

The Love of God

by Mike Morrow

God's love is demonstrated through His mercy, grace, and sacrifice, and it is available to all who believe.

Duration: 50:38

Scripture: Ephesians 3:19, 1 John 4:7-8, 1 John 4:10, 1 John 4:16

Topics: "Gods Love", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not just talking about God's love, but experiencing it as a reality in our lives. He encourages the congregation to take a moment to express their love for someone who has been a blessing to them. The preacher then discusses three aspects of God's love: its role in our regeneration, its ability to change our hearts, and its reflection of the character of Christ in us. He also highlights the futility of practicing Christianity without love, using biblical references to support his points.

Transcript

I'm going to call your attention this morning to several passages of Scripture. 1 John chapter 4 and verse number 8, you don't have to turn there, because if you do, we'll be here a whole day as we turn to every Scripture. Let me read them to you, and I'll try to be faithful as I do that.

1 John chapter 4 and verse number 8 says, He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. 1 John chapter 4 and verse number 16 says, And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

1 John chapter 4 and verse number 10 says, Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And then Paul says in Ephesians chapter 3 and verse number 19, To know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Anytime you're assigned the task of preaching on an attribute of the infinite God, you've been given a daunting task.

And I think that's doubly so, as Brother Paul has already acknowledged when you come to this great truth of the love of God. Paul said that it was a subject that defied knowledge. And in another place, Paul said God's ways are past finding out, and surely his love is one of his ways.

And so we don't need this morning a lot of human knowledge. We don't need this morning a lot of speculation. What we need this morning is revelation and illumination.

That God will help our hearts to understand a little something of this great truth. Let's pray again. Father, Lord, we come before you today confessing our inability.

Lord, recognizing your almightiness. We thank you for this moment, we thank you for this day, this hour. We pray, Lord, that you might exalt yourself before our eyes.

Oh God, I pray that no flesh would be displayed, but that the love of God might be seen clearly this morning. Help us, we pray, for your glory and for your honor in Jesus' name. Amen.

I have recently had the opportunity and been reminded anew of the awful concepts that people had of God in the ancient world. If you go to China or Japan, you find those terrible idols, those leering idols that those people called their gods. If you remember the gods of the Philistine days, they were gods that demanded sacrifices, human sacrifices.

And in the Scriptures, the Bible tells us that they actually built the high places of Baal, that in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire to Molech. They built up also the high places of Baal to burn their sons as an offering to Baal, Jeremiah chapter 19. If you survey the gods of the Greeks and the Romans, even in Paul's day, their gods were brutal gods, hateful gods.

Somebody said they were like superhuman in power, but they were superhuman in sin as well. Adolescent brats, if you will, full of hatred and jealousy and malice toward one another. Those gods inspired the Greek games, where men literally tore one another to shreds to satisfy the appetites of that crowd.

If you study those old Roman gods, those experiences, they were always lusting for blood. It must have been a terrible and a shocking thing, and a radical thing for John to have said, God is love. That must have fallen on an ear and shocked them when they heard that.

And yet that's what God is in Himself. The Bible says God is spirit, the Scripture says God is light, the Scripture says God is love. The Trinity itself is involved in a great love affair.

The Father loves the Son and the Spirit. The Spirit of God loves the Father and the Son, and the Son loves the Father and the Spirit. And there is that Trinitarian love.

I don't know much about that. That's hidden in the darkness and the mystery of who God is. But that Trinitarian love spilled over into what we know as creation today.

God loved and loved and loved and loved, and then He created a world so that He might love some more. Genesis chapter 1 and verse 31 says, And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

I think it's interesting and significant that one of the verb forms of this Hebrew word for good is the word loving. It's related to the thought of love. God looked upon everything He had made with love.

In the Trinity love, looking upon His creation and His universe with love. This morning I want to speak to you about three aspects of the love of God. And I am ashamed that I don't have more.

But I don't think we could stand my standing here speaking all day long. I know I couldn't. So I want to talk to you just shortly about three aspects of the love of God.

I want to talk about God's love toward us. And then I want to talk a little bit about God's love for us. And then I want to mention God's love in us.

The love of God toward us. Did you know God is actively blessing this world today? Though the world deserves nothing but His wrath and His anger. I agree with everything Brother Charles preached last night about the wrath of God.

But I'm also glad that the psalmist cried out, Oh God, in wrath remember mercy. Because this world needs mercy. And I'm glad to report this morning that God has had mercy upon this world.

When Adam and Eve sinned and rebelled against God, God cursed this world. He cursed Adam and Eve. They brought their sons and their daughters and the entire creation under the curse.

It would have been wholly just in God if He had just cast all of it aside. If He had put Adam and Eve in hell and blasted the universe into non-existence, God would have been just had He done that that day. He would have been perfect and pure and just.

In light of that, isn't it amazing when you consider how manifest the love of God is toward mankind and toward this world in a general sense. The world lies under the blasting of sin's curse. But it receives more of God's love than one could possibly imagine.

We who deserve nothing but the highest measure of His wrath have received bountiful good at His hand. The Bible says, Who giveth food to all flesh, for His mercy endureth forever. Psalm 145 verse 9 says, The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.

Verse 14 says, The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Paul in Athens affirms this truth. Speaking of the true God, he said, He is neither worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things. God gives light to every eye.

God gives air to all that breathe. He gives water to every creature that drinks. He gives reason to our minds, comforts to our hearts, and fatness to our souls.

God showers blessings on those who constantly reject Him. The Bible says in Matthew chapter 4 and verse 44, But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. For He maketh His Son to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

In other words, God loves His enemies. He blesses them that curse Him. He does good to them that hate Him.

He makes His sweet sun shine to fall on the fields of those who despise Him. He causes the gentle rains to water the gardens of those who insult Him and mistreat their fellow man, those who constantly

blaspheme His name. I was watching the news the other day and they were trying to evacuate one of the men from New Orleans.

And it was one curse word after another. And I thought, God's giving him the breath to breathe as he curses and uses the name of his Creator in vain. But God's good and God's loving toward all of His creatures, including mankind.

Everything good that comes down to any human being on the face of the earth comes down from God. The Bible says, Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God is good toward all mankind.

I want to say God desires the salvation of all men. I realize there might be some here today who would dispute with me about that, so let me be clear. He desires the salvation of all.

He decrees the salvation of some. The Bible says in Ezekiel 33 and verse number 11, Say unto them as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways.

For why when you die, O house of Israel? Again, the Scriptures say in 1 Timothy 2 and verse number 3, For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Let me give you one more verse. You might recognize it.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. I want to tell you, God loves this world that He's created. He has a benevolent love for all that inhabit this earth.

If it were not so, then this universe and all that dwell in it and all of us would have had our place in hell long before now. But I want to say to you that's just the beginning of the love of God. Because God not only has a love that is toward us, but He also exercises a love for us.

The question comes, doesn't God love all men equally? Doesn't God unconditionally love all men? Well, let me say to you that God loves all beneficently and benevolently, but He loves some specifically and especially. I like John Piper's answer to that question. Someone said, Dr. Piper, doesn't God love all men the same? And he said, oh no, God doesn't love all men the same.

He said, let me give you an example. I love all women, but I don't love them all the same way I love my wife. Amen? I want to tell you, this doctrine that I'm about to speak about is hated by the world.

This particular love of God, this electing love of God, this redeeming love of God, this love that's for us. Did you know God's love elected a people? Oh yes, it did. Ephesians chapter 1 and verse number 3 says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as He hath, listen now, chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.

I was listening to a man expound that one day, and he tried to explain it by saying God didn't choose people. He chose a plan. The plan of salvation.

Somebody help me here. Hath chosen us. What does that mean? I kind of think it means what it says.

He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated us under the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. There are two ways that you can interpret those verses. Some scholars tell us that the way to interpret the verse is the way it's written.

That would mean that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world so that we would be before Him holy and without blame in love. Others say that the punctuation is wrong. You do know, don't you, that there's no punctuation in the Greek New Testament.

And so they kind of had to put the commas in, the periods in, where they thought they were supposed to be. These scholars tell us that we were chosen to be in Him holy and without blame, and that the next verse should read, in love, having predestinated us. But you know, whatever the correct interpretation, we still finally come up with the unmistakable idea that the choosing God did, or the predestinating God did, was done because He loved us.

He chose us in Christ. He predestinated us under the adoption of children before the foundation of the world because He loved us. Well, God's love not only elected a people, God's love redeemed a people.

The Bible says in Romans chapter 5 and verse number 6, For when we were yet without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. Romans chapter 5 and verse 8, But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans chapter 5 and verse number 10, For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Somebody said, what was God's reason for electing and redeeming a people? It's an amazing thing that God would save anybody. And so the question always comes up, why me? Why did the Lord save me? Why did God elect me and then send His Son to die in my place? I want to tell you there was nothing in the sinner to draw out God's love. It was not the prospect of future faith that the sinner might have that drew out the love of God.

The whole reason for God's electing love is found in the person and the nature and the will and the character of God Himself. God explained to Israel why He chose them. Listen to His explanation.

The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in number than any people, for you were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved you. My, my, think about that just for a minute. Do you remember when you were a little boy or a little girl? You asked some stupid question of your mama, and she said, honey, just because.

When you're older, you'll understand. Well, that's what God said to Israel. They said, why did you choose us as a nation? And God said, just because.

I loved you because I loved you. That's why God loved us. That's why God chose us.

And maybe when we're a little older, say 10,000 years into eternity, or 10 million years into eternity, God will begin to help us understand. But right now He just says, because. Just because I loved you.

Did you notice how good God is in His answer? God's way of loving us. He has a special way of loving us. God had to overcome a lot of obstacles to love us.

Did you know that? Ebenezer Erskine, that old Scottish divine, had some things to say about that, and I'll paraphrase him today. The fact that we are creatures, and God is God, is a barrier to God demonstrating His love for us. But love conquers this.

The Bible says God was manifested in the flesh. Our moral distance and our sin was a barrier against God showing us His love. But love breaks this impediment also.

God is not only manifested in the flesh as Christ, but He's made in the likeness of sinful flesh. And the Bible says He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Mr. Erskine said the curse of the law is a barrier to God's love.

How could He love that which was cursed by His righteous law? But love found a way, and the Bible says that Christ became a curse for us, that we might be redeemed from the curse of the law. Sin and its guilt and filth stands in the way of God loving us, and yet the Bible says Christ came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Our deadness to God puts us in a position so that we could not receive God's love.

Even though everything I have said above is absolutely true, we are still dead in trespasses and in sins. There we are in the grave, longer than Lazarus. Not four days, but forty years and fifty years, in some cases seventy years.

God saved my dear dad after he was seventy years old. Can you imagine seventy years in the deadness of the grave? But love found a way, and the Scripture says, But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath He quickened us together with Christ. By grace you are saved.

Love found a way, and every statement made above that way was Jesus Christ. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. Mr. Spurgeon said, Can anyone measure that word, so? He said, Bring out your surveyors with all of their instruments.

He said, Let them survey as far as they want to survey on this word, so. And when their instruments are burned up and finished, they can't measure. God so loved the world.

He said, Let them, the astronomers, bring their telescopes and all of their instruments to measure the heavens. But the heavens don't even compare to this great word, so. God so loved that He gave.

If you want to really know the love of God, you've got to realize what God gave His Son up to when He came. Go with me to the hill just outside of Jerusalem. The crowd's on its way.

They've crushed the crown of thorns upon Jesus' head. They've slapped Him and spit upon His lovely face. They've mockingly robed Him in the garments of a king.

And they've faintly bowed their knees to Him. And then they've disrobed Him and beaten Him beyond recognition. Can you hear them coming? The screaming, mocking, cursing, jeering crowd bringing Christ to Calvary.

Well, the Bible says, There they crucified Him. What does it mean that this man's dying on a Roman cross? Does it mean that he has offended Rome, just like many others who've died on the cross? Is there nothing more to it than that? Yes, I want to say there's much more to it than that. The prophet of old explained it this way.

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And with His stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray. We've turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.

The Word of God says that it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. That's what was happening on the cross that day. It means that it wasn't just the crowd that was guilty that day.

It means that my sins and your sins were the reason Christ died. God so loved the world that He gave the world. The world, that's me.

And that's you. To my shame, I must say to you today that had I been there, there's no doubt in my mind that I would have been one of the ones jeering at Him. I would have probably welded the hammer that drove the nails into His precious hands and feet.

It would have been me thrusting the spear into His holy side. My sins and your sins stood jeering at the cross. Yet the Bible says, For when we were yet without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly.

Again, the Scripture says, But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And again, Romans 5.10, For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Can you see the awful state we were in when God loved us redeemingly? We were without strength, the Bible says.

The Greek word for without strength is the word from which we get anesthetic. It means impotent. We were lying there in the coma of sin with our mouths hung open and the drool coming out.

No, we were worse than that. We were in the throes and in the agonies of death. No, we were worse even than that.

We were already dead and in a state of corruption, totally unable to do anything spiritually good. While we lay there in our ungodly, corrupt condition, just in time, Christ died for the ungodly. Not only were we dead and without strength, but the Bible says we were sinners.

The word does not just mean missing the mark in this case. Listen to Strong's definitions of that word. It means devoted to sin.

Not free from sin. Pre-eminently sinful. Especially wicked.

Read the verse this way, But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were devoted to sin, while we not for a moment were free from sin, while we were pre-eminently sinful, while we were especially wicked, Christ died for us. Hallelujah, what a Savior. We do have us a God, brethren.

Look at the third word that we're given to describe our condition. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life. Again, I give you Strong's definition.

Hated enemies. The word enemies means hated, odious, hateful, opposing God in the mind. I got into an email discussion with a gentleman on one occasion.

He just could not receive the concept that God loves what He hates and hates what He loves. But it's true. I don't know how it's true.

But it's true. The Bible says that God hates every worker of iniquity. He hates them.

And yet, while we were hated and odious and hateful and opposing God in the mind, the Bible says we were reconciled by the death of His Son. Aren't you glad this morning that God doesn't wait until we're fixed up before He loves us? Aren't you glad He loves us when we can't even love ourselves? He loves us when we're in that terrible, terrible state of sin. Certainly, there was nothing in our rotting corpse that drew out the love of God.

He loved us because He loved us. And through Christ, God redeemingly loved His people. Amazing love, how can it be that Thou, my God, should die for me? I've spoken to you for a moment about the love of God toward us.

The general love of God. I've spoken to you about the love of God for us. Just touched on the redeeming love of God.

For a moment or two, I want to talk to you about the love of God in us. His sanctifying love. Did you know the love of God in us proves our regeneration? The Bible says in Romans chapter 5 and verse number 5, the love of God is shed abroad.

That is, lavishly poured out in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Galatians chapter 5 and verse 22 says, The fruit of the Spirit is love. When God regenerates a soul, one of the major characteristics of that regeneration is that He fills him with His love.

He gives us love for His children. He gives us a great love for God Himself. 1 John chapter 2 and verse 10 says, He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

1 John chapter 4 and verse 7 says, Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. It's a shame that we Baptists are known for our swabbling and our fussing and our splits in our churches. I think one of the evidences and one of the terrible consequences of easy believism and cheap grace being preached is that we filled our churches full of people who are not full of the love of God.

I heard of a pastor who went to a new church. One Sunday morning he went to this church and he stood and he preached and everything seemed fine. He went back the next Sunday morning and the piano was on the opposite side of the church.

He thought he was going crazy and he said, I don't know what's going on. And so he went back the next Sunday morning and he made a point to see where the piano was and sure enough it was back where it was originally. And he said to one of the church leaders, What's going on here? The leader said, Well, a few years ago we got into a little squabble about which side of the church the piano ought to be on.

So to keep peace we move it back and forth every Sunday or so. Doesn't that sound like a bunch of Baptists? I heard about another church that got into a deep doctrinal discussion. They had a great

disagreement.

The discussion was centered over whether Adam had a navel or not. Yeah. Well, I mean, you think about it, if he came directly from the hand of God, he didn't need one.

Did he? Some people said, Oh no, God just kind of put one in there. You know? So they got into this big discussion about whether Adam had a navel or not. And they split over this.

I was told it's the truth. One group was called the navel group and the other group was called the no-navelers. It's funny until you think about it.

And then it gives us room to weep. We filled our churches up with people who know nothing about the love of God. How dwelleth the love of God in us? When a person's really regenerated, the love of God shed abroad in his heart and the fruit of love for God's people and for those around him spring up in his life.

It's the evidence that we've been regenerated by the Spirit of God. I tell you, if you're in a place, they're constantly fussing about what color the carpet's going to be and they're griping about where they're going to put the water fountain. Listen, I want to tell you, God has some precious saints in places that don't have carpets.

They have dirt for floors. God doesn't care about that mess. God help us to understand, those things don't matter much.

The love of God, oh, shed abroad in our hearts. Submitting to one another. Backing up.

I heard a story about a preacher. In fact, this preacher told me himself and said it was true about himself. It actually happened to him.

An old mountain preacher. He said he was going up one of those mountain roads over in the Carolinas or Tennessee and said it was just a little one-lane gravel road. He was going up that road and he was late for a meeting.

It was a preacher meeting way up there on top of the mountain. And he said, sure enough, just as he got about halfway there, here comes this other car meeting him. And he said he's all flustered.

He kind of stepped out of the car and he said, back up! And the guy stuck his head out the window of his car and said, you back up! Old Mack Hodge said that they got into almost a fight. He said he jumped out of his car and he ran over there and all of a sudden he realized what he was doing. And he said, hey, he said before we do this, let's pray about it.

Mack said they got down there and called on God. When they got through praying, the man said, I'll back up. Mack said, no, I'll back up.

He said, no, I'll back up. Well, I tell you, the love of God will change your heart. It will change your heart.

But not only does the love of God show regeneration in us, but it displays the character of Christ in us. Let me call your attention to 1 Corinthians 13, and verse number 1. Notice the futility of so-called Christianity without love. Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal.

He said I can speak with all kinds of eloquence or I can speak with all kinds of heavenly tongues, but he said without love it's just a bunch of noise. Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not love, he said I'm a big fat zero. Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not love, he said here on earth or in heaven, there's no profit in it for me at all.

And then he gives us the features of God's love. Love suffers long. Love is kind.

Love does not envy his brother or sister. Love bondeth not itself. That is, love is not a braggart.

Love is not puffed up, swelled up with pride. Love does not behave itself unseemly. It doesn't seek its own.

It's not easily provoked. It's not prickly and irritable. It thinketh no evil.

It rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Love bears all things. You want to talk about no-fault divorce? Come on, Christians! We talk about... Boy, it's certainly gotten solemn, hasn't it? We talk about our culture.

They tell us that the divorce rate in the Southern Baptist Convention is the same as it is in the culture. And you want to say something about the easy-believe-ism and to come and pray this little prayer after me theology. Beareth all things.

God's love believeth all things. Hopeth all things. God will.

God can. I believe God's going to. Oh, I may have to suffer under this for a while, but God can save him.

God can save her. God can change this situation. God can.

Love endureth all things. Love never fails. Where there be preaching, it shall fail.

Tongues are going to cease. Knowledge shall vanish away. Thank God for that.

Knowledge shall someday melt in the presence of pure revelation. We know in part, we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, and I believe that's Jesus Christ, when the Son of God comes, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, and charity.

These three, but the greatest of these is God's love. And all these things, my friend, are the characteristics of Christ, the life of the believer. Can you put 1 Corinthians 13 in the context of the Corinthian church? Divided and fussing.

This is my favorite preacher and that's my favorite preacher, so let's split the church over it. Can you put 1 Corinthians 13 in the context of a church that was carnal and sinful and people wanted their own way? Paul said, oh no. No, let the character, the love of God flow in and through your heart.

I want to say that the love of God in us demonstrates the power of God to save us. Revelation 1 verse 5 says, And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten of the dead and the prince of the kings of the earth, unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. There is

power in the loving blood of the Lamb of God.

Revelation 5 and verse 9, And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. I do not understand how anyone can read that passage of Scripture and not admit that God's love is a discerning love. That God's love is a distinguishing love.

God's love is a powerful love that picked us up and redeemed us out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. You may not like the doctrine of election until you're saved, but after you get saved... Now, I'm not unchristianizing everybody that doesn't believe in election. But I'm coming dangerously close.

Oh, to understand that God, as one evangelist who came to our church said, can you imagine how many God stepped over and around to get to you? Out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. I declare unto you today that the blood of Jesus Christ saves. It doesn't make salvation potential.

It doesn't make salvation available. But the blood of Jesus saves to the uttermost. Hallelujah, what a Savior.

Finally, God's love is demonstrated in the perpetuity of it. God said to Israel of old, The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Paul put it this way. He said that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. That you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth of Christ's love.

That's the width of Christ's love. It reaches to the farthest ends of the earth. The Bible says every tongue and tribe and nation.

Somebody's going to represent Him. My soul. The width of Christ's love.

And then He said that you might know the length. He said from everlasting, I have loved thee. Therefore, I have drawn thee.

It's from eternity past through all eternity future. Brother Charles, I too don't understand what that means. I know if you can go as far as you can go in the past and keep on going after you've gotten to where you're going, you haven't started yet.

If you go as far as you can go in the future, when you get there, you haven't begun your journey yet. God said from everlasting. From everlasting.

That's the length of the love of Christ. And the depth of Christ's love. Is there anyone here that can testify that God's love reaches deep? Oh, my soul.

There's no drug too strong for Jesus not to take you out of. There's no habit too strong Jesus can't break. There's no sinful, dirty place that you've ever been that Jesus doesn't know about.

I tell you what, His love can reach down to the farthest, to the deepest. I like the old country song, the old country gospel song, when it reached way down for me. My uncle is a Baptist preacher.

He is kind of like me, a little backward and homespun and backwoodsy. He was in school and they had him preach. You know, they had the young preachers to preach in school.

And he kept preaching saying, God retched down and got me. God retched down and got me. His homiletics teacher finally stopped him and said, if you don't quit saying that, I'm going to retch up there and get you.

But he reached way down for me. I don't know how far down he had to go for you, but Paul said if you could ever meditate on the depths of God's love, and then the heights of God's love. He takes him from the bottom all the way to the throne of glory.

Can I clear out a spot and have a spell? All the way to the throne of glory. Think about that. I heard a preacher preaching one time and he said the word for throne in one of the places in Hebrew talking about the throne of God was more like a couch.

I got to thinking about the passage where the Bible says that we would be with Him on His throne. He's going to have a long throne with all of His people on the throne with Him. He's seated us together with Him, the Bible says, in heavenly places.

All the heights of God's love. You get dizzy when you think about it. Paul said to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

We talk a whole lot about the Holy Spirit today. Oh, I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

What do I need to do? Do I need to pray more? Do I have a longer quiet time? Do I need to read my Bible more? Do I need to claim this and claim that? I'll tell you what. Be filled with the love of God and you'll be filled with all the fullness of God. There was once a story told of a Russian prince and his servant who had made a journey across the cold, snowy Russian wilderness.

Though knowing the dangers, the only mode of travel that they had was by dog sled. And so they munched across the white plain. And as they traveled along, they saw a dark mass behind them.

It grew closer and closer until they realized it was a pack of ravenous wolves. The wolves were gathering ground every minute. Finally, the wolves were only a few yards behind with the prince screaming at the dogs to go faster.

The servant, seeing that there was but one thing to do, flung himself off of the back of the sled and fell under the hungry fangs of the wolves. Of course, the pack stopped to attend to the man that was down and the prince was set free. The man that related that story said he thought, what a wonderful illustration of the love of God.

Then he said to himself, but really, really it's not. It would have been a much better illustration of God's love if the prince had thrown himself off to save the servant. I've only touched the tip of the subject today.

I feel like I've picked up a grain of sand on top of a huge mountain range and tried to give you just a little bit. The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell. It goes beyond the Father's star and reaches to the deepest hell.

Could we with ink the ocean filled and were the skies of parchment made and every stalk on earth a quill and every man a scribe by trade to write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry, nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky. O love of God, how rich, how pure, how measureless and strong, it shall forevermore endure the saints and angels song. I know my time's up, but Paul's talked about something that strikes at the very heart of what we're doing here, I think.

And that is not only do we need to lecture and preach and talk about these things, but they need to be a reality to us. I wonder if we could do this this morning. There are many strangers here, people I don't know, but there are others that I do know.

There are many strangers to you here this morning, but there's people here that you know. I wonder if there's somebody here that you really love. It's been a blessing to you.

It's helped you in your Christian life. You may just have to turn to the person next to you. He may be sitting right there, or you may have to go across the auditorium.

But I wonder if we could take a moment this morning and let the reality of God's love in us take hold. Come on, stiff Reformed Baptists. Could we turn loose and love one another a little while this morning? Let's do that.

If there's been somebody that you know that's been a blessing to you, why don't you just go to them right now, hug their neck and say, I love you in Jesus. And then if there's somebody standing off by themselves and they don't look like anybody loves them, go love on them a little bit.

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