

O How He Loves You and Me

John 17:20-23

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. NKJV

“and that the world may know that You have . . . have loved them as You have loved Me.”

The world does a lot of talking about love, but talk is cheap. And although there are some great stories of love among humans, they pale in comparison with the love which God has for us.

Now we know all that in our head, but it is hard for us to work it out in our lives. I know that is true because Christians are plagued with the same problems that non-Christians are. They struggle with bouts of depression. They strive for significance. They are always worried about their own self-worth.

So we have it in our heads that God loves us, but what difference does that make? How would we be any different if He did not love us? And if God loves Christians, then why are they not much different than the rest of the world of which they are a part?

Part of the problem is the iceberg phenomena. We see that giant piece of ice floating in the ocean and we marvel, but we cannot comprehend the amount of ice we still cannot see.

So it is with the love of God, we just can't appreciate how much He really loves us because God uses different terms and specifications than we do.

We consider God's love to be like human love. With its fickleness and degrees of variation. We cannot help but compare His love to that of our parents, especially our earthly father. And that is where the problems begin. God's love is not patterned after their love, their love is patterned after His.

So listen today as we try to just get a glimpse of this love that Jesus talks about.

- I. You have . . . have loved them **as** You have loved Me
 - A. That little word is very important here.
 - 1. It tells us that God loves us in the same manner and to the same degree that He loves the Son.
 - B. That that should blow our minds, like an over loaded circuit.
 - 1. Because we have great difficulty loving people the same.
 - 2. We have friends and close friends.
 - 3. Even among our children and grand-children we must fight the urge to

favor one over the other.

C. So it is that we just cannot comprehend that God loves us as He loves His own Son.

II. What are the characteristics of God's love for us.

A. God's love is infinite.

1. God is an infinite being and is infinite in all His characteristics.
2. He is infinite in knowledge, power, goodness, holiness, faithfulness, wrath, sovereignty, wisdom, and of course His love is infinite.
3. Now it is impossible for us to understand infinity.
4. We have nothing to represent it, only the universe provides an example of infinity.

B. But one thing we know, and that is that our love is anything but infinite.

1. People "fall out of love" about as fast as they fall in love.
2. And even the love of parents for their children is usually severely tried when the children turn teenagers.
3. Since we rarely experience anything close to infinite love it is difficult for us to believe that God could love us that much.

C. Also the teachings of some churches and groups do not help in the matter.

1. So many groups teach that God's love can be cut short if you do not do all the things that He requires.
2. As a matter of fact some churches have a system so as to get back into God's good favor by performing certain duties or ceremonies.
3. They have a whole system of merit awards that get you back into the love of God.
4. No wonder that often when Christians fall into some great difficulty or tragedy that they often think that God is out to get them.
5. One of the plaguing questions that we often hear is, "why would God do this to me."

D. God's love is eternal.

1. We discover in the next passage that God loved Jesus from the foundation of the world and so He loved us.
2. But more importantly His love will never come to an end.

E. God's love is perfect.

1. It is complete.
2. It is all that we could hope or expect.

III. God's love provides security.

- A. It is amazing how many times the love of God for us is connected to the sacrifice of Jesus.
1. Ro 5:8 (NKJV) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
 2. Jn 3:16 (NKJV) 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.
 3. Gal 2:20 (NKJV) I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
 4. 1Jn 4:10 (NKJV) 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.
- B. This means that if God's love provided for our failures then we are secure in Christ Jesus.
1. Ro 8:1 (NKJV) There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.
 2. 1Jn 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us

IV. His love causes us to love others.

- A. 1Jn 4:8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, 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. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides

in love abides in God, and God in him. 17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us. 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.