

The Light of Love

Romans 5:8

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Thesis of the letter – you can benefit from everything Christ did for you by Faith. (Rom 1:17)

The Bible is the greatest love story ever told.

1. The Nature of the Individuals.

- a. Illustration: Tree and its fruits.
- b. The Father and Son (Love).
- c. Human kind (Sin).

2. The Nature of our Sins: Self-Centred Enmity. (v.10)

- a. A hard concept to grasp in our “moralistic world.”
 - i. Do you put God on the defense chair?
 - ii. The countless objections to Scriptures.
 - iii. BC/AD > BCE/CE.

3. The Nature of God’s Love. (vv.6-7)

- a. Action.
- b. Sacrificial.
- c. Model: “Love your enemies”

Conclusion.

- a. God’s Justice.
- b. Love God back. (Action, Sacrificial, legit)

In this fourth Sunday of advent, the candle of love, our reading comes from Romans chapter 5, verse 8. “But God demonstrates his own **love** for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” When you read Romans, it is always good to keep in mind the thesis of this letter, “the righteous one shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17).

Faith in Christ! You can benefit from God’s love for your life by faith. Not by works, not by human rights, not by church religious rituals, and not by divine rights.

I want you to see this sermon as a loving story, every loving story has the good and bad actors:

*“But **God** demonstrates his own love for us in this: While **we were still sinners**, **Christ** died for us.”*

1. The first thing I want to point out is the nature of the individuals in the verse: God (love), Humans (sinners), Christ (sacrifice).

God’s name is connected to the word love, because God in his nature, he is love – he loves all the time, and everything he does comes out of a loving heart.

Humans are connected to the word sinners, because humans by nature sin – all the time. Even in our best day, we cannot go one day without sinning. Perhaps, that’s why it’s so easy to eat chocolate and chips, and watch tv; while it is so hard to eat vegetable, and exercise.

Christ’s name is connected to the word death, because he is in his nature, a self-giving lover – he gives his life for the sake of others.

As our Lord Jesus taught us very well, “you will know the tree by its fruit.” God’s good actions are strictly connected to his nature; humanity’s sinful actions are strictly connected to our disobedient nature.

It brings to mind the word “core” which comes from the word “cardia” in Latin – which basically means “heart.” From the heart flows everything we do. From God’s heart, there is a flood of love; from our hearts, there is a flood of sin.

2. The second thing I want to point out is the nature of humans’ sin – it is self-centred.

In order to understand verse 8 “we are sinners,” you need to read verse 10, which says: “For if, while we were **God’s enemies**, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”

Please pay careful attention to the word enemy, because that’s a bit of a hard concept to understand. I will give you 3 examples to make things clear:

- a. Have you ever struggled with thoughts such as, “If God is good, why does hell exist?”; “If God is good, why is there evil on Earth?”; “If God is good, why did that little baby die so prematurely?” Without noticing, those kinds of questions prove that our heart’s tendency is to put God on the “Defendant’s seat,” while you and I sit at the “Judge’s seat.”
- b. The countless objections against the Bible, “it is not God’s word;” “it has errors;” “why is there war, capital punishment, “sexism,” in the Bible?” Such objections are another proof that our heart’s tendency is to wage war against God.
- c. Lastly, history itself. Jesus Christ was such an important figure in history, that he divided it into “before Christ” (BC), and “after Christ” (AD in Latin, which translates “Anno Domini” = the year of the Lord). Now society has changed that into BCE/CE (Before common era & Common era – respectively). Our human heart’s tendency of distancing ourselves from God.

Those are just a few examples of how humans have become enemies of God.

It’s important to understand that humans (attacker) have become enemies towards God (“victim”), not God towards humans. People get confused here, and they make assumptions about God that is just not true.

From the beginning, Adam and Eve (representing the whole Human Race) have rejected God’s word (“don’t eat from the fruit of knowledge”) for Satan’s word (“eat from the fruit and you will become just like God”). Ever since, we have been into that trap of running away from God and offending him with our sins for centuries... Until Christ came and died for us on the cross!

That’s what changed everything, and that’s the next point of this beautiful love story.

3. The nature of God’s love for us: it is supernatural!

In order to understand God’s love in verse 8, “Christ died for us;” you need to read verses 6 and 7: “You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.”

- When someone dies for their own sins, that's fair.
- When someone dies for a beautiful cause, that's noble.
- When someone dies for his enemies, that's supernatural!

You can learn three things about God's love for you when he gave his Son to die on the cross for your sins:

- His love is action: We live in a day and age where the word love is everywhere, everyone talks about it – most of the time, in a wrong way. God proves to us that love is not empty words, love is action.
- His love is sacrificial: We live in a day and age where the world loves itself, egocentrism. Christ loves us in a sacrificial way, his love is Agape, the Greek word for love which means his love is self-giving.
- His love is true: Have you realized that Christ does what he preaches, and preaches what he does? He is the one who told you "love your enemies." Now he shows you that on the cross, he loved his enemies, and turned them into friends and family!

I wish I could give you a human illustration to describe Christ's love for you; perhaps the love between a married couple, or motherly love... But any human illustration would be very far from reality, because Christ's love is unfathomable. The cross is the only illustration, and it is sufficient by itself.

Conclusion:

I want to conclude with two final thoughts:

Firstly, the cross shows you how much God loves you, that's right. But the cross also shows you how much God hates sin; his Son suffered on the cross the punishment of our sins – sin cannot go unpunished.

God is righteous in his nature; there is justice in all that he does. Some might think that God could "forgive" people just by letting people get away with it: "just say sorry and everything is all alright..." That's not who God is; sin must be punished, and he punished his Son instead of punishing you, so that you could *righteously* be called a child of God.

Secondly, God is love and he loves you. He could've proved to you that he loves you in the same way we try to prove things (by writing 3 – 10 reasons why so and so...). But that's not the way he chose to reveal his love for you; he chose to reveal his love for you through relationship. The Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the love story between God and his people, which culminates with the cross and the promise that Jesus will come back and take us home with him.

Therefore, I call you to love God back! By having a true, deep, and meaningful relationship with him – love that is action, sacrificial, and true. Just like he does to us.