

The Magnitude of God's Love

The Kingdom and the Covenant, Session 2.10

God's Love for Humanity

- Creation story, God created a special universe for mankind to reign over & enjoy
- Gen 1:26(a), "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness'"
 - "image" (Heb, *selem*, n): the visual appearance of something or someone
 - "likeness" (Heb, *d'mut*, n): similarity in appearance, character or nature
 - My opinion: God created us in his image and likeness, to look and be like him, to think and act like him; to be his peers, as much as created beings can be peers of their Creator
- Gen 2:16-17, ¹⁶ "And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'"
 - Ro 5:12, "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned."
 - Why did Adam & Eve's sin affect everyone else?
- Gen 6:5-6, ⁵ "The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. ⁶ The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain."
 - According to verse 6, how did man's sin affect God?
 - Does the Bible say he had that reaction when angels fell?
 - Why did man's fall affect God so much?
- Jn 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."
 - What motivated God to do this, according to the first phrase in this verse?

The New Covenant

- Suzerain covenant, in which a superior nation controls another nation
- Business covenant, which is limited to business activities of the partners
- Blood covenant, in which the covenant partners have equal legal status & common property
 - "A covenant is a loving, enduring relationship in which each partner focuses on the other's well-being and success, including what they deserve, need or want."

How Much More

- Ro 5:9, “Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!”
 - Why will we not experience God’s wrath over sin?
- Ro 5:10, “For if, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”
- Ro 5:15, “But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!”
- Ro 5:17, “For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.”
- What did we do to deserve God’s grace?
- How was God legally justified in sending his Son to die in our place?”
- Why did he do that?
- Because God adopted us into his family, what should we call him?
- What does all this reveal about his love for us?

Jesus

- Jesus the man & the image of God
 - Jn 14:9, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”
 - What was Jesus saying about his own nature?
 - Col 1:15, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”
 - “image” (Gk, *eikon*, n): similarity in appearance, character or nature
 - “firstborn” (Gk, *prototokos*, adj): the first in a series
 - Ro 8:29, “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”
 - “likeness” (Gk, *eikon*, n)
 - “firstborn” (Gk, *prototokos*, adj)
 - God created humanity in his image & likeness; similar to his appearance & nature
 - Now he’s restoring that likeness in us by conforming us to the likeness of Jesus!
 - God is developing Jesus’ qualities & traits in us, so we’ll be like both Jesus & Father
 - 2 Co 3:18, “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”
 - What did we do to deserve this?
 - How is God justified in doing this, despite our original sinful condition?

- Why would he do this?
- How is this an expression of his love & intent for us?
- Jesus the Son of God
 - Jn 5:18, “For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.”
 - “equal” with God (Gk, *isos*, adj): having the same quality, quantity, value or measure as another
 - Jesus is the Son of God
 - “son” (Gk, *huios*, n): son

God’s Sons & Daughters

- We are God’s children – sons & daughters
 - Gal 3:26, “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”
 - *huios*: adult child with family authority, responsibilities, rights & privileges
 - Ro 8:14, “... those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”
 - “sons” (Gk, *huios*, n): same word
 - If Jesus was claiming to be equal with God by calling himself the Son/*huios* of God, does the Bible indicate we’re “equal” with God because it calls us *huios* of God?
 - Are we actually “equal” with God or Jesus?
- God’s kingdom is completely available to us
 - Lk 12:32, “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”
 - Give us what? How much of it?
 - Mt 16:19, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”
 - What’s the significance of having the keys of the kingdom?
- We are God’s heirs
 - Ro 8:17, “Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”
 - If we’re coheirs with Jesus, what does that reveal about what’s available to us?
 - Eph 1:14, Holy Spirit “is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession – to the praise of his glory.”
 - Col 1:12, “... giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.”
 - What did we do to qualify for this inheritance?
 - Heb 6:12, “We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.”
 - What must we do to inherit the promise?

- God adopted us
 - Gk, n, *huiiothesia*: a legal proceeding that creates a parent-child relationship between persons not related by blood; with the adopted child being entitled to all privileges belonging to a natural child (including the right to inherit)
 - Ro 8:15, “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship.”
 - “sonship”: *huiiothesia*
 - Gal 4:5, “.... that we might receive the full rights of sons.”
 - “full rights of sons”: *huiiothesia*
 - Eph 1:4(c)-5, “In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will....”
 - “adopted as sons”: *huiiothesia*
 - God’s adoption of us was a legal proceeding that has almost unbelievable implications
 - What I believe Father told me about our adoption:

By adopting you and making you an heir, I completely transformed your nature so you’re compatible with me and my kingdom through Christ. Now you no longer bear bad fruit and are effective in my kingdom As you learned, the adoption process completely erases all record of your previous nature and works. You’re right in saying you aren’t presently a sinner saved by grace, because I no longer call you a sinner or have any record of your sinfulness. Adoption is that thorough.

It also involves granting you full rights as my son. You have the same rights in my family and kingdom as my Son, Jesus. Let that soak in. You don’t yet have the same capabilities and you clearly haven’t experienced all of your rights, but Jesus is your example and your adoption is your promise. It is all yours. Let that soak in. Obviously, your thoughts, motives and actions must be compatible with mine for you to produce good results and I grant you time and provide opportunities for you to grow into that. As you grow or become more spiritually mature, you’ll get better and more consistent results, which means you’ll be more effective in my family and kingdom. Your “full rights” as my son include a long term learning curve.

You are an heir and I’ve provided everything you need for life and godliness. Everything I have belongs to you and you can appropriate it as needed. Ask whatever you will and it’ll be done for you; again, within the parameters of compatible thoughts, motives and actions. You don’t lack anything, though you’ve only experienced very little of what’s yours. I honor your free will and don’t “force” anything on you, but it’s all readily available to you as my son.