

Heart of the Gospel

Part 7 – What kind of Love?

Romans 5.6-11

Through Jesus, God has done for us what we could never do for ourselves

Prior Love (v.6-8)

- Before we earned it by our actions
 - We were incapable (weak) of doing right before Him
 - We were intent on doing wrong (ungodly)
- Before we deserved it by our character
 - Weak – Ungodly – Sinners – Enemies
 - Nothing attractive about us – not righteous, not good
- God freely took the initiative to love us
 - Been this way from the beginning – Deut 7.7-9

Rescuing Love (v.8-9)

- It's not love in word only – it's love in action, working for the greatest good of His beloved
- Our greatest need is rescue
 - From our sin, sins, brokenness, indifference, approval of wickedness, silence, and many other expressions of our spiritually dead state
 - Q: can't people just live there and be miserable? Why rescue them from that?
 - We don't need rescue from our misery, we need rescue from something far greater
- Our rescue is from His wrath (v.9)
 - Do not for a moment think that God will tolerate wickedness forever
 - His wrath is not a capricious or fickle whim of His anger – it is white hot indignation against wickedness in the world He created to be good
 - Bashar al-Assad – Syria chem weapons
 - John Newton – slave trading / Amistad
- His love rescues us by Jesus
 - While we were still sinners
 - Jesus died for us – *in our place*
 - God makes us right by faith in Jesus
 - Whenever we doubt His love, the cross is there to remind us
 - When God unleashes His wrath on a wicked world, we will be saved from it by Jesus

Personal Love (v.10-11)

- We are made right...but more
- Justification means not guilty before the Judge
- Reconciliation means welcomed before the Father
 - Demonstrates His desire to have a personal relationship with us
 - Always been this way – Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, David
 - Jesus interacted with people on purpose – to show His desire for relationship
- God loves YOU

Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do you think people like Romantic Comedies and other tales of love? What is it about them that draws people in? Why do some people not mind seeing them again?
2. In describing the love of God, the Scripture teaches us that God's love is prior to our action or character (v.6-8). How have you seen people try to earn God's love by their actions? How about by "who they are?" Why is it so important for God's love to be freely given to us by His initiative?
3. God's love is also a rescuing love. What kinds of words does the Bible use in v.6-11 to describe the need for rescue? Read Colossians 3.5-10. Which sinful practice sticks out? Why? Where do you see it operating in the world? In your own life? How does the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus rescue us from it?
4. Because God will not tolerate injustice forever, His wrath is coming upon the world (v.9). If you were judge of the world for a day, what sin would you obliterate in your wrath? Why? Can you extrapolate that to how God sees the situation? What is your sense of the wrath of God now?
5. In v.10-11, Paul uses the word reconciliation three times in those two verses. How is this different than justification? What do both of those terms tell you about God?