

God is Love (5)

KSBC May 31, 2009

God's Love is Great and Satisfying

Psalm 63

Intro. What satisfies you? What comforts your soul? What promise, person, event or commodity allows you to rest and gives you hope? Our task this morning is to learn and be stretched by the testimony of someone who is satisfied with God's great love – to the point where he says that God's love is better than life itself.

The message of the Bible is that our souls can find rest, hope and comfort only in God's great and satisfying love. That love is found in Christ Jesus. It is the good news of the gospel that God loves you to the degree and extent to patiently endure your sinful rebellion, provide his Son as a substitute for the penalty of your sin and powerfully provide you with a new heart and his Spirit.

A clear and present indicator of the reality of your faith is ultimately where your soul finds rest, hope and comfort. As you may recall from our introductory studies in 1 John, our desire is to both know God's love for us and to rely on it (4:16). In other words, we can't say that God's love for us is great and yet not find it experientially satisfying. Closing that gap between what we know about God's love and what we actually feel or experience on a daily basis in our various life circumstances is what we are looking to do today with the Psalmist's help.

We continue our journey of knowing and relying on God's love by turning to a Psalm of David, written when his life and kingship were in danger. Psalm 63 teaches us how to practically combine our belief that God's love is great with an experience that testifies that God's love is also satisfying. This Psalm is a model that we can apply and follow in our pursuit of knowing and relying on God's love for us.

Remember, we are working with a definition of God's love that includes his spontaneous determination to sacrificially and generously give of himself for our eternal benefit.

Read/teach Psalm 63.

Observations:

- Back ground/contextual story of David/Absalom; 2Sam.15:13ff, 15:23;
- Repeated references to soul (1,5,8) – intense and personal exercise of seeking after God
- Begins with early seeking; ends with joyful confidence in God's love – satisfied by God
- Motivating truth for prayer and process is that God's love is better than life (3)

Calvin – By life is to be understood, in general, everything which men use of their own maintenance and defense. When we think ourselves well provided for otherwise, we feel no disposition to have recourse to the mercy of God.

Psalm 63 teaches us how to live a life of love as dearly loved children of God – Eph. 5:1-2. From it we learn the pathway to follow and the pitfalls to avoid in our daily journey of experiencing the great love of God. Let's ask God to graciously teach us and draw us to find our satisfaction in his great love.

Learning to enjoy the satisfaction of God's great love involves . . .

1. Identify your dry and weary place – how is a thirst for God being created in your life? 1-4

Note where the psalmist is and the circumstances he faces that stir up his desire to be connected to God's love. Many are prone to lose the comfort of his love during even the slightest trials – here the trials of a dry and weary place create a thirst or desire to pursue God.

- God appoints intentional thirst producing events and seasons.
- Usual systems of support are removed. 2
- Quality of life issues are involved. 3
- Thirst is necessary/motivates to seek after God. 1

Cmp. John 4:13-14; woman at the well Psa. 42:1-2 84:1-2

2. Use the sleepless nights – what really satisfies your soul? 5-7

Note the confirmation of satisfaction along with the word picture to explain the level of gratification experienced (v.5). Note also the future tense/perspective . . . while it may not be presently, I will be satisfied in greater measure in the Lord.

- Satisfaction is a biblical way to speak of your deepest needs as a person.
Proverbs 27:20; 30:16 Isa. 55:1-3 John 7:37-39
- Satisfaction is a critical battlefield in your fight for joy in God's love.
Deut. 31:20ff
- What satisfies you is only discovered by deliberate reflection and evaluation.
v.6-7 Psa. 90:11-14

Matt. 5:6 – Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

3. Intensify your pursuit – what is your commitment to seek hard after God? 8-11

Note the strong personal commitment of 'clinging' to the Lord. Because God's love is better than life, a strong devotion is expressed to follow hard after God by the psalmist. This 'clinging' is similar to marital devotion and the devotion of friendship. This devotion is possible only through the support of God's grace – his right hand . . . v.8. This devotion can be evaluated in the following terms . . .

- Personal disciplines necessary to seeking after God. 1 - early
 Psalm 1 Psalm 119
- Perseverance through difficult times by God's grace.
 3 my lips will glorify 4 I will praise you 5 my mouth will praise 7 I sing
- Active trust for current issues. 9-11
 My enemies 9-10 My life/dreams/calling 11
 Cmp. Isa. 41:10 Phil. 3:8-14 1Timothy 4:7 – train yourself to be godly.

Conclusion

God rewards the thirsty, the soon to be satisfied and the clingy with the experience of his 'better than life' love found in Jesus Christ.

Responding . . .

1. Identify what God is doing in your life now to convince you that you need him.
2. Repent and turn from seeking satisfaction from the wrong people and places.
3. Renew your commitment to reflection, spiritual disciplines and following hard after God.