

December 25, 2011

"God's Love"

John 3:16

"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. (John 3:16 NKJ)

I. God's love is extreme –

"For God so loved ..." (John 3:16 NKJ)

The word so here highlights the HIGH and extreme quality of God's love for us. It speaks to the extreme lengths God went to for us –

1. It is extreme in its reach to lost sinners -

"Ain't mountain high enough, ain't valley low enough, ain't no river wide enough to keep me from you!"

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8 NKJ)

David understood this –

¹¹ For Your name's sake, O LORD, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great. (Psalm 25:11 NKJ)

^{NKJ} Psalm 51:1 <To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.> Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. (Psa 51:1 NKJ)

2. God's love is extreme in a multidimensional way -

¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height-- ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph 3:17-19 NKJ)

A. *Width* - ¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:12 NKJ)

B. *Length* - ²⁴ But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Heb 7:24-25 NKJ)

C. *Depth* - He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps. (Psalm 40:2 NKJ)

D. *Height* - For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; (Psalm 103:11 NKJ)

II. God's love is eternal –

"For God so loved the world ..." (John 3:16 NKJ)

The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with loving kindness I have drawn you. (Jeremiah 31:3 NKJ)

"I believe the doctrine of election, because I am quite certain that, if God had not chosen me, I should never have chosen Him; and I am sure He chose me before I was born, or else He would have never chosen me afterwards; and He must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why He should have looked upon me with special love." CH Spurgeon

III. God's love is for every tribe, tongue, kindred and nation –

"For God so loved the world ..." (John 3:16 NKJ) *Not only the Jews ---*

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, (Rev 5:9 NKJ)

¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh-- who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands-

¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:11-22 NKJ)

⁶ "I, the LORD, have called You (*Jesus Christ*) in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, (Isa 42:6 NKJ)

IV. *God's love is extravagant –*

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son ..." (John 3:16 NKJ)

³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Rom 8:32 NKJ)

We often evaluate or estimate the love of another by the expense of the gift or gifts they may give us. Even Jesus evaluated gifts this way and God KNOWS what the true cost is of those gifts we give COST US –

⁴¹ Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many *who were* rich put in much. ⁴² Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. ⁴³ So He called His disciples to *Himself* and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; ⁴⁴ "for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood." (Mark 12:41-1 NKJ)

³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. (John 12:3 NKJ)

V. *God's love is a love to believe in –*

"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. (John 3:16 NKJ)

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:14-15 NKJ)

VI. *God's love is a saving love –*

"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. (John 3:16 NKJ)

"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21 NKJ)

1. *We would and should perish without this love –*

As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. (Romans 3:10-11 NKJ)

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, (Romans 1:18 NKJ)

²⁷ And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, (Hebrews 9:27 NKJ)

2. *Yet in Christ God found a way to be both Just and Justifier –*

²¹ But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (Rom 3:21-24 NKJ)

VII. *God's love is demonstrated to us in the Lord's Supper-*

¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, "This is My body which is thanks, and said, "Take this and divide *it* among yourselves; ¹⁸ "for I say given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:17-20 NKJ)