

## **JESUS LOVES ME**

### **INTRODUCTION**

John Piper, the founder of "Desiring God.org" was hosting a radio program called: "Ask Pastor John" The topic for the day was "The love of God".

The audio transcript for the radio show records this:

"Casey in Michigan writes in with a very perceptive question: "Pastor John, I have battled depression for about two years. I have this view of myself as a vile, horrible, disgusting creature whose good works are filthy rags. When I sin, I tell myself, 'Of course I sinned. I'm a vile sinner. I don't know how to do anything else. ... But reading the Word more and more, I see that Christians are supposed to have victory in Christ and they are beloved children of God. But I don't know how to view my sin in any other way than becoming completely depressed. So my question is, how do I balance being humble, yet not completely disgusted with myself, and knowing I have value in the eyes of the Lord, yet not becoming prideful?"

Casey's question indicates that she feels paralyzed by a sense of self-condemnation.

I have come across a number of Christians struggling with the exact same problem. The statement "she feels paralyzed by a sense of self-condemnation" rings true, and today I want to spend some time helping each of us to realise that God loves us and wants to free us from that dark place of condemnation so that we can flourish in His love.

My goal today is to remind you of these five things:

- God is for us.
- He cares for us.
- Even though we don't deserve it, Jesus loves us.
- We are God's righteousness in Christ.
- Nothing can separate us from His love.

### **MESSAGE**

#### **GOD IS FOR US**

**John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

My first question is this: If God were not for us, why would He have given His own precious son to purchase our salvation? Jesus Christ is Father God's love personified!

**He is for us when we are going through hard times:**

**Isaiah 43:2 & 4** When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. 4 Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honoured, And I have loved you; Therefore I will give men for you, And people for your life.

- God is with us. We are precious in God's sight and so He honours us and helps us. He will ransom us, even to the point of giving His Son for us.

**He is for us when we feel others have forgotten or forsaken us:**

**Isaiah 49:15-16** "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. 16 See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls (*walls of protection*) are continually before Me.

- Even when others are not for us and forget us, even though it's highly unlikely, a mother may still forget her child, but God is for us, He will never forget us, He looks upon us with compassion and tender love.
- **Hebrews 13:5** He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

The Bible has many examples like this. Without a doubt, God is for us!

***My question to us is this: We can all mention areas where we have experienced God being there for us. Why would He be for us if He doesn't love us. If that is so, then we have experienced His love.***

**GOD CARES FOR US!**

**1 Peter 5:6-7** Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.

- Think about your own children or what our parents did for us when we were children. When the child was stressed out about a situation what would the parent say? "Don't worry, it's all going to be okay." "Mommy will make it better" or "daddy will make it better."

As a parent, I can identify with this love characteristic of God.

- As a parent, I'm a stabilizing influence to my children.
- I comfort them with real love when they are struggling.
- And I am so proud of them, I'm excited for them when they achieve things. I even brag about them...
- **Zephaniah 3:17** The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness; He will quiet you by his love; He will exult over you with loud singing.

***The evidence is all here: The love of God quiets us, He rejoices over us and sings over us – doesn't this paint the picture of a loving Father? Why would we ever think that we are exempt from His love?***

## **EVEN THOUGH WE DON'T DESERVE IT, JESUS LOVES US**

**Romans 5:8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Ephesians 2:4-5** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved—

- God loved us even when we didn't love Him.
- He loved us even when we were sinners.
- By sending His Son, God showed us through a physical act how much He loves us.
- Think about it, Jesus died for us even before we were born – regardless of how we would choose to live our lives, He chose to die for us.

***The challenge today is this: If Christ died for us while we were still sinners. He paid in full, how can we, as born again Christians even start to say we are not good enough to receive God's blessings and favour in our lives – He loved us even when we were lost in sin. If God's love was good enough for us when we were hopeless sinners, surely it's still good enough for us today, even if we get things wrong.***

## **WE ARE GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST**

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

- The first thing we need to realise is that when we are born-again, we are a new person. Something has changed. We may look the same, and sound the same, but God has brought about a miraculous change in us – our spirit has been renewed and He has given us a new beginning.

**2 Corinthians 5:18**(NLT) And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to Himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to Him.

- This is not something we can achieve of ourselves – God has done it in us, it's a gift from God!
- He brought us back to Him in Christ Jesus!

**2 Corinthians 5:19**(NLT) For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And He gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.

- When we say, I am not good enough, we are right. Our own righteousness does not measure up to God's standards.
- But God didn't bring us back to Himself through anything we did, our sins are no longer counted against us because of Jesus Christ. Our own goodness or badness has nothing to do with it, so when we say God can't accept me, I'm too bad, that's wrong theology,
- No-one is too bad to be reconciled to God because the goodness of Christ has over-ridden all our badness!

**2 Corinthians 5:21** (NKJV) For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the **righteousness** of God in Him.

The word "righteousness comes from the Greek "dikaiosunh" (Pronounce: dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay).

- It speaks of equity of character with God!
- Jesus makes our character acceptable to God, because God, when He looks at us, doesn't see our unrighteous and unworthy character, He sees the blood of Christ and it covers and hides our sinful character and in its place, God sees the character of Christ, which is equal to the character of Father God!

**Colossians 1:26-27** the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Tim Keller, an American pastor stated it this way: "You are more sinful than you ever thought you were. And you are more loved than you ever dreamed you could be."

So how do we deal with our sin without the despair? And at the other end, how can we feel valued without feeling proud?

- We let ourselves see the fullness of the sinfulness of our sin, but with every glimpse, we must remind ourselves of the infinite cost that was paid so that we don't dishonor the beauties of the Lord's sacrifice by holding on to the guilt that he paid to remove.
- And every time we have the slightest sense, "He loves me. He values me. He is making me His child. He has taken me into His family,". We experience the joy of knowing we have received the free, blood-bought gift of grace overflowing from the heart of God. We didn't earn it. God gave it as an act of His love.

**The challenge is this:**

- ***Can we accept that our sins are forgiven and that God loves us?***
- ***Can we accept the truth that God loves us so much that He has made us into His righteousness – equality of character with Him?***
- ***Do we realise that it's not about us, it's about Christ in us , the hope of glory?***

## **NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM HIS LOVE.**

Now we're we can take the discussion to the next level!

We have the love of God, we have His righteousness – did you realise that His love is so great that nothing can separate us from it?

### **Chris Tomlin's words for this in his song Jesus loves me are:**

*"I couldn't run, couldn't run from His presence. I couldn't run, couldn't run from His arms. Jesus, He loves me, He loves me, He is for me. Jesus, how can it be, He loves me, He is for me."*

**Romans 8:37-39** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Nothing, nothing, nothing can separate us from the love of God that we have in Jesus Christ...our Lord.
- We can push it away ourselves... but if we are in Christ and desire to be in Christ, then nothing can wedge it's way in and separate us from that love!

## **CONCLUSION**

**Jerry Bridges** said "God's unfailing love for us is an objective fact affirmed over and over in the Scriptures. It is true whether we believe it or not. Our doubts do not destroy God's love, nor does our faith create it. It originates in the very nature of God, who is love, and it flows to us through our union with His beloved Son."

We need to realise these five facts:

- God is for us.
- He cares for us.
- Even though we don't deserve it, Jesus loves us.
- We are God's righteousness in Christ.
- Nothing can separate us from His love.

Therefore, let us start to live victorious Christian lives, seeing ourselves as God sees us!