love cannot be an option in the life of anyone. Those who try to live without love give testimony by their life of this truth.
- C. The Bible states very simply; God is love, (I John 4:8). The question before us in this lesson has to do with the meaning of God's love. What does it mean for God to love me? And, a closely related second question - What should my response be to God's love?

I. The Biblical Statement of God's Love, Malachi 1:2.

I have loved you, saith the Lord

Observation: In these few bold words God affirms His love to us. One conclusion we quickly draw about love - is that it is highly personal. The Infinite God loves us as individuals. There is no "humanity* or "common man" for God to love - only persons, individuals. He loves us as persons - individually.

II. The Illustration of God's Love, Romans 5:8.

But God commendeth (revealed, proved) His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Observation: The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ was and still is the evidence of God's love. If the only testimony we had of His love was the Bible we would tend to doubt the statement. God has done more than state it often in His Word - He has proven His compassion in history!

III. The Interpretation of God's Love, I John 4:9,10.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Observation: Now we see one of the most important facets of God's love - it is an action. In John 3:16 it states "God so loved . . . that He gave His only begotten Son . . ." This divine giving which resulted in the Incarnation, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is important for us to understand if we are to know the meaning of God's love. In God -- love and action are inseparable.

IV. The Biblical Application of God's Love.

A. God's love has made a provision for our salvation. Roman 5:8,9.

But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood (death), we shall be saved from wrath (Hell) through Him.

Observation: Jesus Christ bare our eternal judgment. When we receive Him as Savior and Lord (John 1:12) the value of His death is imputed to us (Eph. 1:7). All the benefits of salvation immediately become ours (Eph. 1:3; Romans 5:1; 8:1-3; Col* 2:10-15).

B. God's love is the basis of our assurance of salvation. I John 3:1,2.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God, therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God

Observation: These verses trace the source and assurance of our adoption back to the love of God. Here we need to remind ourselves again that God's love is an action which provided the atonement. Because of the death of Jesus Christ - we can be forgiven and accepted by God.

C. God's love has established a permanent salvation relationship. Rom. 8:35,39.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation . . . nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Observation: The type of a provision produced by God in His love has made the relationship between Himself and the believing sinner to be a permanent one. This simply means that the compassion of God and the product of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ - will be ours forever. Does this mean that we can live in sin? In no way. The person who continually lives in known sin as a characteristic of his life is not a genuine believer (I John 2:3,15; 3:8,9,14,24; 5:20).

D. God's love has provided the motivation and power to obey God. I John 2:5; 5:3.

But whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected, hereby know we that we are in Him . . . For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous.

Observation: Through the work of Jesus Christ the Christian has been set free from the bondage and power of sin. This freedom becomes more and more a reality in our lives as we learn to fellowship with God and claim the provision of God in faith and love.

E. God's love enables the believer to love other believers. I John 3:16.

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Observation: To love other believers is the test and evidence of genuine salvation (John 13:34,35). As God's love is an action -- so must our love for one another.