

## The King Is Among Us – Love Has Arrived

12/10/17 – Pastor Randy

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We have been talking about the incarnation: The fact that God the Son, without surrendering His divine nature, took on a human nature, being conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit. All that God has done for us through Christ has been accomplished through the incarnation-crucifixion-resurrection of Jesus.

*“The incarnation-crucifixion-resurrection of Jesus is the grandest bridge ever built, at the highest cost ever paid, spanning the greatest chasm ever known, motivated by the most extravagant love ever displayed.”*

Today we turn to Romans 5 to see HOW Jesus built this grand bridge.

Romans 5:6-11

*When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.*

Last week we learned that what the Jewish High Priest did symbolically, Jesus did actually. By taking on a human nature, in addition, not in place of His divine nature, Jesus was equipped to do what He could not have done otherwise; to die in our place, offering himself as the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins. By taking the guilt of our sin and the penalty for our sin upon himself, has placed us in a justified position before God, leading to peace and reconciliation with God.

*Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. – Romans 5:1*

Our guilt has been removed, resulting in no condemnation and no separation. Wrath is removed, peace is renewed. Alienation gives way to reconciliation.

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---

But HOW did Jesus' death save us from condemnation & reconcile us to God?  
Romans 5:12; 15-19;21

*When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned...*

*.But there is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ. And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.*

*Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous...*

*So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Romans 5:12-21 provides us with critical information regarding HOW Jesus saves from sin!! But first we need to notice a few things this passage, and the NT as a whole, tells us about our sin problem.

1. Adam's rebellion against God has consequences for the whole human race that has descended from him. Adam's sin has affected us and infected us. Some object: "Why should I suffer due to Adam's sin?" We are still responsible for our sin despite the nature we inherited from our first parent. If you were raised by a parent that was a racist, that doesn't excuse you to be a racist. Having a father who was an absentee dad or an abusive dad doesn't give you an excuse to be and do the same.

2. Adam's sin has affected me but I am still guilty of my own sin. As an equally guilty party before God, I stand condemned before God, deserving of judgment. Sin leads to death. But while condemnation hangs over my head...

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3. Corruption resides in my heart and mind. Sin does not only consist of offenses for which justice demands retribution and restitution, sin is also a condition that leaves us in need of redemption.

This corruption is evident in two phrases:

a. *Because one person disobeyed God, many **became sinners**.* “Becoming sinners” indicates that we sin because it is our nature to do so.

b. *So just as **sin ruled over all people**.* Sin isn't just something we do, it is a sickness that has infected us and exercises power over us.

The NT describes this corruption as a condition of captivity. In Paul's second letter to Timothy he described the results of someone coming to faith in Jesus as savior as follows: *“Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants. (2 Timothy 2:26)* In Colossians, Christians conversion is described as being delivered from the dominion (i.e. power, control, authority) of darkness and being transferred to the Kingdom of God's Son.

Mankind's inability to resist temptation, to restrain himself from his self-destructive and societal destructive impulses is legendary. Read the news!!! The secular culture accuses Christianity of being to pre-occupied with issues of sexual morality. We are discovering the truth that secular culture has swept the painful and destructive consequences of sexual immorality under the rug for so long and now as people have begun to lift the rug up a little and we are all of a sudden shocked at what we are finding!

The only way to reverse the condition of corruption in our hearts and remove the condemnation hanging over our heads would be for someone to undo what Adam did and become the father of a new race. This would require a human to live a completely sinless, perfectly righteous life. By doing so he could accomplish two things.

1. By living a sinless life, a perfectly righteous life, he would conquer sin, reversing our corruption, redeeming us from our captivity.
2. By living a sinless life, a perfectly righteous life, he could be our substitute, absorbing the judgment for our sins. He wouldn't be qualified to pay the penalty for the sin of others if he was a sinner himself. If that were the case,

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---

he would have to pay his own penalty.

But where do we find a perfectly righteous person since all have sinned? The situation was hopeless...UNTIL JESUS CAME DOWN: THE PERFECTLY RIGHTEOUS ONE.

Where we succumbed to selfishness, Jesus succeeded at doing the fathers will. We caved in to sin, but Jesus conquered sin.

Adam is the head of a fallen, corrupt humanity. Jesus came as the last Adam to be the head of a new redeemed humanity by breaking the power of sin and death. He defeated sin during his life as a human, tempted at all points as we were, yet without sin. He Defeated sin ultimately in his death which was the supreme act of overcoming sin. Because Jesus defeated sin in His life and through his death, death couldn't hold him and He rose again victorious over sin, Satan, and death.

***Jesus was perfectly righteous, without sin.***

*2 Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

*1 Peter 3:18 - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God*

It is important to understand what it means to say that Jesus was without sin, perfectly righteousness. A correct understanding will help us distinguish between true righteousness and the superficial, distorted view of righteousness that creeps into the church. A distorted view where righteousness is nothing more than man-made rules and traditions. Sin and righteousness are not just about our behavior.

***Jesus Perfect Righteousness = Perfect Love***

Perfect righteousness is defined in scripture as perfect love for god and man. Jesus reiterated what ought to have been clear from the OT law. The greatest commandment is to love God and love others. The other laws were given to further define what loving God and others looks like. THE KEY POINT: YOU CAN OBEY COMMANDS AND FOLLOW LAWS WITHOUT LOVE MOTIVATING YOU.

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## Jesus Perfect Love for God and Man

To be perfectly righteous means to love God and man perfectly. But the way we express love for God is not the same as man. Love for God can and should be expressed verbally in our worship gatherings, but it is not complete unless accompanied by obedience. In John's gospel we find Jesus saying that doing the will of the Father was more important and satisfying than eating food. Love for man is expressed, not by obedience or worship, but by benevolence. Benevolence refers to doing good to others. Doing good is defined by acting in another's best interest, NOT by doing everything they want us to do for them. Jesus didn't serve man's wants, but he did serve man's needs.

## Perfect Love Loves Absolutely

Jesus love for His father and for men was perfect in two senses:  
**Absolute** – Meaning it had no lapses or breaks. The best we can hope for from others is consistency. For 23 years I have loved my wife, but not perfectly. At times I have acted out of pride or anger or selfishness. Jesus never took a day off or a minute off from loving the Father or us!  
John 8:29 - Jesus ALWAYS pleased the father.  
2 Cor. - he knew NO sin. Didn't fail now and then.

## Perfect Love Love to the Ultimate Degree

**Ultimate** – Not only was Jesus love absolute; unbroken & continuous. It was also ultimate. It was a love that went to the highest degree. There are varying degrees of love, are there not? We don't love all people to the same degree. You all love me...most of you. But not as much as you love your family. His love for the father was ultimate according to Phil 2:8. He loved the father enough to be obedient to the point of death. That is ultimate love for the father expressed by ultimate obedience. His love for us was ultimate. John wrote, no greater love has a man than this; that he lay down his life for a friend. Jesus was even greater – for his enemies!

## Perfect Love Sacrifices

To be perfectly righteous is to love God and man perfectly. Perfect love is evidenced by the level of sacrifice one is willing to make. Jesus love was

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12/10/17 – Pastor Randy

---

expressed through sacrifice NOT JUST ON THE CROSS BUT IN HIS INCARNATION AND LIFE AS WELL!! We often think only of Jesus sacrificial death, but his whole life was a sacrifice. We need to recognize his love expressed for the father and us in the sacrifice of his birth and the sacrificial way he lived his life and ultimately in the sacrifice of going to the cross!

All of Jesus righteousness was summed up, brought to completion, in His ultimate act of righteousness; His decision to suffer and die for our sins for our benefit in obedience to the Father's will for the Father's Glory.

At the root of all sin is a failure to love God and man. Jesus became a man in order to undo the effects of Adams sin by living a life of perfect righteousness, the expression of perfect love for God and man.

CLOSE: There are two purposes of this message.

**1. To instruct Us.** No one disputes the fact that God's will is for his people to exhibit the righteous character of Christ. Where confusion sets in is what righteousness consists of and how to attain it. Our examination of the righteousness of Christ reveals that righteousness is primarily and ultimately about loving God and others. When that love is lived out, it absolutely manifests itself in certain behaviors. But It must begin with the heart being influenced by the Spirit to love God and love people. If we begin there, the proper moral and ethical conduct will follow. On the other hand, you can pay meticulous attention to religious ritual and adhere strictly to a list of do's and don'ts while having no love for God or people in your heart. The concept of righteousness was corrupted in Jesus day and the same is often the case today. Our human tendency, rooted in pride, is to be more concerned with appearing righteous than being righteous. Rules and regulations are often motivated by a desire to control people than to lovingly serve them.

Loving God entails a willingness to sacrifice our self-interests for that which advances God's Kingdom interests. Loving people entails a willingness to sacrifice selfish pleasures in order to serve the needs of others.

**2. To inspire Us!** To cultivate a greater sense of awe and appreciation for Jesus

## The King Is Among Us – Love Has Arrived

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our savior and lord.

This is the character of Jesus Christ. He is the only perfect righteous one. His righteousness is what conquered the power of Satan and evil. His righteousness qualified him to be our substitute and absorb our condemnation. This is what we call the great exchange. He stood in my place – as a condemned sinner, so I can stand in His place – as a righteous son of God! **2 Corinthians 5:21 – For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

The key phrase is “in Him”. Faith in Christ unites us to Christ and in union with Christ His righteousness becomes our righteousness. And now that we are “in Him”, His power over sin becomes available to us by the Spirit. I don’t know about you, but I want to be one with the One who has conquered sin so I can learn to conquer sin.

Love has arrived and His name is Jesus! Motivated by His perfect love, He built a bridge called love that spanned the great chasm between us and God. created by our sin. Jesus traveled that bridge to us and for us in order to bring us back to the Father. He became one of us and suffered for us so we could become one with him, with His perfect righteousness applied to us. The devil has no power to accuse us, sin has no more power to control us, and death has no more power to threaten us!

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