

Knowing His Love

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0:00] Let me begin by having you turn in your Bibles this morning to 1 Corinthians chapter 2. I will not preach next week. So that means you get to this week.

What I'm asking you to look at this morning is one that reflects probably one of the more consistent things I say from the pulpit.

And that has to do with my dependence upon your prayer. Next week I will not ask you to pray for Pastor Shearer.

I'm doing it this week. And as is appropriate, I want to frame that request in the light of Scripture, knowing that God's people will pay attention to that carefully and think of it soberly.

1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 3, I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling. No man should ever come to the pulpit to preach the Word of God without these things in his heart.

[1:39] And that is the reason why over the years you've heard me say over and over again that I am desperately dependent upon your prayers.

Truthfully, I remember hearing Pastor Brock teach on the place of prayer in affecting the ear with which Tim Knoyer listened to preaching.

I sat back there where Kevin Yankovich is sitting presently. The pews were colored differently. But Judith and I had our youngest son, Samuel, in the nursery then.

And he was a high-kneed child. I said that because he's sitting back there and I thought I'd take a cheap shot and get away with it. That was really not the truth.

Don't send me an email on that. Other things are okay, but that was just a joke. But I remember hearing Pastor Brock teach on the role of prayer.

[2:46] Listen to me. It changed the way Tim Knoyer listened to sermons. It made me realize that Tim Knoyer had a part to play in taking a frail instrument, imperfect at best, and pleading with the Spirit of God to help that individual bring the Word of God with clarity, with simplicity, and with passion.

And like I said, I will not give an introduction such as this next week. Because you understand the logic of that, don't you? But look at verse 4.

This is what I want you to remember. And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and in power.

That's always the desire of a man who preaches the Word of God. That what is seen is the evidence of the power of the Spirit of God working to touch the lives of people for the glory of Christ.

Now, I said you're getting two today. That's number one. Click that off. Move on. 1 John chapter 3.

[4:23] How many of you here would admit that sometimes you're a little full of yourself? Besides me.

I mean, you know, I remember when I heard Paul David Tripp admit that he was the biggest problem he had. Now, I had been struggling with coming to grips with that, but he said it so well. It's like, I can buy that. Yes, I am a problem. And strangely enough, that problem doesn't really show up in my devotional life or my prayer life.

It shows up in particular when I'm around other people. Because I'd like to think that they're the problem. And I would admit that relationships always bring sinners into close proximity with each other, but we don't tend to see it that way.

And 1 John is all about helping professing believers understand the significance of the question of, am I really saved?

[5:43] We're looking this morning at 1 John chapter 3, verse 1, just as an intro, and then more particularly at verse 16. But let me read that to you.

It says there, See what kind of love the Father has given unto us, that we should be called the children of God. I hope you have never gotten over that reality.

That the unbelievable blessing that you have of being God's child and having a personal relationship with the Lord of glory is something that at every moment puts a smile on your face when you stop and think about it.

In fact, it is the remedy to much of our moodiness and surliness and unhappiness in life. Wouldn't you agree with that?

Here's Paul saying, and when he says, Behold, I can't get my head around the fullness of what it's saying. It's like, wow! Behold what manner, what kind of love the Father has given unto us that we should be called the children of God.

[6:59] It's overwhelming. Paul then kind of plays out through, or not Paul, but John plays out through the remainder of the first part.

He talks about the fact that this thought ends up having an effect upon the way we live. And if you are sitting here this morning and your heart is touched with the sweetness of the truth that you're the child of God, well, one of the takeaways as a result of that is that you end up with a greater sensitivity to the issue of personal sin.

This morning, as I was spending time in prayer, I found myself lamenting, just grieving of heart with one of the recurring battles of my own heart.

How many of you have those? A couple areas where, you know, just like, You know what? I really wish this didn't happen anymore, and I didn't have those kind of lousy, low-life, unacceptable, godless thoughts.

How many of you are in that space with me? Thank you. Mike, there's one of us here, okay? And I remember thinking of the passage in Hebrews 1, verse 9, where the author, unknown, recites a passage in the Psalms.

[8:22] Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity. And I found myself this morning as I was in prayer and preparation for the Lord's table just saying, Lord, I so hate sin, and I long to grow in grace.

And in the passage we see in 1 John is, hey, we are the children of God, and the truth of the matter is is that we're not what we will be, but, man, thinking about it has an effect upon our lives.

And as the apostle unpacks the portion of passage, he deals with this issue of sin, and he brings it around to a very, very practical challenge in terms of relationship and really challenges us to kind of think through the issue of whether or not our relationships with one another are marked by the love of Christ.

And I'm not going to take the time to deal with that piece of it. What I want to do is have you put your finger on verse 16 because it is an absolutely central truth in the believer's life.

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us. It's appropriate that a passage such as this be part of our time around the Lord's table.

[9:58] There's a connectedness. You remember that when Paul is correcting the church at Corinth regarding their time around the Lord's table, he reminds them that when we take these elements, he says, you do show forth the Lord's death.

The bread and the cup are reminders of Jesus dying for us. And so here we are in a companion passage over in 1 John 3 where the apostle, as he is reminding us of our relationship with Christ, and he's reminding us of the significance of that, he makes this kind of foundational statement.

This is what love looks like. Jesus died for us. Jesus died for us. And since we are at the table and we are going to be taking these elements, I think it's appropriate for us to recognize what we're not doing today.

For one thing, we recognize that the enemy of our souls is great at leading us astray, and even we who are well-framed and relatively mature believers, how many of you would admit that there are times when your mind just is not connected to the things it should be connected to?

I mean, there are some of us here that perhaps spend an hour, an hour and a half in our devotional life. We get up early in the morning and do it, and I can tell you this, that even when you're engaged in that level of discipline, there are times that you can go through the motions and your heart's not in it.

[11:34] And so I would appeal to you that when we come to this table that we are careful that we don't just get caught up and led astray by the enemy of our souls. So let's recognize that for one thing, we're really not engaged in a saving ritual.

I remember talking with an individual not too long ago who said to me, oh, I've missed communion for so long, it just doesn't feel right.

And I've got to tell you, I can understand that. But on the other hand, I don't want any believer to ever end up having the idea that you kind of lose all kinds of points with God if you don't take communion necessarily.

I mean, there are some people that are bed fast. There are some people that are in the military, and there are reasons, various reasons, they don't engage in the Lord's table.

And so don't think to yourself that when you take communion, you get kind of extra points with the Father. Satan has actually deceived many into thinking that the bread and the cup are a means of salvation, and that actually taking the bread and the cup is one of the ways that you assure yourself of your eternal destiny.

[12 : 55] The false teaching surrounding that proposes that every time communion is actually offered, that the priest is making a fresh sacrifice of Christ for our sins.

That is an unholy teaching. And it is clearly contradictory to the Scriptures. I want you to take just a moment.

You're there in 1 John, and we're going to come back to it. But I want you to turn in your Bible over to Hebrews 7, verse 27, and mark what it says, talking about Jesus in relationship to the priestly sacrifices that were made in the Old Testament.

He says this, He had no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all.

And I would encourage you, underline that in your Bible, once for all. Once for all. We find a very similar statement over in Hebrews 10.

[14 : 05] And in verse 10, here's what it says, And by that will, Jesus referring, or the passage referring to Jesus coming to obey the will of the Father, it says, And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Now stop just for a moment and listen and look up. This is a little unusual statement, once for all, once for all. You don't find that kind of repetition without understanding that the Spirit of God wants to be clear that we're not misled.

It's pretty hard to get around a once for all statement, isn't it? It's there to remind us. The sacrifice of Christ sufficient and once for all.

I want you to understand that when we come to this table, we are not here, not only to not engage in a saving ritual, but we're not just going through the motions. And one of the characteristics of our fellowship in preparing for the Lord's table is that invariably, the Wednesday before we come to this table, there is a portion in the prayer bulletin reminding us of the fact that the Lord's table is coming, and there are things that we should prepare for in prayer.

I'm all in favor of taking a quiet moment to quiet your heart before you take the elements, but how many of you admit that sometimes that can be pretty just functional?

[15 : 40] I mean, you know what I'm saying? Probably a more practical way to really get down to the nut of the matter would be to turn to your wife on Saturday evening and say, honey, are there any sin areas in my life that you think I need to repent of before I take communion tomorrow morning?

That's a really comfortable thought, isn't it? Inviting your wife to help you realize where you are struggling. I mean, the last time your wife probably had a comment to say about your spiritual deficiencies, how did you receive it?

Probably what you said is, who are you to talk to me? You low-life, struggling sinner that you are. You know, it's like, but here's my point, okay? Hey, hey, come on.

We should realize that we've got to be careful that we're not going through the motions, and that means that we carefully do exactly what it says in 1 Corinthians 11, where it says, examine yourself, that you not be judged with the world.

And so, if you are into multitasking, and I think you are, some of you are already thinking about what lunch is, so you can handle this one too, just go ahead and say to the Lord, help me to listen with one ear, and with my spirit, kind of my heart, kind of consider, are there attitudes I have that really aren't pleasing to you?

[17 : 05] Do I have some unconfessed sin that needs to be cared for before I come to the elements? And so, I want to remind you that what we're not doing today is we're not just going through the motions. What we are here to do this morning is think deeply on Christ's death for us,

because I've got to tell you something, listen to me.

What He has done for us means everything to me, and it means everything to you who know Christ. It is the foundation for the way we live and act and think.

Isn't that right? Isn't it right? And it helps us to remind ourselves again and again and again of who Jesus is and what He's done for me, because it has a tendency of redirecting, correcting, and helping me get back in the space that I need to be.

So here we are with this little verse, and the apostle says this. He says, listen, this is how we know love.

He laid down His life for us. So let's look at that very simple statement and recognize that when it says He laid down His life for us, what it is telling us is that Jesus made a voluntary choice.

[18:35] Jesus' death on the cross was not kind of a quirk of fate. It was not a cruel display of the heartless attitudes of the Jewish leaders, though they were heartless and godless.

What we understand is that what took place on the cross is something that the Lord Jesus consciously and deliberately chose to do. You are there in 1 John.

I want you to look at a companion passage that amplifies this statement. Turn back to John's gospel, to John chapter 10, verse 17. John chapter 10, verse 17.

For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. I lay down my life.

There are some things that you and I have been forced to do because they're necessary, that sometimes we do things because other people expect us to do them. But what Jesus is saying here is that His decision to die for us was something that He chose to do.

[19:53] It wasn't an accident. It wasn't something that just happened. The Son of God, our Savior, the one who has redeemed me and has blessed me with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, consciously and deliberately chose to lay aside His pre-incarnate glory and to come here and live on this earth a sinless life and to die for my sins.

The wonder of His choice is really magnified when we stop and consider the glory of the one making the choice. And it should overwhelm us. It should overwhelm us.

I have not watched any basketball yet. But I have friends that are out on Facebook and I do check to see where they are. And I have, some of you remember Tom Watkins, Dr. Tom Watkins.

He is a Michigan State fan. And every one of his posts, he must be going to the games quite a bit because I hear him post this and post that and post the other thing.

And I get the sense that he's pretty encouraged right now. I mean, Michigan State basketball is kind of really pretty neat. And I'm thinking, so that's good.

[21:12] That's good. He's a great guy. But I want my heart to be more affected by the sweetness of what Jesus has done for me than any sport activity ever.

You got that? And so, when we think about Christ's voluntary death for us, it ought to overwhelm us. That's what the apostle is saying.

This is what love looks like. Jesus laid down his life for us. And so, hammer that home in your life. Jesus died by his own choice.

Scripture actually goes to quite a detail to help us get that fact in our minds. And so, we're going to take some time and work our way through the Gospels in relationship to that. Keep your finger there in 1 John.

We will come back to that. But go to Matthew 27, verse 50, first of all. Matthew 27, verse 50. Jesus died voluntarily.

[22:16] And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. Now, what does that say? In most cases, death comes upon people just as a providential flow of the process of dying.

dying. It's not like, and I have been in the hospital room and at the bedside of many individuals over the years of ministry, and I've watched a number of individuals die.

It's not like anybody says, hey, you know what? I'm out of here in a minute and a half. It happens when God in his plan ordains it. But Jesus chose the moment of his death.

And here's what it says there. In verse 50, he said, and he cried out with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. He chose to die for us. We're in Matthew. I want you to turn to Luke chapter 23 verse 46.

Luke chapter 23 verse 46. Then Jesus called out, calling out with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. And having said this, he breathed his last.

[23:28] Into your hands I commit my spirit. This is an act Jesus did voluntarily. John chapter 19 verse 30.

John chapter 19 verse 30. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, it is finished. And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. So when you take the bread this morning, when you take the cup this morning, I want you to meditate upon the thought that Jesus chose of his own free will to die for you.

he died for you. And the truth of the matter is, is that if we think carefully about our own wickedness and the just punishment at the hands of a holy God, the fact that Jesus died in my place is overwhelming.

coming. I have to tell you that there is benefit in reminding myself over and over again of what Jesus has done for me.

[25:07] And the practical exercise this morning of taking a portion of bread and taking a cup that reminds me of both his death for me.

And the new covenant is something that should reorient and reframe my natural tendency of being just a little bit self-focused.

There's something else that I want you to understand as you look at this passage. Going back to 1 John chapter 3, he laid down his life for us.

And the fact that he died for us, I want you to recognize that Christ's work was sufficient. It wasn't wasted.

His death was more than voluntary, and when I say more than voluntary, I do not mean in any way to take away from the fact that it was voluntary, but it was more than voluntary. It was necessary and sufficient for our sins.

[26:10] the action that is spoken of here in the text refers to something that is done and the matter is settled. It's finished.

Jesus didn't die to give us a model of how to live a sacrificial life, though his life is a model of how to live sacrificially. His death was the only completely appropriate and necessary substitution for our death.

I know that theologians can dispute about wording, and I think it's appropriate to do so. Some have a great deal of angst over saying Jesus died our death.

They think that we should say Jesus died for us, and I struggle to make a distinction because I believe Jesus died in my place. And so, when we stop to think about it this morning, I want you to respond as you take the bread and cup.

Think, you died for me, for my sins, in my place. It's interesting, in John chapter 1, verse 29, when John the Baptist saw Jesus coming, he said, behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

[27:31] That's neat. That's a blessing. I want you to think back to that passage that I referred to earlier in Hebrews chapter 10, verse 10, and then also in 14, and just kind of fix this in your mind that Christ Jesus died for our sins and it is completed.

It's done. It's finished. How many of you like to occasionally get kind of wrapped up in studies just to find out if it's really so? I was studying this morning the Greek word tetelestai and I have to confess to you that I can think of who was Evangelism Explosion's pastor?

Can anybody help me with that? James Kennedy. I remember hearing James Kennedy say that the word tetelestai means paid in full. I can't say that I found that actually in further research today or last week.

And one of the advantages is that you guys can sit here and Google right now and find out if I'm right. Don't do that! But here's my point. Hey, we ought to pay attention to being accurate and careful.

What it does mean is that the matter is settled. It's done. So this morning as you think about what Christ has done I want you to understand when he said it is finished he meant that this work of redemption this work of giving you salvation this work of assuring your eternal destiny and where you will spend all of eternity the matter is finished it's done it's settled there's nothing else to add to that.

[29:18] I think of the words of the song that says this I need no other argument I need no other plea it is enough that Jesus died and that he died for me.

so this morning as I ask the men to come and we will gather around the table now I want you to think to yourself this is love Jesus laid down his life for me I want you to pray with me before we take these elements father I can only refer to my own heart and I know how easy it is for me as I come to this table to be careless in my own examination that is unfitting given the seriousness of the warning that we find in 1st

Corinthians regarding taking this time of remembrance in an unworthy fashion I struggle with sin father and I am very thankful for the time of coming this morning before you and asking for the spirit's help that I deal with humility and spirit enabled objectivity with sin and Tim Kenoyer's life I'm thankful that Jesus died for me that I do not have to stay a slave to sin I'm thankful that because of what Jesus has done for me that my relationships and attitudes towards others are liberated from being so entirely consumed with myself and enabled by your spirit to be focused upon the glory of Christ and the needs of those you bring to me and father I would pray that this morning with a hatred for sin and a love for the Lord Jesus that I would long to grow to be more like him and I pray this for his glory amen but I do I do I do I do I do I do I do I do Thank you.

Thank you.

[33:35] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[36:05] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[38:35] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[41:05] Thank you.