

Living In The Overflow of God's Love Why We Love

Intro: (Ex. 33:18-23)

vv. 17-18 *And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name." 18 Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."*

- A. The Israelites had really made a mess of wanting to "see" God
1. But let us not be too quick to judge them
 - We live in the same danger of confusing *religion* and its forms with *God*.
 2. What about Prayer?
 - Make a list and pray right
 - If we get what we want, we're confirmed
 - If we fail to receive what we've asked, we give up

That's not faith in God!

It is faith in a form or formula

It's faith in faith.

- B. We do the same thing with our garbled use of the church.
1. Church is the place we attend.
 - The thing we do on Sunday
 - An association of people in special favor with God.
 2. So we attend & wait for God to be nice... After all, we've been nice to him - We're present at church more than not

That's not faith in God!

It is faith in a form or formula

It's faith in faith.

- C. We can't have religion by recipe! (the security of formulas and patterns and performances that are predictable and programmed is not faith in God)

Remembering the Story of Simon

- A. In the story this morning-
1. I'm not sure that you could find two people more different
 - He's respected--She is treated like dirt and looked down upon
 - He's a Church leader--She is led by her own sin...She's a street walker
 - He makes his living by promoting standards-- She by breaking them

- He's planning to host a party--She's planning on crashing it!
- 2. Ask anyone who the holy roller is (Simon!)
 - Theologian
 - Man of the cloth!
- 3. But not Jesus-- He knew them both.
 - He would have picked the woman (In fact he does)
 - And Jesus tells Simon why
- 4. We know what's going on with Simon...
 - He's thinking (my house?)
 - This was a formal dinner
 - Invitation only!**
 - The upper crust!**
 - The cream of the crop!**
 - What is she doing at his feet? (groveling & kissing them)
 - ...If Jesus were the man he says he is... he'd know better

B. But Simon is about to learn a lesson this day... **Don't be thinking things you don't want Jesus to overhear!**

**Jesus heard Simon's thinking & decided to share some of his own thoughts:
Lk 7:40-47**

C. Simon invites Jesus into his house but treats him like the unwanted mother-in-law!

- No water for his feet
- No kiss of greeting
- No oil for his head
- 1. It's like Jesus walks in and no one takes his coat, or shakes his hand... Ozzie Osborne would have better manners!
 - He's not welcome
 - The woman does everything that Simon should have done
 - She has no invitation & no positive reputation in the community

She's a hooker with a tight skirt showing up at the preacher's annual Christmas party!

Here's what amazes me

A. These religious people would have some pretty strong opinions about her and her lifestyle

1. But it doesn't stop her from coming
 - She's not coming for them

- She's coming for Jesus
- 2. This woman is calculated!
 - Her face to his dirty, dusty feet!
 - No water, so she uses her tears
 - No towel so she uses her hair
 - She massages his feet with perfume

Max Lucado says: The aroma is as inescapable as the irony.

- B. But you'd think that Simon being religious would have this kind of love
 - He's harsh & distant!
 - She's a sinner, yet can't resist evading him.
 - His love is measured
 - This woman's love is unsettling and uncontrolled

So what makes the difference between the two?

A. Education? Training? Money? (Not for Simon!)

1. No... there's something that the woman has, that Simon doesn't have
2. The treasure she has is... God's love!
 - We're never told when she received it
 - How she heard about it
3. But we do know this: She came to Jesus thirsty!
 - Thirsty because of her guilt!
 - Regret!
 - Because she was never able to find love before...

B. She drinks deeply from Jesus' love and grace.

Simon doesn't even know he's thirsty!

- People like Simon don't need grace (instead they analyze it)
- People like Simon don't ask for mercy-- They argue their righteousness.
- While she drinks up, he puffs up!
- While she has an abundant love to give, he has no love to reveal.

Why? (Luke 7:47)- *"Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven-- for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."*

Here's The Why

A. You can't give what you don't have.

1. If we never receive God's love how can we love others?

What do we normally do in relationships with people who are hard to love... we try harder!!

- My spouse needs forgiveness-- I don't know how... but I'll give it!
- I don't care how hard it is, I'm gonna love that no good bum!
- I'm supposed to love my neighbor-- man-o-man, I will!

So we try harder, we clench our teeth, and we'll love even if it kills us! (Jesus & Judas)

B. Could it be that we're missing something?

1. We give love to others by first receiving it- **1 Jn. 4:19** *"We love because he first loved us."*

Do you long to be more loving?

Then begin by accepting your place as a loved child of God- **Eph. 5:1-2**
"Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

Do you want to learn to forgive?

Then remember the forgiveness God has given to you. **Eph. 4:32**
"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Do you find it hard to put others first?

Then think about what Christ did for you. **Phil. 2:6**
"Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,"

Do you need more patience?

Partake of God's patience **2 Pet. 3:9**
"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

Do you find it difficult to be generous?

Consider God's generosity to you. **Rom 5:8**
"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Can't we love like this?

A. Without God's love the answer is no.

B. What we need is help from outside ourselves

1. If we are to love like God, than we begin by receiving God's love

It's real easy to say...

- Hey, Jesus taught us to love one another, so suck it up and love!
- Be patient, kind or forgiving...

2. But to instruct people to love without helping see that they are loved is like telling them to write a check without making any deposits in their accounts

- No wonder there are so many relationship that are overdrawn

John shows us the right approach. God makes a deposit before he tells us to write a check!

(1 Jo. 4:9-10) *"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."*

C. We know what God wants us to do... right? **1 John 3:23** *"And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us."*

Oh... but how are we going to do this?

- Kind to the vow breaker?
- Kind to those who are unkind to us?
- Patient w/folks who have the warmth of a dead piranha and the tenderness of a porcupine

How can we love as God loves?-- by living loved! (receive first, love second)

If you're ready to love like this... let's look at 1 Cor. 13:4-8a

(Called by many the finest chapter in the bible on love)

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails..."

1. I've heard the lesson--replace the word "love" with my name...
"Scot is patient, Scot is kind. he does not envy, he does not boast, he is not proud. Scot is not rude, he is not self-seeking... Stop! (I'm lying!)"

2. This is a standard far to high for me to reach.

- In fact, no one can reach it!
- No one, except Jesus!

3. Doesn't this chapter describe the measureless love of almighty God?

- Let's read it again.... (Jesus inserted into the passage)

“Jesus is patient, Jesus is kind. He does not envy, He does not boast, He is not proud. He is not rude, He is not self-seeking, He is not easily angered, He keeps no record of wrongs. Jesus does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. He always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Jesus never fails.

Here’s your message:

Rather than let this Scripture remind us of a love we cannot produce, let it remind of a love we cannot resist-- God’s love!

1. Perhaps there are some here today who are thirsty for this type of love.
2. Please listen to heaven’s answer- GOD LOVES YOU!

He loves you Personally

He loves you Powerfully

He loves you Passionately

3. God loves you with an unfailing love.

And His love, if you let it, will fill you and will leave you with a love worth giving...

So come this morning... come thirsty and drink deeply from the well of God’s love.

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