

Love Gives All

Loving God the Way That He Loves Us

John 17:24 “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

- The great desire of Jesus' heart before going to the cross is that there would be a people who love Him in the way the Father loved.
- It was to that end that He came to make known what the Father's love is like through His life, His ministry and ultimately His death on the cross.
- Only by looking into the Father's love can we ever grow to love in a way that is like Him.

One trait of God's love that shines in bright contrast to the world is His extravagant generosity – giving all for the sake of love. And He calls us to the same.

I. The Call to Give Everything

Luke 14:25 Now **great multitudes** went with Him. And He turned and said to them, 26 “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish’? 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, **whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.**

- Jesus teaches this parable in contrast to another about those who fail to answer the invitation: Luke 14:16 Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ 18 But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ 19 And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ 20 Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ 21 So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ 22 And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ 23 Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’”

- Our willingness to give all is what contrasts us from the world.

Luke 14:34 “Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? 35 It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

II. Biblical Examples

1. Abraham

Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3. I will bless those who bless you, And I will

curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” 4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him

Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, **not knowing where he was going**. 9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as *in* a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God...

13 These all died in faith, **not having received the promises**, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

- Abraham was given a promise by God. He left all that he *knew* to pursue **what he could not yet see** and never did see. He left behind all that he had to pursue a God-given promise of something far greater.

2. Israel

- The nation of Israel was heir to that same promise when God called them up out of Egypt. You would think it would have been easy for them to give up Egypt – they were slaves. And it was at first, but they soon grumbled.

Exodus 14:11 Then they said to Moses, “Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? 12 *Is* this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, ‘Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For *it would have been* better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.”

Exodus 16:3 And the children of Israel said to them, “Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat *and* when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

- Why the different response? They had the same promise, and they had God present in a very real way assuring them He would fulfill it.

Exodus 13:21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. 22 He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.

- In their immediate reality, they lost sight of the promise. The enemy relies on our shortsightedness.
- The great dilemma of man is this difficulty in rightly distinguishing between the very real, but temporary things that fill our lives now, and the greater reality of eternity – which we were created for, and yet cannot wrap our minds around.

Ecclesiastes 3:10 I have seen the burden God has laid on men. 11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

- How then do we persevere? What did those who walked in faith have going for them?

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 **looking unto Jesus**, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become

weary and discouraged in your souls.

- He is our example of how to persevere – what motivated Him? His eternal reward (us).
- He is our reward – He is the joy set before us.
- He is our assurance that the reward is worth it. Though we cannot wrap our minds around the greatness of what is coming, God, who knows exactly what it will be like, considered it worth it to endure the cross for the sake of what is to be.

III. Because He First Loved Us

John 3:16 For God **so loved** the world **that He gave** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also **loved** the church and **gave Himself** for her

- It's an issue of love. The call to love is a call to abandonment and to giving all.

Psalms 45:10 Listen, O daughter, consider and give ear: Forget your people and your father's house. 11 The king is enthralled by your beauty; honor him, for he is your lord.

Ephesians 5:31 ***“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”*** 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

- The great mystery of it is, He's already done it.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. 9 **Therefore** God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and ***that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

- Jesus left His Father's side in the glory of heaven, humbled Himself and took on flesh so that He could be joined to us – we could become one flesh – and ultimately gave **Himself** for us.
- Suddenly what He asks us to give isn't all that extreme.

IV. Giving All is the Nature of Love

- The cross is the great revelation of what love is, and therefore who God is.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us.

- Jesus' gift on the cross is the brightness of God's glory and the express representation of His image

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days **spoken to us by His Son**, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being **the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person**, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they

John 17:1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come.

Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 And now, O Father, **glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.**

- Jesus shows the world something about God, that God is so jealous over us knowing that He promises that all shall know this wasn't just the act of some martyr or good man or prophet, the Man upon the cross is God and the glory of the nature demonstrated at the cross is God.

V. Where does our love go?

- We were created to fulfill the first commandment. Do we believe that? That we have everything it takes in us to fulfill the first commandment... fully? We do. We were created in the image of this God – the God who is love. We were created with love in mind. We were created to be passionate, to feel, to desire, to be fascinated, to be compassionate – and all of these things to their fullest extent all the time. God put in us everything we need to love Him wholeheartedly. Where did it go? Or more accurately, where is it going?

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Galatians 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

- Our love is going elsewhere – to the world and to the flesh. The world, especially in our culture, goes straight for the desires of the flesh.
- So long as our love is going elsewhere (even part of it), the love of the Father is not in us. Not that we don't love, but we don't love the way He loved (Jn 17:26) – His love gave all.

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

- The good news is the remedy is simple – stop giving to other things and begin giving to God.
- What we're sowing is our lives – by living we're sowing into something. What is it? We can only give what we have. To some level we can give out of our excess, but eventually as we desire to give more, we have to look at reclaiming what is being given elsewhere

VI. What Can I Give?

2 Corinthians 9:7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

- As we look at what to give, we are not looking to raise the bar – the required amount of giving. We are looking for invitations and for opportunities to give.
- The heart won in love sees everything God asks of us as an opportunity to give to Him something that He desires. We've already decided in our hearts to give extravagantly and abundantly – we're just trying to figure out what that looks like. We're looking for gift ideas. What does He most desire? What is it that will bring Him the most pleasure?
- The list of things to give is endless. Ultimately, it's everything – love gives all. The beauty of

gazing into God's love is that it transforms our hearts and that leads to a thousand transformed behaviors because our heart is now actively seeking things to give.

- The first commandment is a good starting place as far as what to give. Beyond just the general concept of all, Jesus spells out some specific areas of our life that He desires which helps us know where to start looking for things to give.
- The sermon on the mount is a good starting place on how to give – what does it look like when we walk in a lifestyle of giving unto God.

Mark 12:30 *And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.* 'This is the first commandment.

1. Your heart – our affection, our passion, our emotions

- They are often wasted on worthless things
 - Every time we get annoyed or frustrated at a person or thing, that's emotion being given to that thing which could have gone to God instead
 - When we give our passions to other things (sports, bands, politics) they could be going to God
 - Entertainment (TV, movies, etc) specifically targets our emotions and directs them towards characters and situations that aren't even real
 - Even food can become an outlet for emotions
- Fasting – removes something that dulls our emotions, enabling us to better receive from God
- Prayer – the giving of our emotions to the things on God's heart for us and for the world around us

● Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

● Blessed are those who mourn

2. Your soul – who we are at the core: our identity, our self-image, our personality

● Who owns your soul? Is it God? Or is it the world? Or is it you?

- Who owns the right to define you?
- Who influences the way you act?
- Who are you seeking to please?
- Blessing our enemies, prayer, giving, fasting – all in secret unto God's eyes only. More time spent seeking what God thinks of us and less sowing into what the world thinks of us.
- Blessed are the poor in spirit
- Blessed are the meek
- Blessed are those persecuted for His sake.

3. Your mind – what are we fascinated with? What are we filling our minds with? Our will – who are we agreeing with?

- Seek the knowledge of God
- Set your mind on things above
- Blessed are the pure in heart

4. Your strength – time, energy, money, reputation, influence (Actually left off by Matthew's version). It will go where your heart goes

- Giving, fasting, prayer, our schedule
- Obedience

2 Samuel 24:24 Then the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing.”

VII. Love's Payment Plan

- It is not a one-time payment. If we ever stop loving God with our all, then He didn't really get all did He?
- It has to start now. The best thing to give God is 'now'. Give Him this moment, and the one

after it, and the one after that. It's all we've got. Don't wait for the big opportunities to love in some dramatic way – the only way we are prepared to handle the big moments is by loving Him in the small ones, in the day to day. We have the opportunity in each moment, each decision and each circumstance to make the choice to love God wholeheartedly.

VIII. The Rewards of Giving

Matthew 19:16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” ... 21 Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. 23 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” 25 When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” 26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” 27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” 28 So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And **everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.**

C.S. Lewis – The Weight of Glory

“We are halfhearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

- By giving up the pleasures of this world, we gain the superior pleasures of God
- By giving up rewards and an inheritance that will not last, we gain treasure in heaven (Mt 6:19-21)
- All is rubbish compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus – Philippians 3
- A lifestyle of giving all is the inescapable conclusion of a One Thing mindset (Ps 27:4). If He is the only thing worth seeking, then all should be devoted to seeking Him

IX. God's Response to Our Gifts

Song 8:7 If a man would give for love All the wealth of his house, It would be utterly despised.

- Why does giving have any reward? After all, we owe Him all anyway right? Imagine if a man owes you \$100000 and *gives* you \$20. Are you pleased? Do you reward him for that?
- This is how God's great gift to us in Christ invites us to give. Not that we now owe Him all – we always did all along. Now by the free gift of God, our debt, which we could never hope to repay is canceled.
- We could have given all to win God's love and it would have been utterly scorned. Because He gave His love freely, our every gift now is the free gift of a heart won in love, not reluctant or from obligation, and it ravishes His heart (SoS 4:9).

Mark 12:41 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. 42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. 43 So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; 44 for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.”

- It is enough. 'When everything is given, nothing is lacking.'
- All God ever asked for is our all. We have everything He's looking for, no more, no less. Will we give it all to Him?