

Title: **GOD'S LOVE IN US**

Text: John 17:26

Subject: *God's Everlasting Love for His Elect*

Tape: *John #117*

Reading: *Romans 5:1-21*

Introduction:

Everywhere today (Easter Sunday) people are confronted the facts of Christ's incarnation, life, death, and resurrection, facts that cannot be denied. But, I have a few questions for you...

1. Do you know what the Lord Jesus Christ did while He was here on earth?
2. Do you know what he has done and is doing since He went back into heaven, since His resurrection from the dead?
3. Do you have any idea why He did what He did and why He does what He does?

Understand this: No one will ever be saved by learning the history of Christ's life, or by celebrating the great events of His life (His Virgin Birth — His Passion — His Death — His Resurrection — His Ascension). You've got to know something else. You

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must know the meaning of His life, death, and resurrection. The Gospel is the declaration of the meaning of His life, death, and resurrection!

The title of my message is — **GOD'S LOVE IN US**. While you are turning to John 17, let me make five statements about the love of God.

1. *“God is love.”* — That is Who God is and what God is. — *“God is love!”*
2. God commends His **love toward us** in the Sacrifice of His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:8).
3. The Triune God acts in **love for us** in all His works of grace and providence. — The nuptial chariot in which our blessed Savior carries His Bride through the ages of time is *“paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem”* (Song of Solomon 3:10). — *“In love having predestinated us!”*
4. God sheds abroad His **love in** us in the gift of His Spirit (Romans 5:5).

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5. God's love is **made perfect in us** when by faith in Christ we are made to know and assured of His love for us (1 John 4:9-19).

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Here in John 17 the Lord Jesus is about to leave this world. He is going back to the Father.

- He has told His disciples that they must abide on the earth for a while, that they must endure unceasing trials, heavy troubles, and great tribulation.
- He has promised to send His Holy Spirit to comfort them.
- He has promised to help them.
- He urged them to simply trust Him.

But He knew their hearts were heavy, anxious, troubled, and fearful. He knew that they were full of doubts and questions. So, just before He goes out from them, just before He goes to die in their room and stead, the Son of God tenderly takes them by the hand, as it were, and says, "Let's go to God and pray."

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It is this great, high priestly prayer that is before us in John 17. **In these 26 verses our Master prays for the complete and perfect salvation of our souls** (the salvation of all God's elect).

- Preservation (v. 11, 15)
- Joy (v. 13)
- Sanctification (v. 17)
- Union (vv. 21-23)
- Heavenly Glory (v. 24)
- Complete Gratification (v. 24)

Let's read just the very last part of this great prayer together. What a treasure we have before us!

(John 17:24-26) "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (25) O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. (26) And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them,

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and I in them.”

Our text will be verse 26. — *“I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”* With those words our blessed Savior tells us the meaning of His life, death, and resurrection as our Substitute. Let me try, one more time, to talk to you about the love of God as it is revealed in this great chapter. My subject is — **GOD'S LOVE IN US.**

GREAT SUBJECT

What a great subject! I cannot imagine a subject of greater depth, a mystery more wondrous, or a motive more inspiring than the love of God. I never feel my own incompetence as a preacher more than when I try to preach about the love of God in Christ. The love of God is an ocean of infinite depth, a mine with infinite treasures, and a mystery of infinite wonders.

- Infinitely Vast!
- Infinitely Full!
- Infinitely Rich!

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- Infinitely Wondrous!

The love of God is a subject completely beyond the reach of comprehension in our present state. He who knows the most about it knows very little. Here is a subject into which we may dig and dig as deep as heart and mind will allow, and still never discover all the golden nuggets which lie within it.

Yet, it a subject that is always indescribably delightful, comforting, and instructive for our souls.

- How many have been converted by the commendation of God's love to sinners in the sacrifice of his darling Son!
- What has more effectually corrected us from the error of our ways that a fresh reminder of God's love for us?
- Nothing so effectually reproves our sin, unbelief, and worldliness as the love of God for us.
- Nothing moves our hearts Godward like the revelation of God's love for us.

May God the Holy Spirit show us something of the wondrous mystery here revealed. — *"I have declared*

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unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

Proposition: Here our Savior speaks about what He had done, what He would do, and why. In a word, He here declares in the hearing of His disciples the entire purpose of His existence in human flesh, summarizes the whole of His work, and asserts that the purpose of all is this: — *"That the love wherewith thou has loved me may be in them, and I in them!"*

IN US

The very last word of our Lord's prayer is concerning the love of God for us; but here the love of God for us is made manifest by the love of God in us. This is the last petition which He offers, — *"That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them."* He means for us to know and enjoy the love of God for us! But there is more here than that. He prays that the love wherewith the Father loved Him may itself be in us! He could ask nothing greater than this. **He asks that we might be**

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filled with all the fulness of the love of God. In that great request, our dear Savior asked that we might be filled with all the fulness of God himself, for God is love. — God is love, and he in whom loves dwells dwells in God and God in him.

It is my prayer that, this very hour, the Lord God will graciously grant this request of His Son for your soul! — O great God of grace, shed abroad Your love in the hearts of chosen, redeemed sinners, for Christ's sake. — **That is the very beginning of the experience of grace.** When God comes to sinners in saving power and grace, He puts His love in them.

(Romans 5:1-5) “Therefore, being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the

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love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

“Only love to us be given,
Lord, we ask no other heaven!”

Indeed there is no other heaven here below or yonder above than to enjoy the fulness of His perfect love. This is where the prayer of our great High Priest ends. — *“That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them.”* I repeat — What a great subject! Spirit of God, help me, for Christ’s sake to make known the love of God that passeth knowledge!

(Ephesians 3:14-19) “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;
17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what [is] the breadth, and length, and depth, and

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height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”

Alright, I want to show you **FOUR THINGS** in this message.

1. GOD REVEALED IN CHRIST

First, the Lord Jesus looks backward and summarizes His entire life and ministry. — “*I have declared unto them Thy name.*”

Now listen to me and hear me well. — **There is no salvation without knowing God. And there is no knowing God apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.** Knowledge is not salvation; but there is no salvation without knowledge.

The Son of God came down here in human flesh and dwelt among us, so that we who are but weak flesh might know the eternal, infinite, incomprehensible God.

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Watch the Master's language. He says, "*I have declared unto them Thy name.*" What a tremendous statement of fact! Here is a Man appealing to the righteous judgment of God Himself, asserting with absolute, unqualified confidence that He had fully, constantly, and perfectly made known to men all that God is!

The strange thing is that you and I are not astonished by this fact. Many of you have heard it from your infancy and have heard it so constantly that it no longer seems astonishing. Be astonished, my soul! **Here is a Man Who never learned anything about God, a Man Who has fully revealed God, a Man Who is God!**

This is our Savior's own account of His whole life and ministry. The meaning of all that He is and all that He did on this earth is just this: — He stood here in human flesh and said, "Look at me. This is God. 'I AM!'"

(John 14:7-10) "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth

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ye know him, and have seen him. (8) Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. (9) Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **He that hath seen me hath seen the Father**; and how sayest thou *then*, Show us the Father? (10) Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.”

THE FATHER REVEALED BY CHRIST

As the Father was and is revealed only in Christ, so it is only by Christ that He is revealed to us and in us. The only way men and women can and will know God is by special, Divine revelation.

(Matthew 11:25-27) “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (26) Even so, Father:

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for so it seemed good in thy sight. (27) All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.”

The knowledge here spoken of is a knowledge Christ gives. — *“I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it.”* — It is not knowledge we pick up as a matter of book learning, but knowledge given us by Christ. It is not knowledge communicated by a preacher, but knowledge granted by God the Holy Spirit.

DISTINGUISHING KNOWLEDGE

This knowledge distinguishes God's elect from the world. It is the mark by which the elect are made manifest. In the sixth verse of this chapter our Lord says: — *“I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gayest me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gayest them Me; and they have kept Thy word.”* The world does not know the Father, and

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cannot know Him, for it abides in the darkness and death of sin. Judge yourselves therefore by this sure test, and let the love which grows out of gracious knowledge be a token for good unto you.

2. GOD'S NAME DECLARED

Second, our Savior looks forward to that which He would yet do. Look at the text again. — “*I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it.*”

AT CALVARY

Throughout His life He had declared the Father's name, His character. But He had not yet finished the revelation. Had the revelation ended here, no son of Adam had ever known God. He says, “*I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it.*” — **Go with Him to Gethsemane**, and hear Him declare the name of God. But do not stop in Gethsemane. — **Go on to Calvary**. Pause, my soul, adore and wonder! Here, as I behold the Christ of God suffering all the horrid wrath of God as my Substitute, I see the Lord God Himself revealed. Now

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my soul cries with the prophet, — *“Lo, this is our God! We have waited for Him! He will save us!”*

- Only now is it possible for God to be both the righteous God and my righteous Father.
- Only now can the Judge of all the earth, Who must do right, embrace us poor, derelict prodigals as the sons of His love!

“Lo! In the grace that rescued man
God’s brightest form of glory shines!
Here, on the cross, ‘tis fairest drawn
In precious blood and crimson lines.

“Here I behold His inmost heart,
Where grace and vengeance strangely join,
Piercing His Son with sharpest smart,
To make the purchased treasure mine.

“Oh, the sweet wonders of that cross,
Where God the Savior loved and died!
Her noblest life my spirit draws
From His dear wounds and bleeding side.”

BY THE GOSPEL

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When God the Holy Spirit comes to sinners in saving mercy, He is sent by the enthroned Christ, Who continually declares the Father unto men by the Gospel in the saving operations of His grace. When God saves a sinner, not only has the sinner learned who God is, the Father's name has been so declared and manifested in the Son and by the Son in the sinner's heart that the sinner is made to love the God he once despised!

FOREVER

But do not ever imagine that there will be an end to this glorious work. The knowledge of the infinite God comes to us gradually. How slow we are in learning! And when we have learned all that can be learned here, we will have learned but little! Throughout the glory of eternity, the Lord Jesus Christ will be declaring the Father to us!

3. THE REASON

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Now, *third*, our Savior tells us the reason for this revelation of God. He says, (Watch the language!), “*I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: **that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them,** and I in them.*”

Our Lord's prayer **is not that the Father's love may be set upon us, or moved toward us.** God does not love us because we know Him. He loved us long before we knew Him. Paul speaks of — “*His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins.*” Christ did not come to set His Father's love upon the chosen. Oh, no! He did not die to get the Father to love us. **He came here and died because God loved us!**

I cannot begin to tell you all that is included in this statement. (A man cannot tell what he does not know, and shouldn't try!) But it is certain that our Lord would have us understand at least these four things.

A REVELATION

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First, our Lord Jesus here prays that the love of God for us would be shed abroad in our hearts, assuring us of the Father's love for us (Romand 5:5). **Our blessed Savior would have us enjoy a deep, continuous, undisturbed assurance of the love of God for us.** It is this revelation of the love of God that is both the cause and the fruit of faith in Christ.

A REALIZATION

Second, our great Savior would have us constantly realize that the love the Father has for us is that same love which He enjoys! — “*That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them.*”

Oh, wonder of wonders, I feel more inclined to sit down and roar with rapturous laughter than to stand here and talk! The love wherewith the Father loved His Son is His love to you and me! — Did you hear me? You are, my brother, my sister, the object of God's delight, even as Christ is, because you are in Christ! — I cannot state this more clearly or more wondrously than Spurgeon did, when preaching on this same subject. **Here is what**

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Spurgeon said to his congregation in London 150 years ago...

“Do not tell me that God the Father does not love you as well as He does Christ: the point can be settled by the grandest matter of fact that ever was. When there was a choice between Christ and His people which should die of the two, the Father freely delivered up his own Son that we might live through Him. Oh, what a meeting there must have been of the seas of love that day, when God’s great love to us came rolling in like a glorious springtide, and His love to his Son came rolling in at the same time. If they had met and come into collision, we cannot imagine the result; but when they both took to rolling together in one mighty torrent, what a stream of love was there! The Lord Jesus sank that we might swim, He sank that we might rise and now we are borne onward forever by the mighty sweep of infinite love into an everlasting blessedness which tongues and lips can never fully set forth. Oh, be ravished with this. Be carried away with it; be in ecstasy at love so

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amazing, so divine: the Father loves you even as he loves His Son; after the same manner and sort He loveth all His redeemed.”

C. H. Spurgeon

A REFLECTION

Third, our love for Christ is a reflection of the Father's love. What a poor word I have chosen to express what I want to say — “reflection!” But how else can I say it? — **That love which we have for our Savior is the Father's love for Him.** It is the love of God in us, created in us, born in us for His Son! The love is mine. I love him. Yet, it is His. He gave me the heart to love Him, and put the love in it! Therefore, I can truthfully sing,

“My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine;
For thee all the follies of sin I resign.

A RADIANCE

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And then, *fourth*, the love of the Father for the Son that dwells in us is that love that beams forth and radiates from God's saints to others. Oh, yes, if the love of God dwells in me, it radiates from me to others.

(1 John 4:8-14) “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. (9) 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. (10) Herein 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 ought also to love one another. (12) No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. (13) Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. (14) And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world.”

4. CHRIST IN US

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Now, look at the last line of this great, great prayer. Our Savior came here to make God known to men; that the love of God might dwell in us. But there is more. He came here to make God known to us, that the love of God might dwell in us, **that He might dwell in us!** — *“I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, **and I in them.**”*

That is my *fourth* point. — **The Lord Jesus Christ dwells in His people by faith, assuring us of God's perfect love for us!**

What can this possibly mean? Obviously, we cannot now apprehend it. But soon we shall.

(John 14:20) “At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”

For now, it is enough to know that Christ dwelling in us is the assurance of God's love for us and of our hope of glory yet to come (Colossians 1:27).

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(Ephesians 3:14-21) “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, (16) That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; (17) That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, (18) May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; (19) And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. (20) Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, (21) Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.”

Christ in you is the hope of glory because Christ in you is the assurance of God's perfect love which “*Casteth out all fear*” (1 John 4:9-19).

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(1 John 4:9-19) “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. 10 **Herein 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 ought also to love one another. 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

(Romans 5:5) “Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

(1 John 4:14) “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son [to be] the Saviour of the world. 15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. 16 **And we have known and believed**

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the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

“17 ¶ Herein is our love (**that is to say, God's love for us**) made perfect, 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 casteth out fear:** because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. 19 We love him, because he first loved us.”

O sinner, would you be assured of God's love for you? Would you have God's perfect love in you, that perfect love that “*casteth out all fear*” and will give you boldness in the Day of Judgment? — Come, trust my Savior. — “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!*” — “*He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life!*” O Holy Spirit, come now, by Your omnipotent, irresistible grace, and shed abroad the love of God in our hearts afresh, and shed abroad the love of God in the hearts of poor, lost, perishing sinners in this place, for Christ's sake!

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Amen.