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GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN

Some things are so great that comments only detract. Like the ocean that is measureless and the sky that is without dimension, so is the subject of our lesson today: God's Love For Man. It is impossible to explore completely in all its aspects the great love which God has for the human family. The Bible teaches us in 1Jno. 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." Because God is love, His every act must be interpreted in terms of love. All of God's works partake of His nature. For example the greatness of God may be seen in the creation of the earth. Only one capable of outstanding power could bring into existence the great universe of ours as it now exists. Again, the beauty of things awaken us to His great might and concern for human beings. There is no park in all the world today that can in any way compare with the beauty that was in the world before sin cursed it. Everything changed with the inception of sin upon the earth. No thing was the same.

The Bible teaches us that the earth was made by God for man. God did not create the earth for himself but rather for His creatures here below. This is a manifestation of God's love for man. The fact that he created the beautiful garden of Eden and placed man there showed that God loved him. Thus the creation of man in His own image and the many material benefits provided for his welfare are manifestations of God's love for man. Of all the things created man was the only one to bear in his spirit the image of God. What an honor this was. And what a shame that man showed his disrespect for his blessings by disobeying the commandment of his creator. As a result of sin man made his exit from this primeval paradise. The gates of that beautiful garden were closed. But God, our great benefactor, immediately opened the doors of repentance, and gave man an opportunity to turn from his sin and choose a better way of life. One must admit that the human family suffered a great loss in Eden.

However with deeper love than He showed in preparing the garden for man, God immediately begins to prepare and plan man's redemption.

Which brings us to our next subject: Christ a mani festation of the love of God. In Jno. 3:16 the Bible says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Notice what it says here. God so loved that He gave. The object of God's love was man. The gift of God's love was Christ, His Son

The Father expressed His love in the superlative degree, for he took the finest jewel that Heaven could offer and sent him to this earth, filled with sin and sorrow. While here He went about doing good, dedicating Himself to the welfare of man both physically and spiritually. Finally He was crucified that we might regain all that we lost in Eden and even more. He died, not because of crimes or sins of His own, but rather because of our crimes, sins, and unrighteousness. The perfect and complete picture of God's love for man is a cross on a mountain outside the city of Jerusalem, and on this cross a man suspended between two worlds as though He was fit for neither.

Another manifestation of God's love for man is the Church. It serves as a token of His care and concern for the human family. How foolish and ungrateful it would be on the part of man to say that the Chruch has not part in God's plan of redemption and that it is unnecessary. The truth is, God has selected the Church as the place where reconciliation takes place. In the spiritual body of Christ, we come into relationship with God the Father. Also, the Bible teaches that God's plan of salvation is made known unto the world by the Church. When one comes into the body of Christ, he becomes an heir of salvation. It is here that he enjoys the fatherhood of God, and he shares a brotherly relationship with Christ. What a wonderful manifestation of God's love to provide an institution capable of showering such blessings upon us. Surely God has reserved his choicest blessings for His children. These blessings may be had and enjoyed in the Church, An institution provided as evidence of his love and care for the elect.

Another manifestation of God's love is the Bible. What a wonderful thing that God would provide a book to guide and direct us on our journey from earth to heaven. It tells us when we are right and when we are wrong. It never leaves us in doubt, but readily clears the air of all false doctrines and leaves only the prize gems of truth. It is the mind of God revealed to man.

Because of this, we don't have to ask the question,

whatdoes God think of this or that?, for by going to the Bible, we can readily find out. We may use the Bible as a guide, a help in directing us in the right way. It encourages the faint hearted, as well as condemns all who trifle with its Holy contents. The Bible is not the production of man, but rather from the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "The words I speak unto you, they are not mine, but my Fathers which sent me." Thus we have a message from above, rather than one from man. Not only did the Spirit of God give it, but providence protected it. Down thru the ages, providence has kept it safe. Though man has tried to destroy it time and time again, all his efforts have been in vain. Voltaire the French agnostic decided that he would write a book that would outsell the Bible. However, he failed. Few people know that he lived or that he ever wrote a book, and yet the Bible is as popular as ever. Hitler made the same boast but suffered the same fate. As all have who have tampered with the Bible. The agnostic, atheist, infidel may mock and ridicule divine wisdom and law, but it is just not in their powet to destroy this manifestation of God's love for his people--THE BIBLE. That is the reason we insist that you LET THE BIBLE SPEAK. Unlike the creeds and doctrines of men, it can be trusted. It is a book worthy of your faith and confidence. Regardless of what the problem may be, or how deep the mystery may appear, if we will only allow the Bible to be heard and believed our seeming difficulties will quickly pass away. It matters not what the theologians think, or what the critics say, as long as we stand upon a thus saith the Lord, we are safe. Thanks be to God for His wonderful gift-THE BIBLE.

But again, the promise of eternal life grows out of God's love for man. Jno. 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, (here it is) but have (eternal) life." God wants man to live eternally. When banished from the garden of Eden because of his sin, man was deprived of the fruit of the tree of life. But now, through the love of God, Jesus has come, dying for our sins, and restoring to us a right to the tree once again. For just as surely as we live in harmony with the teachings of the Bible, we shall enjoy the promises of our Father. We shall live eternally. This is one thing that is so different about man. All animal life ceases to be, it dies. Even though our bodies die and decay, our spirit returns to God where it is reserved until that day when the shadows will flee away and we shall be gathered home forever.

Now let us turn to Romans 8:38-39. We read: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor

things to cme, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The Bible teaches that none of these things will ever be able to separate us from God's love. It does not say that these things will not come between our love for him, for sometimes they do. Far too many times, we don't love and respect Him and His word as we should, but even when it is like this, God still loves us. God's love for us was so great that he selected heaven's prize Jewel and gave it, becaused He loved us. One of the interesting things to me about the above text is the fact that when we find ourselves in famine, peril, distress, etc. immediately we think that God has left and forsaken us, but not so. Remember these things cannot separate us from His love. WHY? Perhaps this is the reason: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." The very essence of God is love. His every action must be interpreted within the light of His love for man.

As I told you in the beginning of this lesson, some times comments seem to detract from the theme itself. Especially when the theme is so great and so boundless as the love of God. There is no man who can pay due justice and respect to God's love. It is impossible for the preacher to completely explore it. Or for the artist to paint it, or for the philosopher to explain it,or for the orator to extol its beauties. The best way for me to tell you about the love of God is to tell you that over nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus the Son of the Living God, came to this earth and died. He died for you and for me. This is the love of God. If you have never obeyed the Lord and taken advantage of what He did for you long ago, you should now.

Written by Ray Shea
Route 1
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

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BIBLE ARITHMETIC

ADD NOT TO THE WORD. Rev. 22:18, But add new man Eph. 4:22-24
SUBTRACT NOT FROM THE WORD. Rev.22:19,But subtract old man Eph. 4:22-24
Add to faith, 2Pet. 1:5-9; Neither give place to the Devil, Eph. 4:27; Be followers of God as dear Children, Eph. 5:1.

SUBTRACT NOT FROM THE BIBLE. Rev. 22:19 But subtract from your life all filtheness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. Jas. 1:21

SUBTRACT GUILE. 1Pet. 2:1, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,(verse 2) As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.

MULTIPLY KNOWLEDGE. 2Tim. 2:15, Study. Psa. 1:1-5, Meditate day and night. Do the will of the Father.Rev. 22:14 By keeping the sayings of Jesus. Jno.14:23

Sincerely yours,
Lloyd Treat
13 N. Bock
Broken Bow, Oklahoma 74728

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WEIGHED IN AN EVEN BALANCE

In Job 31:6, Job asked, "Let me be weighed in an even balance that God may know my integrity." Job wasn't afraid to be weighed, as long as the scales were correct. Job knew if justice was to be obtained he was alright.

In Daniel 5:27 Daniel told Belshazzar, "Thou art weighed in the balances andart found wanting."Belshazzar's balance was as even a balance as Jobs was. The difference was in their lives. What they had on their side of the balance. Belshazzar's life was wanting, not in worldly pleasures, for he had all the pleasures of this world he could wish for. But he took the golden vessels from God's temple and used them in revelry. He also praised the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood and stone. The things he was wanting in or lacked was in righteousness. There was no reason for his failure,his fathers history was known to him. He knew of God and how God had blessed his father when his father had done what God wished of him and he also knew how God had punished him when he went against God's will.

How his father was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beast, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. Daniel 5:21 also verse 22,"And thou his son, O Belshazzar hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;"

We have the Bible examples of righteouness and unrighteousness before us. We have the righteousness of Elijah and how God looked after him and fed him. Of Daniel and how God closed the mouths of the lions so they couldn't hurt him. Of Moses and how God was with him in leading God's children from bondage and through

the wilderness. Though Moses did one thing wrong and it threw the balance the other way, so that Moses didn't get to enter the land of Promise, though he was allowed to see into it.

Will some of us today be able to see into heaven, (through the Bible), but fall short of it because of something we do or don't do in this life? How will we be weighed? We won't be weighed by our opinions. The blind man leading the blind thinks he is doing good, but the Bible says they will both fall into the ditch.

The one great question will be: WHAT IS RIGHT? God will be the Judge. What of the different doctrines and practices that are in the world today? We may say of a person that, he lives a good moral life. Does Gods' Word say that alone will save him? It would be one thing on his side of the balance but Gods' Wod says you need more. All we do and say will be judged by Gods' Word. WILL WE BE FOUND WANTING?

James 4:17,"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

How much sin will it take to throw our balance the wrong way? No sin can be in heaven. Our sin can be forgiven us, if we sak in the right way and in time, rightly repwnting.

Written in love of the truth,
Your Brother in Christ,
Robert E. McCay
22A Creekview Drive
Port Orchard,Washington 98366

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MEETING DATES

BROKEN BOW, OKLAHOMA,	Charlie Burt	June 1 - June 8
YAKIMA,WASHINGTON,	Jerry Perigen	June 22-June 29
PORT ORCHARD,WASHINGTON	Al Way	June 30-July 6

DELTA,COLORADO CAMP MEETING- Aug. 3rd. Contact the following for more information:
Ken Baldwin P.O. Box 138 Delta,Colorado 81416
Phone 303-874-4581
Bud Wilkerson Rt. 1 Cedaredge,Colorado 81413
Phone 303-856-3703

DEBATE DATE

January 27th & 28th 30th & 31st Fayetteville,Arkansas
Bro.Paul Ferguson and Bro. Ellis Lindsey
Phone Ray Shea: 501-1-442-9075 or Paul Ferguson:501-1-443-3863

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NEWS IS SO SLOW IN COMING IN, AND ARTICLES TOO. WE SAVED TWO LATE ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE. HOPE IT WILL BE A FULL 12 PAGE PAPER. IF YOU WANT THE PAPER ON TIME WE MUST HAVE MATERIAL TO GET IT OUT ON TIME

OBITUARY

Brother Curtis C. McCluskey beloved husband of Lurana McCluskey, father of Howard,David, Ray McCluskey and LaVerne Harper. Brother of Monnie Wheeler, Ruby Sluder, Oval Duncan, Fay Leach & Clarence McCluskey. Also survived by 13 Grandchildren & 1 Great Grandchild. Brother McCluskey was a minister of the Church of Christ,working mainly between San Pablo,Sacramento & Grass Valley congregations even when health was very poorly. He was born March 23,1908 at Oswalt, Oklahoma and passed from this life November 23,1974 at Sacramento, California, where he had resided the past 29 years. Brother J.D.Logan spoke at the services in Sacramento Memorial Mortuary. Burial was in Sacramento Memorial Lawn.

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CHURCH NEWS

BELLFLOWER, CALIFORNIA

Dear Christian Friends:

We here at Bellflower Congregation are doing fairly well except Sister Nell Fulkerson, and Sister Kate Lewis. We hope they can be with us soon. We have had several visitors, for which we are very happy and invite everyone any time to our services.

We all were made very happy in Oct. Our grand-daughter, Sharilyn Perigen was baptized into the Church of Christ. She is Jerry and Betty's oldest daughter.

We just returned home form a rush trip to Missouri, to visit our Mom who entered the hospital but is improved now. We visited Peoria Congregation on our way and attended two Sundays at Goshen, Arkansas. Had a good visit with each and every one both places.

As news is short I'll close.

Christian Love,
From the Bellfower congregation
Brother Claud Perigen.

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STANTON,TEXAS

Dear Brethren:

Best I try to write a few lines so you may all hear from us. I have not been well most of this year.Aug thru Oct were my worst.But the Dr's found my troubles.

Now about our meeting. We had a good meeting with Bro.Charlie Burt giving a week of good teaching.It is an inspiration to see some of our young men going ahead with the Lords work. There were no visible results, but fair crowd attendance.

We have some more work to do on our building.Some painting.

So I'll close for now. Greet all from us.

In Christian Love,
N.E.& Alice Bergstrom

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GOSHEN ARKANSAS

Dear Brethren:

We here at the Goshen congregation are all in fair health. In the past few months, we've had some wonderful out-of-state preachers: Bro.Roy Sonderly, LaHabra, Cal. Bro. Claud Perigen, Bellfower, Cal. Bro.Perigen was visiting in Missouri where his mother was pretty sick, and we had the opportunity to visit with him and his wife two Sundays.

Bro.Paul Ferguson will be having a debate with Bro. Ellis Lindsey, of Waco, Texas, on the communion question, if it is the Lord's will. This debate will take place in Fayetteville, Ark. It will be four evenings. Two at the Church of Christ in Fayetteville. The moderator will be Bro. Brown for Bro.Lindsey. Then, for the other two meetings, they will be at the Goshen Church of Christ. The moderator will be Bro.Isaac Ferguson. This will take Place the last week of January: 27th & 28th, then the 30th & 31st. Wed. night, the 29th will remain free for mid-week service to continue with no conflict with the debate at Church of Christ in Fayetteville. Those who can possibly make it on such a short notice should drop us a line or call. Our homes are open to you all. Call me at 501--1-442-9075 or Bro.Paul Ferguson 501-1443-3863.

I am sending a little article that speaks of God's love for man, which I have spoken on a number of times. It shows of God's love for all people, either in the body of Christ or outside. We know that from studing the Bible we find that all spiritual blessings are in the Church, so it is here we gain eternal life through faith & obedience.

Written in Christian Love, Ray Shea.

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SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Dear Brothern & Sister in Christ,

Starting Dec.8th at 10:00 a.m. we will be in a reconstructed barn located on our place, 840 Bell Ave. We wish to convey our thanks to the congregations of San Pablo & Indian Springs for their contributions, without their help we couldn't have completed the building.

The congregation here will surely miss Bro.McCluskey and his teachings.

Phone:916-929-6938 Yours for the Truth, John D. Usrey
840 Bell Ave. Sacramento, Cal.95838

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BROKEN BOW, OKLAHOMA

Dear Brethren:

We are planing our meeting for the first Sunday in June. Bro.Charlie Burt of Lorenzo, Tex. He is a good speaker. Also I am ready to hold meetings most any time calls me. We held a meeting at Lorenzo last June, baptized one, lots of interest shown. We have a small church at Antlers, Okla. Bro.Farrell Wilson meets in his hime. Sincerely Lloyd Treat