

Answers to Sermon Notes

"Love and Light, Part I"

John 3:16-21

11/13/22

- 1) I would like to reflect together with you on the mission of God in this world and your place in it.
 - a) What exactly is God's mission and in what way or ways are you, "a part of it."
 - i) to what degree have you been the beneficiary of his mission, and
 - ii) to what degree are you a participant in his mission – a mission-ary?
 - b) So, there are three specific questions regarding the mission of God:
 - i) What is it?
 - ii) Are you a recipient of it?
 - iii) Are you participant in it?
- 2) While there are other passages that speak to this question, none do so better than this passage as Jesus himself explains the mission of God to Nicodemus.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

- 3) One of the first things we see here is that the mission of God is represented in the gift of God.
 - a) So, if we want to know what the mission of God is, we need do no more than look at his gift.
 - i) Now, as we do, we see that it is both a gift of love (vs. 16-18) and a gift of light (vs. 19-21).
 - ii) As we reflect, then, on the degree to which we are both a recipient of, and a participant in, the mission of God, we can already begin to think in those two categories:
 - (1) To what degree am I both a recipient and participant in the love of God's mission/gift.
 - (2) To what degree am I both a recipient and participant in the light of God's mission/gift.
 - iii) Today we will look at the love aspect and next week we will look at the light aspect.
 - (1) But, I want to underscore that these two aspects of his mission are inseparable.
 - (a) To receive and participate in the love is to receive and participate in the light.
- 4) The Love Of God's Gift/Mission. (Vs. 16-18)
 - a) The love represented in God's gift begins with his great love for the world.
 - i) The world?
 - (1) Creation. (Ps. 145:9, Gen. 8:20-22, 9:8-15, Matt. 5:5, Rom. 8:18-25)
 - (2) Fallen Man, the pinnacle of his creation.
 - (a) In the redemption of man is the liberation of creation.

ii) The **Love**?

(1) **Unlike** the love of the world that we are **warned** against (I John 2:15-17), the love that God has for the world sees the world in its **need** and is moved to sacrificially **address** it.

(a) The need of the world is **salvation** (vs. 17), for the world is under **condemnation**. (vs. 18, Eph. 2:1-3)

(i) God didn't send his Son to **condemn** the world; we were **already** condemned.

(ii) The love of God is **demonstrated** in **looking** past what we were to what we could be again. (Rom. 5:6-8)

1. True love begins with **seeing** another in their need and sacrificially working to **meet** it.

2. The **deeper** the need, and the more **resistant** the one in need, the greater the love that's required.

a. To fix the problem (**sacrifice**) and to bear the cost (**mortification**).

b. To love us required an **infinite** degree of both.

i. The **perfect** Son of God, delivered into the hands of sinners (**haters** of God). (Isaiah 53:3)

b) But, the love of God's gift/mission can only be fully **calculated** when we consider the extent of his love for, "**his only Son**." (vs. 16)

i) This, of course, is the fullest expression of what was **prefigured** in **Abraham**. (Gen. 22:2, 15-18)

(1) "Take your son, your only son Isaac, **whom you love**, and go..."

(2) God has openly testified that this is his **beloved Son**. (Matt. 3:16-17)

(3) And as the sacrifice of his Son was being made, the **anguish** of God reverberated throughout **creation** itself. (Mt. 27:45-54)

ii) **What** could possibly **account** for God's giving his Beloved, only Son to suffer the **torments** of hell that were due to us?

(1) Giving the Son who **loved** him **perfectly**.

(2) For those who **hated** him **perfectly**.

iii) The world would say, "**Madness**."

(1) But, for those of us who have been given eyes to see, we **fall** on our **knees** in the presence of **perfect** love and cry, "**Holy!**"

5) The mission/gift of God is one of **love** and **light**.

a) As it regards the love of God in this mission:

i) Are you a **recipient**?

ii) Are you a **participant**?

b) We will pick it up there, **Lord willing**, next week.