THE MEANING OF THE LOVE OF GOD

Baptist Church, Iowa City, Iowa -- June 7, 1959

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Introduction

A. God the creator.

B. God the sustainer
   God of deism, the immanent God

C. God omniscient and omnipresent
   Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or, whither shall I flee from thy presence?

   If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my abode in hell, behold, thou art there -- Francis Thompson, St. Augustine

D. God is Holy

I. God is love, merciful

1. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.


3. The story of Hoseah. God is love in the O.T.
   John 3:16  I John 4:8

II. God's love is best exemplified in the N.T.

A. The parable of the lost sheep -- love that seeks

B. The parable of the prodigal son -- love that waits

C. God does not find value in us; he imparts value to us. The Kenosis
(1) The word made flesh
(2) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery; but made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

D. Would you become a dog for the sake of saving dogs? He came down from glory to be for us. Even now he is for us; the God-man in the heavenly places.

Conclusion: Why all this talk about the love of God?

A. That we may have a deep sense of gratitude --

Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits --
He forgiveth, he healeth, he redeemeth, he satisfieth my life with good things. Androclus and the lion --
Let's be thankful

B. Let's be loving -- the love of Christ constaineth me -- I Cor. 13.

C. Let's give our hearts to Christ --

The story of Ishii, the great Japanese criminal
God so loved that he gave -- Would you receive his gift?