

God's Plan to Save the World

John 3:16-17

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. NKJV

I wish today that I could communicate to you just how great our God is. That I could explain how much He loves you and what He has done for you. I wish that I could help you see just what God has planned for your life and what He expects of you in order for you to be a part of His great plan. Well that is what I want to do this morning in about 30 minutes as we look at this most beloved of all passages.

I. A Plan Motived by Love

A. We live in a world that talks constantly of love.

1. It is in our music, our movies, our magazines, on the tv shows.
2. Novel after novel searches out love to draw the reader into the story.
3. Our children from a very young age will tell their parents, "I love you."

B. But yet we seem to have comprehended so little of what real love is.

1. For most people love is very conditional.
2. We love others for what they do or might do for us.
3. Engaged couples would climb the highest mountains, cross the greatest desert, swim the raging river for a chance at true love.
4. But 3 years later they won't carry out the garbage for it.

C. When we consider the attributes or characteristics of God, love is extremely important.

1. God is connected with love that John tells us that God is love, 1 John 4:8, 16.
2. God's love though does not cancel out His other characteristics.
 - a. An honest man might for love's sake do thing he should not.
 - b. As matter of fact, for humans love often turns to hate when it is shunned.
3. But not so with God's love.
 - a. God is holy and will always be holy, just and true.
 - b. God's love will never cause God to compromise on His righteousness.

- c. As we see here in this plan that it was God's love for us that caused Him to provide for a payment for our sin in the death of His Only Begotten Son.
- d. God's love could never say, "Well I'll just let them off" for that would violate God's justice.
- e. If there were a judge who loved everyone and allowed all convicted criminals to go free, I doubt that anyone would think they were a good judge.
- f. So therefore, God's love doesn't mean that God can allow sin to go unpunished.

D. God's love is unconditional.

- 1. The Greek word here ἀγάπη agape means to love without condition.
- 2. God's does not love you because you love Him. Instead the Bible says that we love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19
- 3. He didn't set His love on us because we were good, or smart, or rich.
- 4. He didn't set His love on us because we were just a loving person with potential faith.
- 5. As God told Israel of old, "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. 7 The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; 8 but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Deut 7:6-8 NKJV

II. A Plan that Includes all the World

- A. The word world comes from κόσμος kosmos (kos'-mos); probably from the base of NT:2865; orderly arrangement, i.e. decoration; by implication, the world (in a wide or narrow sense, including its inhabitants, literally or figuratively [morally]):
 - 1. The word means to bring order out of disorder and is the word from which we get cosmetics.
- B. It includes more than Jews.
 - 1. The idea is that people from every race and nation will be there. Rev. Tells us that there will be people from every tribe, every ethnic group there.
 - 2. Even though God set His affection on the Jews yet He had much bigger

plans.

- C. It even includes more than just people.
 - 1. Rom 8:20-23 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. NKJV
 - 2. God loves His creation and one day will restore it to the perfection it had at the beginning.
 - 3. God is not dependant upon you and me to save the world.
 - 4. But we are to be good stewards of all that God has given us.
 - a. Jesus taught in parables over and over again that we are only stewards, we really don't own anything, God owns it all.
 - b. And we need to take care of what He has given us.

III. A Plan that Calls for Atonement

- A. God's love caused Him to send His only Begotten Son.
 - 1. Not simply to tell us how to live or set for us a perfect example.
 - 2. He came to die, to satisfy God's judgment on us for our sin.
 - 3. Throughout the OT God shows how people cannot approach Him without the blood of an innocent sacrifice.
- B. As we said earlier, God's love cannot let the guilty go without justice being satisfied.
 - 1. Justice says that if you transgress, if you disobey you deserve punishment.
 - 2. Justice says that God cannot simply allow the sinner to go free.
 - 3. Justice says that in order for God to be just, one must pay all we owe.
- C. Jesus paid it all.
 - 1. He didn't come to make a partial payment but to pay it all.
 - 2. He didn't come to get us almost to heaven.
 - 3. Would you get on a plane that would fly you half way and then let you fly the rest yourself?

IV. A Plan You Can Believe In

A. We must believe.

1. Else we call God a liar.
2. Else we reject the gift of His Son and forfeit eternal life.

B. God requires faith, reliance upon Jesus alone.

1. If you have your only plan just in case God comes up short, you will never make it.

V. An Eternal Plan

A. From eternity Jesus the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rev 13:8 NKJV

B. His blood was the blood of the everlasting covenant.

1. Heb 13:20-21 20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. NKJV

What is your response to God's plan to save the world?

Will you submit to it, embrace it and trust in Him alone, giving Him your life?