

Christ's covenant love and work for His people (Quality: Very good)

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[0 : 00] portion of scripture on my mind to speak from, as the Lord may help me this morning, you'll find in the chapter that we read together. John chapter 13, and at verse 1.

First verse in the 13th chapter of the Gospel according to John. Now, before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

I believe that most of us will immediately connect the opening clause of this text to that great deliverance when the Lord passed over the houses of the Egyptians, passed over the house of the Israelites, when his sore visitation upon the Egyptians was very present, and that every house bore witness to the power of God in the firstborn son being taken from them, and so on.

Now, the feast of the Passover was a regular annual occasion for the Jews to celebrate a glorious deliverance effected by none the less than God himself.

My friends, that was a miracle indeed, and a wonderful deliverance to be remembered. But here we come to the threshold of an even greater deliverance than that deliverance that was given to the children of Israel when they seemed in such a critical position and condition of servitude, even for the unknown future.

[2 : 38] And here we have the Lord instituting, about to institute the Passover afresh with the disciples around him, and the obvious enactment of that celebration would bring not only to the Lord himself, but also to the disciples with him, the solemnity of the moment.

Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world, I wonder, as we think upon that statement, how great a matter rested upon the greatest mind that was ever found under the sun.

My friends, we cannot comprehend the situation as immediately confronting the Lord himself.

Though he was very God and knew all things, nevertheless, the deep and immediate future, that presented itself before him when he made reference to the hour.

When Jesus knew that his hour was come. Can we think of a greater person carrying a greater responsibility at this particular appointed hour in the progression of time as time as time was rolled on through the generations of the world?

[4 : 44] You and I, from time to time, are brought into situations that seem to carry a great weight, a very deep anxiety, an apprehension of the future.

And there are some times in life that we can look back upon, and we were in a state of fear as to what was about to unfold.

But Jesus had no particular sense of ignorance to hide the detail of that hour from him.

He was well acquainted with what that hour should contain. And he knew in all the detail what should transpire, how his cup filled with wrath should be given into his hand, and he should drink that to the very dregs, that God should be reconciled to his people through that he was about to fulfill, and how a peace would be accomplished that would be of everlasting consequence.

Oh, my friends, the greatness of that hour, and the greatness of the attention, as it were, of that hour must have been upon the mind of Christ as he, with his disciples, is about to institute, celebrate the Passover and institute the Supper and then go on his way to Calvary.

[6 : 35] Well, now, before the Feast of the Father, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father. Yes, he knew where he was going.

He knew what the end would be. But what a valley existed between his sitting with his disciples at this point of time and proceeding to the ultimate, when he should go to the Father, as he did after he paid the price of his people's salvation.

Love is inscribed on the whole experience.

He was undertaking a cause, and the cause of all his people, in all generations, among all the nations of the earth, a number which no man could number, of every kindred, tribe, and tongue.

And there he was, as he were in the loneliness of his sovereign, gracious, loving undertakings, face to face with the cross of Calvary.

[8 : 12] He was made sin for us that knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He saw the payment that must be made for the redemption and salvation of each and every one that the Father had committed into his hands and to redeem.

yea, he loved the people. All his saints are in his hands.

This is the situation. These are the circumstances that surround the subject of our text this morning. Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

Nothing excited in him the slightest deviation from his covenant commitment to take our flesh and to come down and to live for the appointed time here in this alien situation to his holy person and his holy character.

Oh, he lived as a stranger on the earth in that sense that even his disciples from time to time manifested a spirit that was contrary to his own spirit as he lived in perfect freedom from sin in the committal of any transgression of the holy law of God.

[10 : 14] My friends, surely the standard that was within him raised an immediate reaction to those things that were spoken and those things that were done even by those favoured characters who were chosen to be his intimate disciples as he journeyed on through life.

I think it would be right to say that Jesus in the family circle into which he was born would from time to time realise in his own spirit the far-off state of mind and the alien influences that were present in those things that were said and those things that were done even in a household sanctified by the purpose of God in a very special way as was the household of Joseph and Mary as they were given the responsibility of receiving and upbringing the person of the Lord and then to come into the more public activities the ministry both practical in the ministry of healing for the sick applying remedies many and various as he went about doing good he was confronted with opposition criticism various expressions so contrary to the whole spirit of what he accomplished and my friends surely he's coming now to the very sharp point of his sovereign and gracious undertakings in covenant with his father and the spirit before the world was made now when he was come that the hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the father was there ever an hour in the passage of time that evidenced such hatred and bitterness as that hour just think of the surrounding call of the

Jews crucify him crucify him crucify him just think of the injustice being being fulfilled that Christ in all his innocence was there arraigned before Pilate and Pilate ultimately being persuaded to pass sentence contrary to his own inner feelings in accordance with the pressures he was under to bring to pass in detail everything that was necessary to the church's salvation my friends there was not anything in the cup of Christ as the father gave him there to drink it that can be taken away from the necessity of the salvation of God toward his people as that is fulfilled in the substitutionary suretyship of the

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the Lord he comes into this experience he comes into this dreadful alien atmosphere he comes to suffer the just for the unjust in a terrible period of time that surely is the more dreadful than any other hour in the history of the universe well having loved his own that were in the world and was this a unique expression associating purely with his people that were in the world at that particular point of time can we look at this statement of the text and say well yes that was a very favorite period in the history of the universe when the love of

Christ was made manifest in a public way that the Jews that were round about could witness and the believers who stood afar off and witnessed those things they had a love to the Lord and they particularly suffered in consequence of their affection for him but nevertheless they were enjoying in the ultimate the fruit and effect of that sacrifice which was to redeem them from their sins and ensure a place in paradise in the eternal hereafter he loved he loved with a perfect affection and a powerful affection he was able to accomplish everything that was necessary to the perfect interpretation of his spirit as he entered upon this holy ground having loved his own which were in the world we can go back in that expression through the

[17 : 20] Old Testament record and we can mark very clearly in our minds the gracious influence of the saints that great cloud of witnesses that were living in the world as through the generations from Adam's day till Christ Jesus is here among his disciples in the flesh a great cloud of having loved his own which were in the world all those that were saved from Adam's day right down through till the hour that we now are confronted with in our meditation the particular hour when Christ was to suffer bleed and die just for the unjust all those participated and experienced somewhat of the love of

Christ it seems here that there is a remembrance raised to the great goodness of God in visiting his people in their various situations the great privileges of the gospel that were given to the saints in Old Testament times the great ingratious promises that were directed to them for their comfort and encouragement you see all these things have a connection with this particular hour having loved his own having loved his own which were in the world yes at this particular time a representative body for who he was suffering in this hour but a representative body in those that had for for had lived in previous times and ultimately those that would yet be born and comprehend that part of the covenant engagement of the

Lord as he entered into covenant with his father and the holy spirit to accomplish the salvation which flows so freely and fully in the shedding of his precious sin atoning blood having loved his own which were in the world this hour hour of terrible terrible hatred but the hour of highest love the two things seem to come together here the hatred of the world to Christ and the preeminent overpowering overshadowing love of Christ to his people that the enmity that was so poignant and so severe in the experience of the

Son of God an experience which could only be sustained by none less than the Son of God my friends it brings into captivity so to speak the fruit and effect of all the bitterness and hatred that has been in the hearts of his people from the beginning to this moment of time he shed his blood for the remission of all their sins having having loved his own the love of Christ as it were gathering into one great act of redemption the transgressions of the multitude of the people of God as he bore the penalty of their sins and died to cleanse them from all their transgressions having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end he went to the end of the law for righteousness he satisfied the demands of the justice of

God there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus that nothing can be raised to their condemnation if Christ has stood in their law place room and stead and done all that justice required wake oh sword against my fellow against the man that is my fellow saith the Lord of hosts you see the sword of divine justice was sheathed in the wound of a precious Christ now having loved his own which were in the world this as it were brings into focus the terrible hatred but against the black cloud of the hatred of fallen man against his maker we see the bow of the finished work the suffering saviour the

[23 : 15] Lord Jesus Christ doing everything that was necessary to the salvation of his peace but I believe the text also comprehends another situation which so obviously was touched upon in the hymn that we sang prior to the service having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end there was never a time when those given into the hands of Christ the redeemed were not loved by the Lord himself yea he loved the people all his saints are in thy hands even when they were dead in trespasses and sin even when they were filling up the cup of wrath against the day of judgment my friends yes the heart of

Christ was fixed upon them the heart of Christ had preserving and upholding and maintaining influence in their experience I believe the children of God even in their unregeneracy when as it were they have no thought toward God in anything but the natural enmity of the human heart nevertheless while they did not love God the Lord loved them and there is a distinction and overruling the love of God in the experiences of the children of God even from their earliest days having loved his own which were in the world all this love of God that is shed abroad in the universe among those whom

God has chosen to save whatever may be their color whatever may be the language that they speak by reason of their natural tongue or whatever circumstances obtain in their life having loved his own which were in the world and my friends he loves them in the progression of time to bring to pass that fruit of his sacrifice that is the sending forth of the spirit of God in regenerating mercy and what an expression of love that is when the spirit of the Lord quickens a soul from death to life and turns as it were the hatred of the human heart to acknowledge that an interest in the

Lord and his salvation is of paramount importance having loved his own and then think of the individual experiences of each believer you cannot divorce those individual experiences of each and every believer from the love of Christ and the sacrifice that Christ made to purchase for them the favours of heaven having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end my friends the great effect and application of the love of Christ in the experiences of his saints so many and so varied that only the mind of God could comprehend only the omniscience and omnipresence of God could meet the need but he loves them he loves them and because he loves them he calls them by his grace and having called them by his grace he has a way of experience to lead them and guide them through this world that is particularly personal to them because when we think of the salvation of Christ well there is a very personal connotation because he calls all each and all by their names having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end through the slippery paths of youth the

Lord exercises a restraint imposes certain things in their experience which distinguish his care of them as opposed to those whom he gives over to the powers of darkness and who run in the broad road to destruction all this love of Christ it leads into the straight and narrow way it brings influences to bear which are harmonious with his love for them personally and individually having loved his own which were in the world he loves them he loves them with an everlasting love and while life unfolds a sequence of changes we have our infant days we have our youthful days we have our more mature and responsible periods in life when weights and burdens are rolled upon us and we feel insufficient to manage affairs and accept and as it were solve some of the challenges that come our way that there is in the love of

[30 : 36] God an influence if I go not away the comforter will not come if I go away I will send him to you says the Lord and there are influences of a spiritual nature which have their effect upon the hearts and lives of the people of God you're not your own you're bought with a price you're not there to as it would be the subjects of a world that is without any restraints and constraints in their spirit and outlook toward you everything is governed finally by the permissive will of heaven and that is pregnant with this beautiful expression having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end we had a dear deacon at old hill years ago and all he did when he came to his death bed he so appreciated this remark having loved his own he loved them to the end and he could see that the way down as it were to the river was a way wherein the

Lord can express and does express his love toward his people the circumstances and not just given over as it were to the prevailing way of certain ingredients in our lives my friends the Lord is in control the Lord is the sovereign disposer of all events till the end of life's journey when where and how is all subject to his sovereign love and wise and gracious appointments having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end have we some in the congregation this morning that are very apprehensive for some particular development in their personal experience and have you in your exercise a goodly measure of evidence that the

Lord has been with you in six troubles that as you have come on through life the Lord from time to time has so manifested his intervention of love on your behalf that a way to escape has been made a way of deliverance has surprised you and nevertheless brought inexpressible comfort and relief to your heart having loved his own having loved his own in six troubles will he forsake them in the seventh will they find a change in his attitude toward them maybe in the discipline of a heavenly father and the exercise of love in and through the

Lord Jesus Christ chastisement from time to time is brought to bear upon the hearts and experiences of the people of God but there is this constant expression of affection whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receive my friends the time when you're on the mountain top then you rejoice in the love of God in a very real way and you wouldn't want to change anything and you wouldn't want to be any different in your situation from what obtains but nevertheless sometimes it is necessary in the exercise of love toward you that the Lord brings to bear his wrath a lot of correction sometimes it seems as God forgotten to be gracious as we sing his love in time past forbids me to think he'll leave me at last in trouble to sink but sometimes in that trouble we feel to be in a sinking condition and we wonder and our exercise as to whether the former experiences were really what we judged them to be what they were made to be in the experience of them but there seems my friends there can be changes in us which are in no wise indicative of any change in him and if he did not exercise his fatherly correction and bring to bear his rod upon us then we might question whether we have any interest in his love because the family of

God in the earth is a corrected family it's a corrected family and the Lord does not just forsake his people to choose their own ways and do their own things he manifests his mindfulness of them instructing them guiding them if I may use this scriptural analogy he's the shepherd of Israel and he guides leads and feeds his sheep in the pilgrimage through life well no he loves them to the end to the end right to the point of dismissal for time and entrance into eternity yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore in loving kindness have I called thee how comprehensive must the interpretation be relative to the

[38 : 24] Lord's spirit toward his people sometimes we may get to the point of question not only about our own state and standing we may find a question with regard to the state and standing of some others by reason of their wanderings from the Lord and the things that they can say and can do that seem to be so far off a Christian spirit nevertheless the Lord is still knowledgeable with regard to the cases and conditions of each and every specific particular name and number of his chosen family and my friends their times are in his hands their times are in his hands and that's a wonderful thought isn't it my times are in thy hands today yesterday and tomorrow the Lord is faithful he's gone to the cross he's paid the penalty of salvation all their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more remember this sometimes the temptation can overtake us that if

Christ has paid the penalty for all our sins then it doesn't matter what type of life we live we shall find in the end that the peace which the Lord has brought for us obtains and that will be our deliverance let us sin that grace may abound if you're forgiven well you've got a freedom to live as you like my friend the love of God of Christ forbids that the love of Christ forbids that we've read in our lesson this morning how Christ washed his disciples feet and we all like Peter really in the assessment of the situation not only my feet but my hands and also my head all the thoughts how we need sanctifying grace to think aright how we need sanctifying grace to handle the situations that come along in life's way we've got two natures that are alien to one another nature would choose this way and the grace of

God says no no no and my friends to think that the gospel opens the door widely for us to indulge the flesh and please our own selves and do our own thing that's completely alien to the love of Christ toward us and it will bring his corrections inevitably to preserve us from destruction and ruin having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end what a blessed people are the people of God to have such a saviour who would pay such a price for their salvation who would come not only come from heaven where he lived in the very presence and joy of his father from all eternity angels serving him everything peaceable and he comes down into this world to be handled to be spat upon to be smitten to be crowned with a crown of thorns to have his holy heart as it were pierced with the sword and to have the nails through his hands and his feet but such was his love that there was not the slightest flicker of opposition absolute submission the cup which my father has given me shall I not drink it shall I not drink it having loved his own he loved them unto the end and I'm going to close with this question the love of the

Lord Jesus Christ to his people as made known in their hearts by the Holy Spirit invariably produces a return of love we love him because he first loved us and I'm sure of this that if the Lord has first loved us there will be by the Holy Spirit given to us a love toward his name and the Lord says this if he love me keep my commandments now don't just isolate the interpretation of that remark as the only thing that is necessary to get ourselves baptized oh no my friends that's one of the commandments that love draws and compels sinners to humbly and willingly submit to but it's only one of the commandments all the commandments of God are exceeding broad and they cover our thoughts our words and our ways and if we really love the

Lord we shall be mindful of him in what we do and what we say and the various expressions of our lives here below what a mercy to love the Lord with mind and heart his people and his ways having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end what a mercy to be preserved in love toward the Lord Jesus Christ that we love him that we love him to the end when the end meets the end what a wonderful prospect in our eternal future to be in the abode of love forever and forever with the people of the people of

[46 : 14] God and with Christ Christ and the spirit and the father in paradise eternally I hope you've been able to follow my humble presentation of what I believe is a wonderful thing having loved those that were in the world he loved them unto the end amen