

The Love that God hath to us

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- [0 : 0 0] Let's read the Word of God together in the New Testament in 1st John chapter 4. 1st John, the first epistle general of John and chapter 4.
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- 1st John, the first epistle general of John and chapter 5. is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Here in his love not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved if God so loved us we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another God dwelleth in us and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.
- [2 : 5 7] Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God. 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. Herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment because as he is so are we in this world. There is no fear in love but perfect love cast without fear because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him because he first loved us. If a man say I love God and hateth his brother he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also. Amen. May the Lord bless that reading of his own holy word.
- We'll sing now in Psalm 107 at verse 25. For he commands and forth in haste the stormy tempest flies, which makes the sea with rolling waves aloft to swell and rise. They mount to heaven, then to the depth they do go down again.
- Their soul doth faint and melt away with trouble and with pain. They reel and stagger like one drunk, at their woods' end they be. Then they to God in trouble cry, who them from straits doth free.
- The storm is changed into a calm at his command and will, so that the waves which raged before now quiet are and still.
- Then are they glad, because at rest and quiet now they be. So to the haven he them brings, which they desire to see.
- [5 : 4 1] Oh, that men to the Lord would give praise for his goodness then, and for his works of wonder done unto the sons of men.
- And note also the last verse of this psalm. We're not going to sing it, but I want you to notice the last verse. Verse 43. Verse 25 to verse 31.
- To God's praise. For he commands the Lord. For thin haste the stormy tempest flies, which makes the sea with rolling wicks, a love to swell and rise.

- They hire, they hire, they kill the depths, They do go down again.
And so the place will lead the way, without the line with pain.
- [7 : 33] They reel and stagger like wonder, At their wits end they peep.
The wind will fall dim from the cry, Who then from streets deathly.
The storm is changed into a calm, At his command and will, So that their waves were
drenched before, Now quiet and still.
Then are they glad because at rest, And quiet now they be, So to the heaven he then
brings, Which they desire to see.
Oh, that men too, The Lord would give, Faithful in goodness, And for his works of wonder,
And to the sons of men.
- [9 : 50] Seeking the Lord's blessing then, Let's turn again to the portion of scripture that we read,
The first epistle, General of John chapter 4, Reading again at verse 16, 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. And in
particular these verses in the middle of the text, God is love.
And we look at it under five headings.
The first of which is, The purposes of God. The purposes of God. Or love purposed.
Love purposed. The Bible is the greatest love story ever told.
- [11 : 09] Where does the story begin? Well, it has no beginning. Where does the story end? Well, it
has no end.
Because God has no beginning, And no end. Our God is the God who has said, I have
loved thee with an everlasting love.
I have loved thee with an everlasting love. God has no beginning.
It was purposed from all eternity. By the great God, The creator of the ends of the earth,
The king of kings, The lord of lords, A God of infinite purity, Of infinite holiness.
The heavens can't contain him. Neither can the heaven of heavens contain him. The lord
who says, I am the lord, And I change it not.
- [12 : 24] Has loved, Has purposed, From all eternity, To loved, To love.
And the wonder of that text in Jeremiah 31, Is this, Amongst many things, I have loved
you. Loved you. Personally. Personally.
Powerfully. You. You. You. And as I said, The God who has no beginning and no end.
His love has no beginning and no end. He is the eternal God, From everlasting, To
everlasting. God is love.
John also teaches us, About, Some of God's other attributes. In the first chapter he tells
us that, He is life.
- [13 : 31] God is life. Chapter 1 and verse 2. 2. For the life was manifested, And we have seen it
and bear witness, And show unto you that eternal life, Which was with the Father, And
was manifested unto us.
He also says this in verse 5. God is light. This then is the message which we have heard
of him, And declare to you that God is light, And in him is no darkness at all.
Throughout the scriptures, We see other attributes of God emerging. God is holy, Holy,
Holy, Holy, Holy, I say, I say.

God is love. His love is as permanent as all his attributes, Which can never be separated. Can never be separated. Because, They provide us with a picture of the very being, Of the very essence, Of God.

The very nature of God. And they are all constantly and intimately related. They are all pure and holy. Perfect unity.

[14 : 56] Perfect triune God. Perfect triune unity. In writing to the Ephesians, Paul says this, In verse 9, Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, According to his good pleasure, Which he hath purposed in himself.

Which he hath purposed in himself. Love purposed. Love purposed. Love purposed. And again in chapter 3 of Ephesians.

And verse 11. According. Well, Let's read at verse 10. To the intent. That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church.

The manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose. Which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. And what was that purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[16 : 09] It is this that we touched on in the morning. God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son, Christ Jesus our Lord. Love purposed.

Love purposed. According to his purpose. Love purposed. According to his purpose. A.W. Pink says this. How blessed to know that the great and holy God loved his people before heaven and earth were called into existence.

That God had set his heart upon them from all eternity. Isn't that quite remarkable?

That God had set his heart on his people from all eternity.

In verse 19 of the chapter we read. 1st John 4 19. We love him because he first loved us.

[17 : 18] This is the eternal first. The eternal first. Why does he love us? He loves us because he is love.

We are neither lovely nor lovable. Sin has spoilt us and marred us so badly. And corrupted us completely and wholly.

That there is nothing in us. Nothing in us that could possibly attract him. Quite the opposite. We deserve.

To be cast into a lost eternity. But love purposed. The divine will purposed.

Love purposed. And it is because of who he is. That we become. That we become. What we are.

[18 : 24] In Christ. So love purposed. So love purposed. The second P is.

Love. Promised. Love promised. The scriptures are full of the promises. The promises of God.

The promises of God. The promises of God. In relation. To. This. Love. That was purposed. And promised.

I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore will I draw thee with loving kindness. There is both a purpose and a promise.

That in history. God was to intervene. In the history of the world. And that promise.

[19 : 24] That was promised. That was purposed in eternity. And in a sense promised in eternity. Was realized in history.

Promised. And realized. In history. And revealed. How was it revealed? It was revealed in the creation.

It is. The love of God. That revealed this in creation. It was the love of God that revealed it. In the garden of Eden. It was the love of God. That revealed. Man. Man. And gave to man. A helpmeet.

Woman. And together they were to become husband and wife. They were to become one flesh. And they were to produce a holy seed.

[20 : 24] And he put them in a garden so full of love. And everything was lovely. And everything was beautiful.

Made in the image of God. For a personal relationship and fellowship. In love. But what happened?

Man fell. Man fell. What happened to the promise? What happened to the promise? What happened to love promised?

I am the God who changeth not. Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. The promise remains.

Even after the fall. And that promise is realized. In salvation. In a savior. In one who was going to draw us.

[21 : 24] With loving kindness. And what is the loving kindness of God? You see it so often in the Psalms. And in scripture. Have you ever thought of. What is the loving kindness of God?

Sometimes it's translated mercy. Well it is this. It is love. Love worked out.

In reconciliation or atonement. I am going to put it in Gaelic. The love of God. The love promised. The love promised. The love promised.

That not even the fall of man could change. And as you follow the history. Of the world. The love. The love promised. The love promised. That not even the fall of man could change.

The love. The love. The love. The love of God. The love promised. The love promised.

[22 : 25] The love promised. That not even the fall of man could change. and as you follow the history of the world you see time and time again love revealed it was the love of God that shut the door of the ark to save Noah and his family it was the love of God that made the covenant with Abraham and with Isaac and with Jacob to give the people a land or to give them a land and a people it was in love that they were delivered out of Egypt Hosea tells us this when Israel was a child I loved him and out of Egypt I called my son it was the love of God that was with them his presence in the worship in the cloud in the tabernacle in the temple in the commandments he took them to the promised land he gave them a kingdom and promised them a saviour to sit on David's throne a temple in Jerusalem where they could sing about this love 1st Chronicles 16:34 give thanks to God for he is good for his steadfast love or his loving kindness endures forever and it became one of the great refrains of Israel and they would repeat it they would repeat it and it became like a like a something that they would know and learn love promised and that also entails his love and chastising them for their sins and when you read the history of the people of God sometimes you just you're speechless at how sinful the people of God were oh until you take more than one look into your own heart and you realise just how sinful you are and how like them you are so like them so so like them but in love he chastised them he chastised them by sending them into the bondage but in love he promised their return love promised all the way from beginning to end his faithfulness he is the God of Christian experience the God of the hills and the valleys in your own experience he is the God of all the storms of life we sang in that great psalm 107 about the storms of life but remember remember that sound that we were singing verse 25 for he commands and forth in haste the stormy tempest flies oh I remember going to see one of our late elders and he was a lovely man many of you

I'm sure would have known him Kenny Moore I went in to see him one day there he was largely housebound with his various afflictions and he said this to me have you ever read these verses in Psalm 107 at verse 25 for he commands and forth in haste the stormy tempest flies he saw that in all his affliction God was there with him and that those afflictions were for his good for his sanctification and he was embracing this God this God and as I said when we were singing note the end of Psalm 107 whoso is wise and will these things observe and them record even they shall understand the love and kindness of the

Lord the love and kindness of the Lord the word of God is full of love promised the song of songs that most intimate love song let him kiss me the church says to Christ let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth these are wonderful phrases for thy love is better than wine the God who says in Hosea I will betroth you to me forever in righteousness justice love and compassion it's almost as if the whole Bible is speaking with all due reverence presents to us the love of God in a picture of the bridegroom and the bride who fall in love and they get married and they start a family and they love their children all the images of the whole testament hold the promise of love and we don't know and we don't realize you know sometimes you read the scriptures and you read even chapters of the scriptures that you've read more than once perhaps even numerous times and you can read it this one time and it's almost as if you've read it for the first time because you see things in it that you've never seen before look at

Isaiah 16 verse 5 then a throne will be established in steadfast love and on it will sit in faithfulness in the tent of David one who judges and seeks justice and is swift to do righteousness and of course love promised in the coming of the Messiah which takes us on to the next P which is love personified love personified in the chapter that we read and verse 9 we read well we can read at verse 2 firstly hereby know ye the spirit of God every spirit that confesses that Jesus

Christ is come in the flesh and at verse 9 in this was manifested the love of God toward us because God sent his only begotten son into the world that we might live through him here in is love personified in Jesus Christ coming into the world in the incarnation in the incarnation Rutherford called John 3 16 which we considered a little in the morning as love incarnate love incarnate not but love covered with flesh and our Lord came into this world in the most remarkable way in the most remarkable way and he was doing the will of the father and what was the will of the father it was this love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself love

[31 : 35] I must be about my father's business even at 12 years of age in the temple I must be about this business I must go to Jerusalem in 1st Samuel 17 when you see David and you see that story at which you're all very familiar with David and Goliath what is really behind David and Goliath well it is this it's all about God it's all about God and it's all about that revelation there of this David who knew his God the God who had helped him fight bears and lions will he not help me against this uncircumcised

Philistine this Philistine who was out with the covenant of God that's what it means uncircumcised Philistine one who was out with the covenant how dare he how dare he challenge God I will go David says I will go go and you see in it more than an echo of God's greater son Jesus Christ I will go I must be about my father's business I will go to Calvary because I love my father and this love was purposed from all eternity and promised and I am the personification of that love I am love revealed and I am going to Calvary to die for the sins of these people and greater love hath no man than this that a man should lay down his life his life everything he did was about love divine love in the miracles in the healings in the forgiveness in the tears in all the healing of the pain and sorrow that sin brought into the world all the pain and sorrow it caused him this man of sorrows and acquainted with grief grieving over

Jerusalem and the sorry condition of humanity and his father speaks and his father declares this is my beloved son I love him the father says and I am well pleased with him listen to him listen to him and what did he do which takes us on to the fourth point which is this love poured out love poured out verse 10 here in is love not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins poured out a sacrifice a propitiation for our sins this is the most loving thing of all did he not say himself that he will love his people to the end to its full out working in suffering and death love poured out in

Gethsemane in the betrayal before his accusers Caiaphas and Herod and Pilate love poured out in front of those who were beating him and scourging him and placing a crown of thorns on his head and all of it under his own divine control I'm remembering the late Mr.

Macaulay preaching I had the privilege of hearing the late Mr. Macaulay at the very end of his ministry or at least at the very end of when he could preach and I heard him in cross and he said this remember this remember this that when Christ was on the cross of Calvary he was there in his full strength not as some depict him as just falling and lifeless and just about to give up no in the Roman Catholic church there is such a thing as the stations of the cross and you see them if you've ever been into a Roman

[37 : 57] Catholic church you see them on the walls around 14 stations of the cross well a lot of these things are just not in scripture not in scripture not in what God has said where in these things he depicted us falling and getting help getting help or the only help he needed was the help of his father and the angels I think it was Robbie Duncan I was speaking to one of the brethren earlier about the late Colm McLeod missionary who was in her own congregation and Colm would often say to us that Rabbi Duncan was asked who does he most want to see when he gets to heaven and to which one of the responses at least at that time was this the angel that came to strengthen the

Lord in Gethsemane well that was just a thought I suppose but what a thought what a thought love poured out in the cross of Calvary greater love as no man than this it wasn't the nails that held him there the cross is a supreme demonstration of the love and the wrath of God in perfect harmony Psalm 85 is a wonderful psalm truth met with mercy righteousness and peace kissed mutually love love Calvary love Calvary love Agape Calvary love it is not like the love that is between a man and a woman we see something in someone and that makes us love them

God sees nothing in us that is lovely or lovable yet he loves us and his love makes us lovable we read and we sang in Psalm 103 so far has he removed from us in his love all our iniquity all our iniquity if you want to know about God's love go to the cross go to the cross if you want him to save you from your sins go to the cross the greatest love story ever told must become your life story yes your life story we considered

I think the last time I was here Galatians 2.20 and that great personal testimony of Paul the life that I now live in the flesh I live through faith in the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me who gave himself for me I came across some time ago a story about an African pastor who was a pastor in an area that was full of traditional African superstition Muslim influences Marxist influences and there he was encouraging people to believe in Christ there was an incident in the village it was a small village with straw huts

I'm sure you've seen pictures there was a fire in one of the huts and everybody inside the hut was sadly killed except one little boy somebody had managed to drag the little boy out before the hut went up in flames so the elders of the village got together what to do with the child and because of their superstition they thought that this child was a special child saved from the fire favoured by the gods and it would be a privilege to raise him so they brought the people together and asked people to come forward to offer to raise this child and the more wealthy people in the village came forward because they had the means to do so and they brought evidence of their credentials and it was all but concluded when one man stood up an ordinary member of the tribe and he showed them his credentials and what were his credentials his hands that were scarred and burned because it was him who had rescued the child and the pastor says this

[43 : 48] I must follow Jesus because he alone has scars on his hands scars acquired because he loved us and suffered for the sake of that love for the sake of that love and finally and in a word love perfected love perfected verse 12 says to us no man hath seen God at any time if we love one another God dwelleth in us and his love is perfected in us there are two elements to this love perfected perfected in us if we follow the divine commandment to love each other to love each other in

Romans chapter 5 and verse 5 we read these words Romans 5 verse 5 and hope maketh not ashamed why because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us because the love of God is shed abroad it is literally the word is flooding flooding flooding into us that love that was poured out for us is now flooding into us through the Holy Spirit no wonder no wonder the scriptures say behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of

God poured out in us perfected in us if we live in obedience to that commandment to love the Lord with all our heart and soul and mind and strength and our neighbour as ourselves the great chapter of love in 1 Corinthians 13 speaks so powerfully about it though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love I am as a sounding brass and tinkling symbol love and so it goes on about the necessity of love Paul writing to the Colossians says to them but above all these things put on love which is the bond of perfectness what is that bond of perfectness a life of holiness and love a

Christ like life constraining love the constraining love of Christ counting the cost not living to ourselves but to him to him who loved us in obedience in obedience and John goes to some lengths in this general epistle to say to them don't love the world and the things of the world the love of the world is death it's enmity to God love each other with the love of Christ with the love of Christ and there's a warning for us of course there as there is a warning for us throughout the scripture of forsaking our first love forsaking our first love love and the second element of that love perfected is this that that love will be perfected in glory in glory

William Cowper who wrote many beautiful hymns wrote this Lord he said it is my chief complaint that my love is weak and faint yet I love thee and adore oh for grace to love thee more oh for grace to love thee more and I pray that that would be your prayer oh for grace to love God more the God who is love the love that was purposed in eternity promised in history personified in the incarnation poured out on

[49 : 39] Calvary's cross poured out in agony perfected innocence and perfected finally in glory God is love and this is very real there's a great mystery here but God is love and God has chosen to reveal his purposes and his promises and what a way he has revealed them in Christ may you come to know this love for yourself and to know him is eternal life and eternal life means that you will be with Christ forever abiding in that love throughout the endless ages of eternity in that love which has no end and the story will continue forever and ever and ever that greatest of love stories amen may the

Lord bless these thoughts on his word we'll sing now in conclusion in Psalm 116 Psalm 116 verses 1 to 6 I love the Lord because my voice and prayers he did hear I while I live will call on him who bowed to me his ear of death the cords and sorrows did about me compass round the pains of hell took hold on me my grief and trouble found upon the name of God the Lord then did I call and say deliver thou my soul O Lord I do thee humbly pray God merciful and righteous is yea gracious is our Lord God saves the meek I was brought low he did me help afford these verses to God's praise

I am because my voice and prayers he did hear I while I live will call on who bowed to me is he on death the cards and sorrows did about me come pass around the pins of how did pour on me

I grieve and crumble found upon the name of God the Lord then did I call and say deliver thou my soul O Lord I do thee humbly pain God mercy full and righteous is yea gracious this our

Lord God God saves many chaos braco he did me help afford a word of prayer in conclusion O most holy God who has declared his love for us help us we pray to love the Lord with all our heart and soul and mind and strength to love our neighbor as ourselves O Lord as we come to the end of the Lord's day may we take all that we've read and considered with us for what remains of this

[55 : 11] Lord's day make each day of this week the Lord's day for us in our Christian experience help us to love each other and we know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren our brothers and sisters and we give thanks for these tokens which mean so much to us and O Lord how wonderfully by the Holy Spirit that that love can be kindled when we meet one another and even when we meet like this O may the fire of love may it burn bright in our souls may it burn bright in our homes and in our work and wherever we must witness to

Christ and all that Christ is and has done and is doing and will yet do take care of us we pray cleanse and forgive in Christ's precious name Amen