

Thou Hast Loved Me

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[0 : 00] Well, do these words sound familiar? O God of the highest heaven, occupy the throne of my heart.

! Take full possession and reign supreme.! Lay low every rebel lust.! Let no vile passion resist thy holy war.

Manifest thy mighty power and make me thine forever. Thou art worthy to be praised with my every breath, loved with my every faculty of soul, served with my every act of life.

Thou hast loved me, espoused me, received me, purchased, washed, favored, clothed, adorned me.

Well, of course, that's from the Valley of Vision. It's a book of Puritan prayers and sovereign grace music. Put it to song and we sing those words in our grace hymns.

[1 : 11] And I read it for that last line where the person who wrote it said, Thou hast loved me, espoused me, received me, purchased, washed, favored, clothed, adorned me.

Thou hast loved me. So whom did Jesus marry and receive and purchase?

Me. He favored me. Not all are chosen. But if you're a Christian here tonight, you were chosen. Not all are clothed. But Jesus spread his garment of righteousness over me. We've been talking about how God loves you.

And tonight I want to look at one more way that God loves you. And that's individually. Particularly, singularly, personally.

[2 : 23] So picture a stage with lots of people on it. And the stage is completely dark. And you are there on that stage standing right alongside everyone else.

And the spotlight turns on. And it turns on you. Just on you. Well, that's how God and his love went out to you.

His special attention, his heart went to you like you were the only one. He loved you particularly. In Ephesians 5, Paul says to the husbands and men, I hope you know this verse well.

Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. So Jesus loved the church.

He gave himself up for her. He loved her like his own flesh. So his sorrow, or her sorrow, was his sorrow. Her plight was his plight.

[3 : 31] He took it on himself. And his need, or her need, was his need. And so Isaiah 53, he took up our infirmities.

He carried our sorrows. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. He loved us.

And he gave himself up for us. But it can be easy to lose yourself in that crowd. And to have the love that Jesus has for you in particular to lose its edge.

To be lost in all those faces. But God wants us to know that he loves us individually. He loves you personally. He wants us to say he loved me.

He espoused me. He received me. He purchased, washed, adorned, clothed. Me. Not just us.

[4 : 39] Not just our. But me. And mine. And so the same Paul that said husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. He also said something else.

And so I want you to turn to Galatians chapter 2 and verse 20. And I want you to look at what Paul says there.

Galatians chapter 2 and verse 20. It's really beyond the scope of what we can even do this evening to look at all of this whole passage and this verse even in its entirety.

And so I just want to focus on the end. But look at verse 20. Paul speaking says, I have been crucified with Christ.

And I no longer live. But Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body. I live by faith in the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

[5 : 49] Well, tonight we are doing something very personal. There's all sorts of different ways we could look at the Lord's Supper. It is a fellowship meal. It is a family meal.

But it's never impersonal. It's personal to Jesus. He said, Do this in remembrance of me. It's about him. On these Lord's Supper evenings, we talk about a lot of things. We talk about Abraham and Isaac.

And we talk about Moses and the day of Passover. We talk about the day of atonement. We talk about lambs. We talk about sacrifices. We talk about a lot of different things.

But they're really all different ways of getting to the one thing. The one person. It's never really about Abraham or Isaac or Moses and the day of atonement.

[6 : 47] It's not about those lambs. Jesus said, Do this in remembrance of me. It's personal to Jesus. And it's personal to us.

Because his death was for me. It was for you. As an individual. Yes, it was for the whole group. The whole church. But what Paul said, The Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. Is something that you can say. Something that you should say.

You can say. And so this evening I just want to look at two things. And it's the first and the second half. Of this little phrase that he ends verse 20 with.

And the first thing is, Christ loved you. That's the first point. Christ loved you. And I want you to fill in your name there.

[7 : 46] Put your name there. Put yourself there. Tonight we are remembering something that has everything to do with you. In Psalm 139, David says, You have searched me.

You know me. You know when I sit and when I rise. You created my inmost being. Christ loved you when you were in your mother's womb.

And how David presents it is as a weaver sitting down at her loom or his loom. And so the weaver is sitting up on a stool and his or her project is there in front of him.

And it takes a while to weave something together. It took nine months to weave you in your mother's womb.

And Jesus sat himself down in the secret place. And he himself wove you together. Collecting bits here and bits there and weaving you together for months on end.

[8 : 59] Now I don't know much about weaving, but I know it takes a lot of paying attention. You have to pay attention to your projects. And so you have to think about your projects. And I'm sure the best projects are the projects that you pour your heart into.

You think about it. And so for months and months on end, Jesus was thinking about you. Jesus sat in his loom thinking about you, loving you, sewing all of your pieces together, layer after layer, loving you, thinking about you.

Hundreds, thousands of thoughts about you. What you would be. What you would do.

What you and he would do together. And so David says, How precious to me are your thoughts.

How vast is the sum of them. And he's not talking about thoughts in general.

He's not just thinking about Jesus thinks about a lot of things. And that's amazing. David is saying, These thoughts are for me in particular. And that you would spend so many thoughts upon me.

[10 : 14] Is an amazing thing. And so David wasn't praising God for how much he thought about everything else. He was praising God for how much he thought about him. And that's how God loves you.

That's how Jesus loved you. And loves you. Thinking of you. Your name is graven on his hands.

Your name is written on his heart. Revelation tells us that there is a thing called the Lamb's Book of Life. It's the Lamb's Book.

It belongs to him. And it's a book of names. It's a book of the saved. It's the book of Jesus' people. But it doesn't just have one line. Where it says the church. There's names in that book. Your name.

[11 : 19] And he wrote it there. He wrote it in his own blood. With his own hand. And where every letter of that name. Has his love on it.

And in it. So picture that book. Picture him sitting there. And picture Christ. Writing your name in it. There is a number that no man can count.

It's in. It's this vast number. But Christ's love is not such that. When he loves one person. That means he only has so much love to give to another person.

His love is not like a pie. That's divided into a million pieces. And yes he has a big heart. But I don't have all of it. No. His love is so infinite.

And so boundless. That he loves us individually. With all that he is. All that he has. As if we were the only one. As if there were none other for him than us.

[12:19] And so his love isn't spread too thin. Like butter. Spread on too much bread. No. All of his love. All of his heart. Is yours.

So Paul says he loved me. And so what did Jesus do because he loved us. Well second. It says he gave himself for me.

The cross is about love. The cross is about his love. And the cross is about you. And how he loved you.

And so in love for you. What did he do? He laid down his life. Now why did he lay down his life?

Well if you back up to Galatians chapter 2.

In verse 16. So back up about four verses there. It's sort of cut halfway in the middle of the sentence. But you see there. Where it says.

[13:18] At the end of that verse. That we may be justified by faith in Christ. And not by observing the law. Because by observing the law. No one will be justified.

Now why is Paul talking about the cross? It's simply for this reason. That we cannot be justified. In any other way than the cross.

The only other option. Was by observing the law. Now justified means. You pass the judgment. You come to the judgment.

And the judge says. You're right. You pass. No one. And so what Paul is saying here. No one passes the judgment. By observing the law.

You couldn't pass the judgment. By observing the law. You were failing at that. You had failed. You couldn't do it that way.

[14:18] You couldn't obey your way out of it. Now I want you to think of this. That observing the law. Is the very best thing that we can do. As humans. It really it's the it's the heights of righteousness to obey God's law.

It's the best thing. It's the only thing that we can do. Should have done. But it's exactly what we didn't do that I didn't do.

And so here you are. Where the very best things that you can do. Observing the law. Wasn't enough.

Because you had failed. You weren't. Going to make it. Through the judgment. You weren't going to make it.

You were going to come to the judgment. And you were going to be justly. Sent. To hell. And that's why Jesus gave himself up for you.

[15:25] Because your very best things couldn't save you. Your very best efforts. Your most religious deeds. The greatest things that you could think of.

The greatest things that you could do. It wasn't going to save you. The midnight. Train. Of God's wrath. Was bearing down on you. And you could not.

Escape. Do you ever have nightmares. Where you're trying to run away from something. And you're not able to get away from it. Those nightmares were about to come true.

For you. God's wrath was going to come. And there was nothing that you were going to be able to do. To escape them. And that's why Jesus gave himself up for you.

That's why Jesus sacrificed himself for you. He threw himself in front of God's judgment for you.

And so don't miss it. He died for you. In particular.

[16:28] He threw himself in front of God's wrath for you. In particular. As much as any mother. As much as any mother has ran into a building. And saved her baby for a.

And lost her life in that. As much as anyone has thrown himself on a grenade. To save his friends. To save an individual. Jesus threw himself in front of God's wrath for you.

Because it was the only way. If you. He did it. And he did it. As if you were the only one. And so what I mean by that is.

If you were the only one. He would have died just for you. He loves you that much. And so.

He became a man for you. And he took on all the sorrows of. A fallen man. Weakness.

[17:26] Tiredness. For you. His family thought he was crazy. And the people ridiculed him. But he took their insults.

And. Instead of reviling them. He bore their insults. For you. And his pure heart. Lived with sinners. For you. And he set his face like a flint. To go to Jerusalem. For you. And he walked into the arms of his betrayer.

For you. And he stood in front of a kangaroo court. And when other times he simply. Walked away. And escaped. There had been other times. When he had been in danger. And he had simply eluded them. But he didn't walk away.

[18 : 29] This time. And he faced their false charges. And he heard their lies. And then he was dragged to Pilate. The Pilate flogged him.

And he was mocked. And he was brought out for the crowd. To ridicule. Soldiers spit on him. And struck him. He carried his cross.

Until his human body gave way. And they took his clothes away. And they crucified him. And they offered him wine.

Mixed with myrrh. To dull the pain. And he refused it. For you. And then the sky went dark. And Jesus came to judgment.

And he passed through the darkness. And he passed through the loneliness. And he passed through the God forsakenness of it. And his soul is desolate.

[19 : 33] And cut off. And then finally he's cut off. From the land of the living. And he does it all for you. And so we sing.

For me he lived. And for me he died. So he took my sins. And your sins upon himself.

Now there's various ways. That we can talk about that. In 1 John. John talks about the sins of the world. Very general term. And then John also can talk about.

Our sins. He does that in 1 John 2. But inside the our sins. Inside of that is the my sins.

It was my sin that held him there. Until it was accomplished. So think of that. In love he died for my sins. And we can think of our particular sins.

[20 : 35] One by one. Sometimes Satan parades them before us. And sometimes our conscience brings them out.

Out of the past. And out of forgottenness. And our conscience brings them up. But. But. Each one of those sins.

Each and every one of those particular ones. He carried. He bore them. He took them to himself. And so your individual lies. Your individual lustful thoughts and actions.

Your individual curse words. Jesus died for them. And he plunged them one by one. Into his blood. And one by one. He washed them from you. From me. And so now there is now no. Condemnation. So dying.

[21 : 37] He gave me life. Dying. He gave me forgiveness. Dying. He gave me. He set me free. And so life is mine. To live. One by his selfless. Love.

And so. Christian tonight. This is personal. It's personal to Jesus. He says remember me. And it's personal to you.

And that is why we say. His body. Was broken. For me. His blood. Was shed.

For me. We say me. Because it was me. He loved me. And he gave himself. For me. Now.

Before we end. Just one last thing. Can you say this? Can you say it? The son of God loved me.

[22 : 37] And he gave himself. For me. Or is it all still. In the general. Is it all still. In the Sunday school answer. Where you know it. In theory.

Or is it like. I'm in the right group. Mom and dad. Go to church. Mom and dad. Are Christians. My friends. Are Christians. My husband. Or my wife. Is a Christian.

And to that. I say. Good. I hope they are. But are you? What about you? Can you say. Do you know. That Christ. Loved you. And gave himself.

For you. See. Christianity. Isn't really. About belonging. To the right group. It's about. Belonging to the right. One. Just one.

And so. Do you belong. To Christ. Christ. Paul was on the high seas. We saw this last week. The storms blowing. The ships rocking.

[23 : 32] Back and forth. The clouds are. Zipping on by. And. Everyone is. Rightfully. Almost out of their minds. With fear.

And hunger. And desperation. But you know. Paul. Was grounded. Even in that situation. He was grounded. The storm.

All around him. And he says this. The God. Whose I am. And whom I serve. Paul said. I'm his. I'm his.

I belong to him. And my question is. What about you? Are you his? How do you get to be his? Well you forsake being your own. You forsake. Being your own. You quit relying on yourself. And your own self-righteousness. And your own self-love. You quit belonging.

[24 : 31] To you. Because that's how we come into the world. And that's how we live our lives naturally. We just do it all for ourselves. I consider. My life to be my own.

The life I live. It's mine. And so. How do you become his? Well. The first thing you have to do. Is you have to.

Sign everything away to him. Sign. Over everything. Everything. All that you are to him. And you come to Christ. And you come honestly.

And you come. Finally. You come. Desperately. Leaving it all behind you. And saying. I'm a wreck of a sinner. But I'm done being my own. I'm done with self.

And I am yours. And if so. If you repent of your sin. All that self-living. Selfish life. And you entrust yourself to him.

[25 : 26] And it is faith. To give your life. Over to someone. And that's what saving faith is. I'm giving myself to you. I'm putting myself into your hands.

If you do that. Jesus says. I'll take you. And I'll forgive you everything. I'll forgive you of all your sins. And then you'll be able to say.

The God whose I am. And whom I serve. And then you'll be able to say with Paul. The son of God loved me. And he gave himself.

For me. Thank you.