

The extent of the love of God to unworthy sinners (Quality: Poor)

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[0 : 00] Next, I'm going to the epistle to the Ephesians, chapter 3, commencing at verse 17.

To the Ephesians, chapter 3, from verse 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Our beloved and spiritual friends will know immediately that the subject matter of our text constitutes the concentration of all the holy spiritual desires of a Father in God, the apostle Paul for his spiritual children at Ephesus.

And not confined to Ephesus, to the whole family of God.

We may say that this is the divine potential by the unction and power and illumination and indwelling of the Holy Ghost for all believers to be brought into the fullness of this tremendous and most sacred and concentrated and concise and complete and heavenly and glorious body of divinity.

[2 : 47] And seeing that the love of God is inconceivable and inexpressible, you will appreciate the difficulty, perhaps, that is recognized by the preacher in attempting in attempting in any measure to do justice to this greatest subject in heaven and in earth.

This is the premier subject of all, the love of God. And to receive the love of God in your soul means that in that precious river or even a droplet of his divine love, every blessing, every divine favor, every promise of the new covenant flows into your soul.

You have everything in the love of God. We have before us this divinely inspired language.

Let us make this initial observation. The preacher does not wish only that your kind prayers may be answered so that there shall be a door of utterance and entrance, but also that you in the pews and the unworthy one, whose sacred lot it is to minister in this so glorious a name, might receive a taste, a divine draft of the love of God so that we may be transported into the heavenless, that we may behold the glory of their Emmanuel, so that we may be enriched, enlivened, cheered, and satisfied with his love.

I feel that I am standing, as it were, before a vast, unfathomed ocean, the boundless, everlasting, immutable, ineffable, complessential, sovereign love of God.

[6 : 08] So many, your late beloved pastor, who was the angel of the church here for so many years, godly deacons and saints that we remember so well as we look down from the pulpit and saw listening with rapt attention to his word in those pews.

Now they know the fullness of that love. And, blessed be God, he grants to us many tastes of his precious love.

we know what it is even in this pulpit to experience a soft heart and the love of God shed abroad in our souls by the Holy Ghost.

So that is our prayer for this day. That it may not be just a dissertation, however correct correct and laudable of the holy doctrine that is before us, but that we may oh, taste and see that the Lord is God.

I want first of all to make just a brief reference to the love of God and where shall we begin?

[7 : 53] Let us commence with the very being of God himself. Let us thank God that by the Holy Ghost in the inspired volume, his blessed book, we have a revelation of his being and character and essence.

His very nature and essence is love. God is love.

Oh, the wonder of it. And in the scriptures and it is a delight to those who fear God and see the glory of the Trinity, there are those occasions when the boundless love of those glorious persons in the Trinity to each other are manifested in the love of the Father to his dear Son, the love of the Son to his Father, the love of the Father and the Son to the Holy Ghost, and the love of the Holy Ghost to the Father and the Son.

for you will notice this feature in the glorious Gospel where the evangelists write this down.

There we see Jesus, the dear Son of God incarnate, always exhorting the Father. When you come to the acts of the apostles, written by St.

[10 : 08] Luke, the beloved physician, and there you will find the Holy Ghost exulting the Son.

And especially would I feel delight in my spirit to name to you those two notable occasions. The first Christ, and this may concern some of you.

When Christ came from Galilee to Jordan to John to be baptized of him, and you know that at first he forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, comest thou to me, said the Lord Jesus, suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.

Your sweet thing, if the love of Christ constrained any today, would it not? So that you heard that word, with sovereign energy and unction, suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.

Then he suffered him, and Jesus, when he was baptized, went out straight way out of the water, and though the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, and the voice of the father, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

[12 : 12] There is the ineffable love of the trinity, and also, on the mount of transfiguration, when that favored trio of disciples, Peter, James, and John, saw the glory of Christ as the glorious eyes see him now in heaven, and then again, the voice of the father, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

Now, you can understand that wondrous, ineffable love of the glorious trinity, that is the foundation of the church, the foundation of the gospel, the foundation of our hope, of our faith, of our expectation, of our joys, of our blessings, of the promises, that is the foundation of all.

But, now we come to this consideration, the outflow of that love to poor, sinful, fallen mortals, guilty sinners, rebels, wretches, those that are utterly unworthy, but the objects of his choice, his dear elect people, love, have you ever felt brokenhearted by the language in the hymn, he saw me, willing, yet loved me notwithstanding all, he saved me from my lost estate, his loving kindness, oh, how great, indeed, the greatest thing in your life is this, child of

God, when the Lord comes and tells you that he loves you, and the Holy Ghost sheds abroad that love in your soul, and all doubt is removed, and all servile and craving for you, and there is a blessed, happy assurance of your personal interest in him, oh, but it now was shed abroad in our hearts, the Lord grants it, so, there is the outflowing of this love, yea, he loved the people, all his saints are in thy hand, and they set down at thy feet, every one shall receive of thy words,

I feel that it will be desirable now, as we wish to apply the holy doctrine in the form of living, vital, spiritual, indispensable, essential, spiritual, spiritual experience, well, that is one summary of the text, these are all living, holy desires of the apostle for his spiritual children, and for the whole church of God here below, and in that consummate glory that they will know hereafter, they're all spiritual desires and spiritual blessings and experiences, you take this first one, that Christ may dwell in your heart by faith, that's a spiritual experience, that you be rooted and grounded in love, a vital, essential, spiritual experience, beloved, do you know this secret?

[17 : 17] Does Christ dwell in your heart by faith? Are you rooted and grounded in love? And then take the next, may be able to comprehend what is embrace and come into the fullness of the enjoyment of it, may be able to comprehend with all signs what is the breadth and length and depth and height, the dimensions of the love of God, these are the eternal dimensions of his love, and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge.

Now all these are spiritual experiences, might be filled with all the fullness of God, the sublime word, a tremendous body of divinity this, that they're all holy desires for spiritual experiences.

And friends, it's personal, it's a matter of your soul and my soul. Do we know these spiritual experiences?

They are also set before you so that you may with the vehement and intensity of love and desire beg of the Lord to impart this form to you and bring you into this sacred maturity so that I feel that it will be wise to now translate the holy doctrine into spiritual experience and you notice the first that Christ made well in your hearts by faith so where shall I begin?

I'm going to begin here where God begins with a sinner but a sinner whose person he eternally loves elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father whose sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ God commended his love to us in that whilst we were yet sinners Christ died for us all the amazing nature of the love of God now when the Lord and there is a set time quickens his chosen into divine life and imparts the spirit of holiness let us be very clear about this they are brought measurably under the spiritual application of the holy moral law and that holy law of God reflects the majesty and justice and holiness of God awareness of that majestic and glorious being

[21 : 22] God himself and the Lord as Isaiah saw him will produce in your soul a sense of what he expressed in confession in fact we seldom hear of this now when said I woe is me for he had seen in the year that king Isaiah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon the throne high and lifted up and his train filled the temple above it took a seraphim each one had six wings with twain he covered his face with twain he covered his feet and with twain he did fly you cover your face one cried unto another saying holy holy holy is the

Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory and the post of the door moved at the voice of him that spake and the house was filled with smoke have you had some awareness of the infinite glorious majestic being of Jehovah this great God so pure so holy so just sin condemning but how wonderful sin condemning and sin punishing yet sin forgiving and my friends there is no there can be no alteration there you may say to me very well

I know I realized that he was a sin hating God but today I will give my testimony to his church to his glory that he is a sin forgiving God how many forgiven sinners are there in this chapel this morning so that you are made ready to the time when he called you but remember that if you know him as a sin forgiving God and know this holy bliss it is because punishment has been known not not by you but by a substitute your sin has been imputed condemned and punished in a substitute that dear saith that blessed sure time so that there has been no remission of the penalty in so far as the substitute was concerned there is remission of the penalty in your case your sin forgiven it is because

Christ received the punishment instead will not his dying love break your hearts dissolve them in thankfulness and gratitude and praise well now you are aware of the sequence there what did Isaiah say woe is made for I am undone and undone the term undone there means cut off he felt cut off woe is me I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of the people of unclean lips and my eyes have seen the king the lord of hosts that is knowing god in some small measure bearable

I know myself behold I am vile do you know it it is perhaps interesting to observe in that wonderful narrative concerning the prophet Isaiah that he named a particular part or organ of his anatomy namely his lips woe is me for I am undone for I am a man of unclean lips why should he name his lips he may of course as experienced Christians children of God come back to me and say well that just expresses the whole man and that is of course correct but there is undoubtedly a specific reason for this that a particular part of his anatomy should be named and the live coal was placed on his mouth and the testimony of the

[27 : 33] Lord was lo this hath touched thy lips I want you to work it out with me as to why that part of the anatomy is named why do you think it is think that antecededly if you can let me then be explicit then so mysteriously the devil that fallen angel who was once in heaven very mysterious isn't it how that Satan and all those evil angels were cast out of heaven because of their pride now when he entered then so mysteriously into that earthly paradise and the first approach the woman entered into a dialogue with her

God had given them a very beneficial law they might eat of all the trees in that garden except one tree of the knowledge of good and evil and in the day that thou dost thou shalt surely die he said ye shall not surely die ye shall be as gods discerning between good and evil and the woman saw that it was pleasant for the eyes and good for food and so on and she took it what did she do she gave to her husband but what did they do they put it to their lips to their mouth and it eat lips mouth of woe is me for

I am undone I do want to find a few poor sinners I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips and obviously the mouth is like the mouth of a volcano and from the wicked out there is the pouring forth often of the lather of wickedness malice sin woe is me time and time now my friends the Lord by that spiritual application will rip you of your last rag and completely empty you it will accuse you apprehend you first accuse you and condemn you and shut you up in prison and lock the door and you're a condemned sinner

I must start here you know what it is there's one point that I would like just to mention about the Adamic fallen that is you know when when God came and they were naked and they knew it and they had fled from him they were afraid of him they'd never been afraid of him before they had revered him they'd not been afraid and hast thou eaten of this fruit now the sad thing is this Adam blamed his wife he said this the woman that thou gavest to me she gave this fruit and I did eat he blamed his wife and when the Lord came to the woman she blamed the serpent now the Lord will not take that it rests upon you as a sinner before God not to make excuses and blame someone else sin lieth at the door so has this spiritual application of the Lord being completed in your soul how did you feel in that cell lost you didn't know anything about love did you you never thought it possible that you could be loved you didn't know anything about mercy your grace or the Lord

Jesus did you may you were a condemned criminal and in that cell you justified God who knew that he was just and you knew that you merited hell where you expected to go was that too deep for you is this something you never know this is how the Lord deals with those that he quickens I know that the Lord in his divine sovereignty deals with each of his dear people according to his pleasure and it is an amazing thing that a few have referred to their initial feelings of God in a way of love that's an amazing thing isn't it but you may be well assured that if this is the case the Lord will teach those their sinfulness and ruin the day will come when they will see deeply their depravity their fallen state and their deserving of hell

[34 : 50] I wonder if I have one here this morning and this would be applicable to you though by my sins deserving hell are you in despair then you'll say not quite not far off but not quite though by my sins deserving hell I'll not despair for who can tell you've had a crumb of mercy my friend you're not without just a little hope in yourself that's a sweet thing isn't that I'll not despair for who can tell now I come in this further step in the subject to observe this glorious proof the method divine of the

Lord to make his son known to the objects of his choice is by divine revelation that is the veil is removed and you see what you have never seen before the day comes when Christ is there the Lord Jesus comes the sky will open your eyes and you see this glorious person of Christ your substitute your short your redeemer your savior friend your friend yes he's come to friend he hasn't come to cut you off no he has come to deliver you to open your presence and to release you from this captive state and to bring you into the liberty of the gospel

Jesus come to