

Stepping Into...

The Perfect Love of God

Jude 20-21

²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ **keep yourselves in the love of God**, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Leviticus 9:22-10:2

'²² Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. ²³ And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, ²⁴ and fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces. Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. ² So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.'

Lamentations 3:22-23

²² The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;
His mercies never come to an end;
²³ they are new every morning; great is Your
faithfulness.'

3 Dangers to mankind

1. Himself
2. His environment
3. God

Aspects of God's love

1. The love between the Father and the Son.
2. His Love for all creation
3. His saving love
4. His choosing love

John 15:9-13

⁹ “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

¹¹ “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. ¹² This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.’

Some key truths about God's character

God is sovereign and transcendent – so far above everything created its not possible to measure it

Omnipotent – all powerful

Omniscient – All knowing

Omnipresent – Present everywhere all at the same time and other times too

Immutable – unchangeable

Ephesians 3:14-19

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ **that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.'**

Hebrews 4:12-13

¹² 'For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ **And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.'**

Ephesians 1:4 'just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.'

Romans 8:38-39

'For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

1 John 4:11 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another'.

Romans 12:1-2

‘I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God’.

Pastor Brian's Preaching Notes: BCC - 23 January 2022 - Stepping into.....The perfect love of God

One of our responsibilities as believers is to keep ourselves in the love of God

Jude : 20-21

Believers need to have a strong and balanced understanding of the love of God

Some struggle with texts like these:

Leviticus 9:22 to 10:2

If God is love then why do these sorts of things happen?

Some have said this:

God in the OT is Judgemental, cruel, vindictive, and wrathful.

God in the NT is Kind, loving, forgiving, and merciful.

But the OT tells us otherwise:

Lamentations 3:22-23

Facts:

Man is in a broken relationship with God and he does not know it.

God's love wants to rescue us from that.

We cannot have a sentimental view of God's love, created by our own culture.

Man is in danger - from 3 areas

1. Himself
2. His environment
3. God

1. Because human beings left to their own devices would wipe themselves out. So many people end up self destructing and living lifestyles that are unhealthy, our sinful nature is what we are. The very essence of who we are is selfishly destructive.

2. The environment that man has created for himself is highly toxic. False religions, atheism, agnosticism, evolutionary biology, there are so many dangers that man has created for himself mainly because they are structures designed to distract us and divert us away from the One True God. Man thinks he can save himself.

3. God is Holy. We all deserve condemnation because of our sinful nature and wilful disobedience.. We are cut off from God by the very nature of who we are.

In Moses time the people were in incredible peril because of Gods holy nature and perfect justice - if people in their state came into contact with Him they would die.

God put in place a way that they could interact with Him without dying. In the OT there is salvation by faith. But God also put in place the law to protect people.

Moses was the mediator and intercessor of the covenant- he protected the people from destruction.

The one thing Moses could not do was to die a substitutionary death for them. Jesus was able to be a substitutionary sacrifice in your place.

Do not limit your revelation of God to Jesus 3 years of ministry. Although turning over the money changers table troubles us, but again it was for the people's safety. Demonstrating the need to approach God in the right way.

God's behaviour is consistent with His character. He cannot change because He loves us.

God used Israel in judgement against the Canaanites because they were given 400 years to repent.

Aspects of God's love:

1. The love between the Father and the Son.
2. His Love for all creation
3. His saving love.
4. His choosing love.

Our responsibility

Jude 21 - Keep in His love

John 15:9-10 - there is a conditional aspect.

God offers us the opportunity to live in His love, but disobedience has consequences.

God's love is unconditional in the sense that salvation is offered to all, but not all experience God's love because they have not repented and do not live in relationship with Him.

John 15:13 is the framework of our interactions with one another
And it is the most single important aspect of evangelism Jesus said how we would know that we were His disciples - love for one another.

Gods character

God is sovereign and transcendent

Omnipotent - all powerful

Omniscient - All knowing

Omnipresent - Present everywhere

Immutable - unchangeable

He knows the movement and makeup of every atom in the universe, every star in the universe.

He sees every blade of grass upon the earth

He knows every second of the past, present and future.

PSALM 139

He has absolute power, knowledge and insight.

He knows what choices we are all going to make

He knows our thoughts, motives and intentions.

God is elective. He knows who will choose to follow him. He knows who will accept Him as Saviour and who will not.

He chose Israel and gave them an everlasting covenant - which cannot fail.

But that should not make us give up.

There is a balance between Gods sovereignty and our responsibility.

Josephs brothers selling him into slavery is an example of that.

God uses the Assyrians to attack unfaithful Israel. He is using them for His purpose.

Our love often grows, but can also diminish. God's love is not like that.

Every creature that ever lived is changing, but not God.

Yet we can have a personal relationship with Him He is a personal being although not a person like us. Eph 3:14-19

How do we balance these things?

Not through sentimentality.
God does not need us and whatever happens does not change Him.

If God loves, then it is because He chooses to do so out of His perfect knowledge and will.

His love is in perfect harmony with His will, character, holiness, and His purpose in redemption.

God does not 'fall in love' with us. His love is set in place already.

We fall in love because we are attracted to someone.
But God's love for us is of a different nature.
In reality we are not attractive to Him at all - because He knows us better than we know ourselves.
Hebrews 4:13

God loves us anyway, it is in His nature to love us. He loves us with a constant unwavering, perfect love.

To us as believers God says these words:

Ephesians 1:4

Romans 8:38-39

1. God's love still sits within the context of all His other perfections.
2. God's love emanates from His character and is not dependant on the objects loveliness or worthiness.
3. His love creates responsibility.

1 John 4:11-19: Gods Wrath: Where there is no sin there is no wrath. Its purpose temporal - it has to exist because of sin and to compliment to God's holiness. It is not an emotional knee jerk reaction.

His love for people is an unchangeable constant and His wrath is inevitable where there is sin.

Some perceive that God's wrath is more obvious in the OT and love is more obvious in the NT. Maybe it is because there is a strong emphasis on statements like this from the NT:

- God is love
- Turn the other cheek
- Love your enemies

But Jesus spoke more about hell in the NT than anyone else in the whole Bible.

OT - temporal things like famine, war, plague, etc, etc.
NT - the prospect of everlasting conscious punishments.

And at what point do we see both God's wrath and Gods love at its most obvious and at its most extreme.:

The cross

God's wrath at the cross - poured out with terrible suffering upon His Son.
God's love at the cross - poured out with terrible suffering on His Son.

And that when we consider the nature and character of God, how awesome He is and yet how He demonstrates His love for us. Romans 5:6-8

Romans 12:1.2

'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God'.