

John031617-122511
Bridge of Hope
December 25, 2011

“Radical Love: God’s Purpose in Loving”

This Advent season we have taken a good look at a very famous text of scripture. It might be one of the most famous passages in the entire Bible. Through John 3:16 we have discovered that God is the source of love; people are the object of God’s love; Jesus Christ is God’s gift of love, and eternal life is given to those who receive God’s gift. If you missed any of these talks you can find some notes from the message on our website – bridgeofhopechurch.net.

Today we are going to look at a text that is just as important but often times gets overlooked. On this Christmas Sunday we are going to look at the purpose of God’s gift of love. Here is how the apostle John summed up the purpose of God.

John 3:16-17 (NIV) *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.**”*

Interesting, God understood the need of man and met that need once and for all. He did what the Law, that He gave to Moses, could not do. Listen to some of the statements made concerning Jesus.

Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, prophesied concerning the Messiah, *“He has raised up **a horn of salvation** for us in the house of his servant David.”* (Luke 1:69 NIV)

The angel of the Lord said to Joseph concerning Jesus, *“Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because **he will save his people from their sins.**”* (Matthew 1:20-21 NIV)

Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: *“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen **your salvation**, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”* (Luke 2:28-32 NIV)

God’s purpose in sharing such great love was because people have a need for a Savior. And the only one who could fulfill the requirements was God Himself, so He came to this world taking on the form of a man in order to provide salvation for all who would receive His gift of love.

FOR GOD DID NOT SEND HIS SON INTO THE WORLD TO CONDEMN THE WORLD BUT THAT THE WORLD MIGHT BE SAVED THROUGH HIM . . .

- **WHY DO PEOPLE NEED A SAVIOR? (DISCUSSION)**

THE SCRIPTURE IS PRETTY UP FRONT ABOUT THIS QUESTION.

1. **The angel said to Joseph that Jesus would save us from our sins.**

- It is a pretty big statement, but one that the scripture testifies to over and over again.

- Paul argues in Romans 5 that just as sin entered the world through one man's sin so righteousness would come through one man's sacrifice.
- The issue for Paul didn't rest on a particular sin that you may have committed as your need for a Savior is based on the sin that we are all born in.
- What we are saying is that you can be a good person and still need a Savior.
- 2. Paul argues that because of God's mercy His love has worked salvation in our lives and the fruit of righteousness is the evidence of His salvation.
 - **Ephesians 2:1-5** (NIV) *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*
 - **Titus 3:3-7** (NIV) *At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*
 - We have the hope of eternal life because of salvation, a hope that we could not have if we had not been redeemed through Christ's sacrifice.
 - It is through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that transformation takes place.
 - This transformation of a life cannot be earned or bought; it is given to us by the grace of God when we believe.
 - Paul states our need for a Savior clearly in **Romans 6:23** (NIV) *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - Thus, we need a Savior.
- 3. Jesus teaches us about our need for Him as Savior in **John 6:39-40** (NIV) *And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."*
- 4. Why do people need a Savior? Because we are lost without one. We have a problem called sin that can't be handled in any other way.

● **WHY DO YOU THINK JESUS THOUGHT IT NECESSARY TO MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT HIS NOT COMING TO CONDEMN US?** (DISCUSSION) IT REALLY IS AN INTERESTING QUESTION THAT I THINK OUR WORLD IS WANTING AND NEEDING AN ANSWER TO.

1. First and foremost in this discussion, must come the recognition that our own sin condemns us and that statement rings out loudly.
 - **Colossians 2:13-15** (NIV) *When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*
 - We stand condemned outside the forgiveness of our sins.

- Jesus made it clear that He didn't come to condemn us, but to set us free from the condemnation that already existed in our lives.
 - **John 3:18-21** (NIV) *Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.*
2. **The Law of Moses was good in that it pointed out our need of a Savior, but in itself it didn't have ability to deal with sin.**
 - Thus, the Law condemned and left people hopeless.
 - It isn't that the Law was bad, it was good because it revealed or exposed our need.
 - The problem was that it could only point out the sin and not bring salvation.
 3. **The coming of the Christ means that hope is available, but in order for us to see the hope, we have to first see the condition of our lives.**
 - Therefore, some believe that all Jesus does is expose our sin leaving us feeling condemned.
 - Jesus is the light of God, and as such, He does expose our sin making us able to then deal with it once and for all.
 - Paul said to the church at Corinth in **2 Corinthians 9:9-10** (NIV) *Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*
 4. **So here is the way that it works, Jesus doesn't come to condemn; He comes to save us from the condemnation that already exists in our lives.**
 - He, in essence, eradicates it from our lives.
 - With this eradication comes a responsibility to live life the way that He teaches us.
 - This is what Paul meant in **Romans 8:1-4** (NIV) *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

Conclusion: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US TO UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE IN GOD'S GIVING OF HIS LOVE?

Because love came down at Christmas, everything changed through the coming of God's love. On this Christmas Sunday we are reminded that it is a story about much more than a baby in a manger. This is the story of God's love. It is about a love so great that sacrifice was required so that people could receive such love. Our sin stood in the way, but God through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, removed the obstacle that kept people from His love. Christmas, while it is about the coming of the Savior, is also about the need of man for the Savior. It is about people who stand condemned, apart from God, in need of reconciliation with God. Jesus came and provided for our condemnation and made a way for us to be saved.

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.** (John 3:16-17 NIV)*

*As the angels declared to the shepherds so we declare to all around us today. "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David **a Savior has been born to you**; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:10-14 NIV)*