

Sermon Title: God is Love

Sermon Text: Psalm 136

Last week we talked about God's sovereignty - that He has supreme power & ultimate authority! **But what good are such things if not accompanied by love?**

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 - The apostle Paul is speaking about man, but the same applies to God b/c human love is intended to be a reflection of God's love!

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a – God not only loves in such ways, He is such things... **God is the perfect embodiment of, and definition to, love!** **1 John 4:16**

With great power & authority one can make a lot of noise & do a lot of things! **But if that power & authority is void of love it is nothing!**

Psalm 135 speaks of God's sovereignty – His power and authority.

Psalm 136 speaks of God's love, that is never removed from His sovereignty!

God did all these things..., and God does everything He does not just because He can (power & authority), but because He loves, & b/c He is love! **In Ps. 136, He wants to reveal this aspect of His being to His beloved people!**

But for God to have a beloved people – Israel, that must imply that there are other people/groups of people that He does not love... Right?

What if your name is Esau... or Sihon, king of the Amorites... or Og, king of Bashan... Or what if you are Pharaoh, over all of Egypt, during the Exodus...?

Doesn't **John 3:16** say that **"For God so loved the world..."**

- Is God's love all-inclusive or is it subjective?
- Is God's love unconditional or conditional upon man's response to Him?
- Is God's love unleashed by faith, or is our faith unleashed by God's love?

We cannot understand God's love removed from His sovereignty... and we can't understand God's sovereignty removed from His love!

Pharaoh cannot say that God is not loving, despite his fate in the Exodus!

Pharaoh was both the recipient of, and witness to, God's love!

Israel also cannot say that God is not loving, despite being enslaved by Pharaoh! Israel too was the recipient of, and witness to, God's love!

We are all recipients of, and witnesses to, God's love! **God simply chooses to show His love in different ways, at different times, to different people!**

Picture the love of a parent... We show our children love differently - at different times, in different ways, with different children! But it's all love!

Being a parent has helped me understand better the love of God, but my understanding is still insufficient b/c **God's love & sovereignty are perfect!**

I am just a simple lump of clay that the potter (God) is shaping and molding into that which He desires, according to His purpose! His understanding is beyond me, but I'm thankful that I'm loved and that I serve a purpose!

That's what the combination of love & sovereignty in God does - it assures us that there's a plan & purpose in all things, & that plan & purpose comes from a disposition of love! **The combination of the 2 makes all the difference!**

Here are 4 things for us to remember about God's love – L.O.V.E.

- **God's love is lavish!** *"In generous or extravagant quantities!"*
1 John 3:1 – "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"
We have been adopted into God's family – what a display of love!
- **God's love is objective!** *"Uninfluenced by emotions or personal prejudices!"*
Ephesians 1:5-6 – "In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved."
We are sons/daughters, not b/c we deserve it, but b/c He chose us!
- **God's love is visible!** *"able to be seen, or not hidden from sight!"*
Romans 5:8 – "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (memory verse for this week).
There's no greater display of love than to lay down one's life for another!
- **God's love is enduring!** **Psalm 136, Jeremiah 31:3, John 13:1**
We may not always feel it, but God's love has been *lavished* upon us, as the *objects* of His *visibly* redemptive & always *enduring* (sanctifying) love!

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