

“God Loved (Part 2)”
By Brother Kenneth Ray
Sunday, January 20th, 2012

Last week we started the first part of our 2-part sermon entitled, “God Loved.” Who remembers the only condition needed to be met to have God’s love active in our lives? accept it. This is sort of a “pre.” Before there was algebra, there was pre-algebra... Normally, physicians don’t like pre-existing conditions, but the Great Physician likes this pre-existing condition. He wants you to have the pre-existing condition of accepting it, before He makes His love active in your life. When we left off last Sunday, we were speaking about Jesus enduring the cross and enduring the shame of it for our sake. This week we are going back to the cross: Jesus, while on the cross, according to Mark 15:34, cried out, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” If you’re looking at that Scripture, then you can see that there is much more to that verse than that; there are a lot more words there than that. But, with in that context, He said, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” What separated the Son from the Father at this point? The one word answer is, Iniquity. Whose iniquity? not His; He committed no sin. Jesus took on the sins of the world; our transgressions and our iniquities. Jesus made His grave with the wicked; remember He was crucified between two thieves. One of those men accepted Him, the other of those men rejected Him. That is the same choice we have today (The Bible says, “8Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (Hebrews 13:8) What are we going to do with God’s love, accept it or reject it? It’s a choice. I don’t have any henchmen to strong arm anyone into accepting Jesus this morning. I don’t have anyone who will put you on a table and interrogate you with Scripture until you get so wearied that you just say, “Fine! I’ll do it!” I don’t have that, this morning. Jesus didn’t have it when He was between the two thieves. But, when you look at it, and you say, “Yeah, I can accept,, or I can reject.”

Let’s think like Americans for a moment, or like people, but I say like Americans, in our capitalistic society, and we say, “What does my choice get me?” He gives us free will (arguable the biggest mistake He ever made); My wife knows, because she’s seen me pick out my wardrobe. Thank God, He gave me a helpmate that helps out with my free will. We have a helpmate to do something about our free will, and that’s called the Holy Ghost. It helps you with more than just your wardrobe, it helps dress you up spiritually, because that is the spiritual fashion sense that you may have.

Jesus’ love is unconditional but He doesn’t force it upon us; we have the option to accept or reject. One of the guys that I work with, his answer to everything is, “Whatever you want, boss.” The boss may ask him, “How do you think we should do this?” “Whatever you want, boss.” “What I want is for *you* to make a decision. I want you to come up with a solution, and bring it to me, and allow me to tweak it as need be.” Jesus wants you to give Him an option of your assessment of whether you’re going to accept or reject His love, and allow Him to tweak it as need be.

Some may think (this usually happens to at least one person in a crowd this size), “You don’t know my past. You don’t know what sins I committed.” True, I don’t, but God does, and I can tell you that He knows and He loves you. Don’t you think that Jesus knew what Apostle Paul did before he became Apostle Paul? I mean, He spoke with him. You think the people didn’t know what Apostle Paul did before he became Apostle Paul? I’m going to give you a quote from the movie, ‘Lincoln,’ “Son, God don’t care where you’ve been, He cares where you

are now.” Now, we do, so we think that God does. We set up barriers, “Oh, I remember what you did; I’m not going to let you do that again,” but God isn’t like that. We have to let God be God and not put barriers up. Apostle Paul had to learn how to love the unworthy. Our free will should not allow someone else’s journey not to start. Don’t top God’s love from reaching someone else because you felt that they are unworthy.

One of my pet peeves is when someone else answers for me when I’ve been asked something. Or when I ask somebody something, and someone else answers my question for them. “Was I asking you?” Don’t answer for someone else when God’s not asking you.

You may think that you are unique (“You’re one of a kind), but you’re not different than anyone else in this, your situation. God created man and you are part of that family; God is our Heavenly Father and in spite of it all, He loves you. Anybody here think that they are not in that situation?

You may ask many questions, but the only question you have to answer is if you will accept or reject God’s love. Reject it, and there is no more He can do for you, He is on the other side of the door knocking. His love is unconditional, but He will not force it on you. He will stand at the door and knock. His love is still there for you, but it’s like anything else with Americans, you’ve got to want it. Accept it, and He can come in and sit and sup with you, and you with Him. He’s not going to critique your dining room set. He will leave you in the direction of having a relationship with Him. We have done a lot of talking about relationships.

I don’t know where you are in your life; I don’t have any special Ninja skills, or Jedi powers. Some feel that they are not worthy of a relationship with God, and find themselves on the outside of what could be something great. Well, let’s address that, this not being worthy. You are not, and neither am I, nor was the thief on the cross who said, “Forgive me.” Christ said to him, “This day, thou shalt be with me in paradise.” Today there is more to it, now we have the Great Commission, but today we are talking about activating God’s love in our lives. By the blood of Jesus Christ we are reconciled back to God and our debt of sin is paid. Let me just say that you are not a thief on the cross, you still have to talk to Him, and you need to take on His name with joy. It is by the blood of Jesus Christ that we are reconciled back to God and that our debt was paid. Without that, God’s love could not be active.

The best way to understand God’s love is to understand Jesus. So, when we began to understand Jesus, we began to understand love. Let’s see how Isaiah 53:7-12 plays out: we see the Father turn away from His Son as a scapegoat for our sin and in all this to hear Jesus cry out, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34) is our first step to understand how vast God’s love is for you, me, all of us. He removes our sins, our transgressions,, as far as the East is from the West (Psalms 103:12). God’s only desire is to give us what is best, and He knows what is best.

God’s love is everlasting:

Jeremiah 31:3 ...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love...

We are promised that absolutely no outside force can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:35-39 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?...

God's relationship towards us is total love, yet the other attribute we hear about God is that He is Holy. Because He is holy, He cannot coexist with sin. This is why He desires above all, for us to be reconciled to Him; and that can only happen by the blood of Jesus. So, while nothing can separate us from God's love, our sin will separate us from God's presence if we do not accept His free gift.

So, we can have a relationship in this life and in the one to come.

