

Because of His Great Love

by Alan Martin

This sermon delves into the concept of God's love and mercy as the foundation for understanding His fullness. It emphasizes the need to grasp the depth of God's love to experience His fullness, highlighting the importance of humility and faith in receiving God's grace and atonement. The sermon connects Old Testament practices like the Day of Atonement to Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, emphasizing the significance of humbling ourselves and believing in Christ for salvation.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:4, Ephesians 3:16, 1 John 4:7, Romans 3:23, John 3:14, Leviticus 23:26, 1 Peter 5:5, John 6:40, John 12:44

Topics: "God's Love", "Humility and Faith"

Description

This sermon delves into the concept of God's love and mercy as the foundation for understanding His fullness. It emphasizes the need to grasp the depth of God's love to experience His fullness, highlighting the importance of humility and faith in receiving God's grace and atonement. The sermon connects Old Testament practices like the Day of Atonement to Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, emphasizing the significance of humbling ourselves and believing in Christ for salvation.

Transcript

Okay, Ephesians chapter 2, 4, and 5. Let me get my... I forgot my, uh, sorry, I forgot my microphone. Ephesians 2, 4, and 5. God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even being dead in trespass, made us alive with or in Christ. By grace, you are saved.

We're just going to focus on the first part of this verse, being rich in mercy, we talked about last week, because of his great love for us. In this same letter, we're going to see in chapter 3 that, if we ever get there, that knowing the love of God is the foundation for growing into the fullness of God. So we're going to explore this love of God and hope you've been meditating on the love of God.

Let's look at that passage real quick, Ephesians chapter 3, verses 16 through 19, and let me encourage you to bring your Bibles. We may not have the overhead if we lose electricity, but if you have your Bibles, that's not going to hinder anything. We can read, so someone will read from your Bibles or the overhead, either one.

Ephesians 3, 16 through 19. You may have power, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge. Here's that, here's that phrase, to know this love that surpasses knowledge so that you might be filled to

all the measure of the fullness of God.

So in order to experience the fullness of God in your life, you have to be strengthened with power by the Holy Spirit in you to be able to grasp it, and as you begin to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of God, then you're going to be able to comprehend in a way that allows you to grow into that fullness. 1st John says something similar. Look at, look with me at 1st John chapter 4, verses 7 through 10.

Somebody read for me 1st John chapter 4, 7 through 10. Dear friends, let us not, let us love one another for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love does not know God because God is love. This is how God shows his love among us. He sent his one and only son into the world that we might live through him.

This is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atonement sacrifice for our sins. Okay, so let's consider something with me. God is love.

What does the is mean? What does the is of that statement mean? God is love. Right, that's a to beaver. That's who he is.

That is, that's his being. That is his nature. His spiritual DNA is love.

Yeah, that's who, that's his very essence. So, if the divine nature is love, everyone who is loving with that characteristic has been born of him. If you're not loving, you don't have his DNA.

Everyone, if you do not love, you do not know God because God's DNA is love. That's his essence. That's who he is.

And if you've been born of his essence, that's what you do. He who love is not knoweth not God, for God is love. So, you know, let us, let's love.

And this is, this is love. It's not that we love God. It's that he loved us.

Now, why did he love us? Best question. And this is so important. Why did he love us? He made us.

He can't not love us because he is love. He is love. He has the answer.

It has nothing to do with us. It's not because you were good. It's not because you were bad.

It's because that's, he loves because he is love. That's what he does because that's who he is. And it's so important for us to grasp that.

Yes. You see, he, I have this written down. He does not love us because of what we do or who we are.

He loves us. He loves the world because he is love. And because of who he is, because he is love, that's why he sent his son into the world to save the world.

He saw what the world was. And how did he respond to what he saw in the world? He responded out of who he is. God loved the world.

And God sees us and saw us as sinners. And how did he feel about us? He loved us. And out of that love comes his mercy towards us, not because of anything we do or say.

And John, and I want to get into this this morning, John ties his love. The last part of what we read, John ties the love of God with God making atonement. Now that's a word at the biblical word that not everybody necessarily knows automatically.

Explain to me, what is atonement? Okay, see, look, that's another word. That's another one of those. Salvation.

Okay, see, we have different various ideas. Propitiation. Right.

Well, it's a word similar that was used in the ark in propitiation. Now, how does that sound similar to something that Noah did with the ark, he covered it with pitch, propitiation and atonement means a covering to cover over. And this covering over was done at a certain place.

It was this atonement, this propitiation was made at a at a place called the propitiation, or it's translated in some places, the mercy seat, where was the mercy seat. It was the top of the Ark of the Covenant, which was kept in the Holy of Holies in the temple, that seat is called the propitiation, the mercy seat. And so atonement would be the blood of sacrifice on the mercy seat.

But so mercy comes out of God's love. Because we need to, we need to ask ourselves this question. If God is love, and that that's how he responds towards man's sin, because that's who he is.

Why is there still judgment? And why is there still hell? Right. All right. One of the things that we need to do is we need to remember is love is not the only being describing God, the only B word describing God, it's actually used less than another word, there is a another word, a being that God is used way more than God is love.

No, not wrath is not just, it's what they say in heaven continually, nonstop, and they say it in triplicate, holy, holy, holy, God is holy. And holiness, by its essence, is against evil. Holiness in its essence must destroy ultimately, the evil that's damaging, corrupting, ruining, taking from people.

And so God is holy, and God is love. And how can he, how can he be loving when he's holy? You see, by making atonement, right? It's why it's important for us to understand the atoning work of God. Now, the nature of this, and this is what I want us to understand about experiencing the loving God, the love of God.

Because when we talk about atonement, we need to get our understanding of atonement from its origin in the Old Testament. How many of you are familiar with the Day of Atonement? Okay, it is a feast, it's not just a feast for modern Jews, it was a feast commanded in the law of Moses. So let's go there, if you have your Bibles, turn with me to Leviticus chapter 23.

This is the passage, it's several places in the law. But we're going to look at Leviticus chapter 23, verses 26 to 32. And I'll read this passage a little bit lengthy, follow me.

Leviticus 23, 26 to 32. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, on exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy assembly for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the Lord.

You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement to make atonement on your behalf before the Lord your God. If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be utterly destroyed from his people. As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people.

You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls on the ninth of the month at evening, and from evening until evening you shall keep your Sabbath.

What do you notice about this? This is the very day that God is saying, I'm going to make atonement so that your sins can be forgiven, and in the very day he's making atonement, he warns that if you don't do a certain thing while I'm making atonement, I will myself destroy you. Doesn't that sound like consider both the kindness and the severity of God? Now what, in this passage, if you were listening, what were the people supposed to do, and what were they told not to do? Well, first, what were they told that they must do? Okay, they were, yes, depending upon your translation, they were told that they must humble themselves and rest. So what they were not to do is, they were not to do any work so that they could totally focus on God making atonement for their sin, and if anyone refused to humble themselves, that person would be cut off, utterly destroyed from his people, and if a person worked when God had said to rest, God himself would destroy that person.

Now, does that sound like God being rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loves us, saved us by his grace? What does grace and humility have in common, or grace and humbling ourselves have in common? Have you heard that somewhere in the New Testament? Grace is an unmerited blessing. Right, but what the question is, what does grace and being humble have in common? Well, you have to humble yourself to receive grace. Ah, God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

The same God with the same heart, the same nature, the same love, the same word, the same way, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Even in the Old Testament, in order to receive mercy and grace, you humbled yourself, and one of the, some of the translations, I think the NIV says, you deny yourself. The day of atonement was a day where they fasted and did no work, and God forgave their sins, made atonement.

The, in this day, when the Jews observed the day of atonement, they fast and do no work. Is it a special Sabbath? What did, listen to this verse. Someone read it for me.

First Peter chapter five, verses five and six. First Peter chapter five, verses five and six. So this is, this is two different apostles.

James, the first one, James, God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. That's in James. And here's Peter, the same truth.

Humble yourselves that you might be exalted. So let's review real quick. So far, God is love, and because of his great love, he is rich in mercy.

And, and from the love that he is, and the mercy that comes out of it, he sent his only son into the world to make atonement for the sins of the whole world in order that the world might receive atonement for sins. All the world needs to be able to receive atonement for their sins is to humble themselves, to humble themselves before God, because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the, to the humble. Now,

Paul makes a statement about the atonement that fully agrees with this.

And I, I still remember the first time I was reading this in the Koine Greek, and it shocked me because I'd never heard this preached from a pulpit. And I've been in church. I grew up in church and was raised there.

I've heard probably thousands of messages by now. Someone read one, a very familiar passage to us, Romans chapter three, verses 23 to 25. Romans chapter three, verses 23 to 25.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace. Whom God has set forth to hear, publicly, Oh, propitiation. Okay.

That's good right there. Thank you. Remember, now I want you to follow me, listen very carefully and see if you see a break in this thought.

Listen very carefully. You can read, but if you can read, listen very carefully, I'm just reading for all of sin and fall short of the glory of God being justified as a gift by his grace to the redemption, which is in Christ Jesus. Did you hear that? Is there any separation in there? Is there any separation in that statement? Am I correct to read that as it actually is for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God being justified as a gift.

There's no separation. So who is being justified then? Who's being justified? All, all the sin. Didn't first John say he died, he died for atonement, not only our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.

That's what John said. Paul is in perfect agreement with this. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God being justified freely.

There is no separation in the original language. And I never caught that, but look what it says, whom he set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood. So Christ is the propitiation, not just for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.

And God set forth the atonement, the propitiation to be experienced through faith in his blood. So these are, these truths are dynamically working together here. God is love.

God is rich in mercy out of his love and mercy. He sent his son to be the atonement for the sins of the whole world, for everyone who humbles themselves and believe the public atonement that he set forth. That's what Paul is saying.

That's what these things are coming together. Now let's look at a very, very familiar passage and see if that passage underscores the truth of what we're just now saying. John chapter three, 14 through 16.

A lot of us could quote some of this passage, but let's just, let's have someone read John three, 14 through 16. It is extremely important that all three of these verses be read as a group and not separated, or you're going to get this worldly idea for God so loved the world. Just so great, big, want to give the world a big, big kiss.

That's, that's the way you read it wrong. Verse 14 is the way God loved the world. It's saying in the Greek word, it means in the very same way as he describes in verse 14, verse 14 says, as Moses lifted up the servant in the wilderness, even so the son of man must be lifted up.

And what is, what is, what happens when God lifts up the son to make atonement? He sets him forth publicly as a propitiation through faith in his blood, just like Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness publicly as a means for the people to not die from being bitten by poisonous snakes. So that whoever believes in him will have eternal life for in this way, God loves the world. This same way that Moses provided a means of salvation to the people of Israel.

That's how God loves the world. Now I'm going to read the passage, follow me in numbers. This passage where Moses makes a bronze serpent and puts the serpent on a tree.

You, we all see this, this symbol quite often. It's the American medical association symbol. You've seen the, the serpent on a tree.

That's what they use as their symbol, but this is done in numbers. Chapter 21, 4 through 9. And because of the length of the passage, allow me to read it here for you. Numbers 21, 4 through 9. Then they set out from Mount Orr by the way of the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom.

And the people became impatient because of the journey. And the people spoke against God and Moses. Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there's no food and no water.

And we loathe this miserable food. You know what the miserable food they were loathing? Manna. The gift of God.

The thing that was keeping them alive and they're loathing it. You know, the Lord sent fiery serpents. It's a way of saying venomous, they're like fire in them, poisonous serpents among the people.

And they bit the people so that many people of Israel died. So the people came to Moses and said, we have sinned because we have spoken against the Lord and you intercede with the Lord that he may remove the serpents from us. And Moses interceded for the people.

Then the Lord said to Moses, make a fiery or venomous serpent and set it on a pole. And it shall come about that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he will live. And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the pole.

And it came about that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived. You know what that is? That is setting forth publicly a means for someone to be saved through faith. And this same way, God loved the world.

Christ is the atonement for the sins of the whole world. Whom God set forth for all of sin and fall short of the glory of God being justified freely by his grace through whom God set forth as a propitiation publicly through faith in his blood. So are you following me now? I like to, I enjoy the language of the Greek Old Testament, which is called the Septuagint.

It describes the people as becoming faint hearted. Yeah, I guess they have to look at an English way of doing it. The literal translation is they became little souls.

And at times when we get our bell rung and temptation has shaken us up, you know what you become? You just become this poor little soul. You poor little soul. It just means that you're reeling from the circumstances you're in.

And that's basically what the people did. We know what we know what the Lord did. He sent the venomous serpents to bite the people to humble them when they, and what happened? They came to Moses, humbling themselves, confessing their sins that we have sinned against the Lord and you by speaking evil against the Lord intercede for us.

And the Lord then had mercy out of his great love for his people. He had mercy and he creates a means for them, setting forth a pole, a serpent on a pole publicly where they can look at if they're bitten and live. And look at comes from the Greek word beholding, to behold.

It means this, it means seeing that becomes knowing. It's akin to this expression. I see what you mean, or, oh, now I see what you're saying.

It's seeing with recognition. So how were the people cured or saved from dying from the venom when they were bitten? They recognized the mercy of God, cursing the element of death. How are people now saved from the wrath of God? They look to Christ and they see, I see God's mercy.

I see the answer and I understand how he's saving me. Christ is set forth as a propitiation publicly through faith in his blood. And, um, Jesus said this in John chapter six, verse 40.

Someone read that for me. If, if Ruth has it up there or you have it in your Bible, John six, verse 40. So my father's will is that everyone who looks to the sun and believes in him shall have eternal life.

And I will raise him up on the last day. Okay. This word, and you need to know that this is not the same word for behold as, as in the Septuagint.

This is a Greek word for behold that we get the English word theater from the odd. So it, uh, it means this, uh, to gaze for the purpose of analyzing. So Jesus said, this is the will of my father, that everyone who gazes on me for the purpose of analyzing why God, my father sent me will be saved.

Everyone who's observing me who's it's another way to say it is to gaze for the purpose of analysis where people concentrate on the meaning of an action and everyone who concentrates on how God has set forth atonement before the world. Everyone will, will receive the benefit of that. John chapter 12, verses 44 to 48.

Listen to this. I'll read it for you. John 12, 44 to 48.

And Jesus cried out and said, he who believes in me does not believe in me only, but in him who sent me, he who is beholding me beholds the one who sent me. I have come as a light into the world so that everyone who believes in me will not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my saying, it does not keep them.

I do not judge him for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has one who judges him. The word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.

Everyone beholding, studying the Lord Jesus for the purpose of understanding why God sent him will not remain in darkness. So let's go back and review. I want us to make sure we stay on track.

God is love. And because of his great love, he's rich in mercy. And because of his great love, which he states to be God so loved the world and who is atonement made for the world.

He, he is our propitiation, not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. First John chapter two, two, he loved the whole world propitiation for the whole world. All is sin and falls short of the glory of God being justified freely.

Same, the same group, the all that sin it's there, but it requires what the same from us that it required of the people of Israel. We must humble ourselves, deny ourselves and look in faith to receive that atonement. And if we refuse to deny ourselves, if we refuse to humble ourselves, God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble.

So the only reason that there is still judgment and that, and that judgment is eternal separation from the presence of God is that men refuse to humble themselves and repent. Atonement has been made and that atonement has been set forth publicly before the whole world. So God's love and grace is the same today as it was before, but it must be received as it was before by men humbling themselves and believing.

I believe we are near the end. You check my notes. Yes.

So since we're early, let's have some questions. What questions is this or thoughts? I should say question or thought. Does this prompt in you from considering this? Sam, back to the John 3, 16, 14 through 17 where he did.

Um, the fact that Jesus, I guess I should say if the Israelites thought salvation was for him to say that it's for the whole world must have jarred them a little bit and they still didn't get it because even after he was raised, you know, Peter had to be, I have to do something to make him understand that it was for not just the Jews, but for all men. Right. Remember what we talked about last week.

We talked about, uh, that the Jews have experienced the hardening in part now. So that what, so that mercy could come to the Gentiles and we receive mercy now in order for wine so that the mercy we've received can go back to them. And this is in Romans 11, where it says, Paul says, for God has bound all men over to disobedience.

Why that he might have mercy on them. Oh, and these words are very specific. It's precise language.

It's very precise language. God desires mercy for all, but we need to understand God's love and mercy in the same way. He originally revealed it.

Yeah, Larry. Right. And in another way, in the same way, the loss is cursed.

It is everyone who's put on a tree or hung on a tree. And so that serpent being put on that pole of that tree represented God cursing that serpent. And, and what did it say about Jesus? He who knew no sin became sin for us.

He became that curse. It's like, he, it's like he grabbed the curse and took it to the grave with him and left it there so that we could experience the life of God. Rudy, you were going to share something a minute ago.

I just wanted to say that, yes, we were grafted, but not because of the goodwill of the Jews. No. Because if it had been for the Jews, we would never have been grafted.

No, but God in his wisdom has, has brought this about. And so this, this, the verses we've been studying last week and this week is that God is rich in mercy because of his great love. So we're told this wherever

we are today, let us draw near with confidence, something.

What do we, what do we did draw near the throne of grace? Why does he call it a throne of grace? Because it's, it's what he wants to give us. It is a throne of grace. Let us draw near in full assurance of faith to that throne of grace that we might receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

It's, it's who God is and it's what he wants to give. Yes, sister Kathy. Right.

It's, see, if we, if we grasp that God loves us because that's who he is, it's going to take some weight off of you. Do you want God to love you because how you do? Because you'll be playing the flower game. Now he loves me.

Now we don't. Now he loves me. Now we don't.

Well, I messed up today. He don't. You don't love me today.

No, no, that's not, that's, that's a very unstable foundation. God loves you because that's who he is. Now, if you do wrong, guess what? Dumb, bad.

You're probably going to suffer from it, but does it change who God is? No. Does it change his desire for you? No, you'll suffer from you being dumb and God will still be love. Isn't that good news? You get ahold of that and you realize when you do something dumb, what do you think he wants to do? Fix you like he did the first time he sent his son out of his heart for who he is before a single one of us did anything good or bad.

His atonement, his mercy, his goodness, his kindness, they come out of who he is. And for all we need to experience that is faith. Yes, brother.

I was looking at the definition of appreciation. I now remember, I now remember what I wanted us to end with. It's interesting.

Thank you, father. He helps us even in the midst of we're teaching and preaching. I wanted you to picture what happens on the day of atonement from the priest's side.

It's described in the book of numbers, in the book of Leviticus. On the day of atonement, which is one day a year, the 10th day of the seventh month, the day of atonement, the high priest would take the blood of a sacrifice and he would come right before the holy of holies, right there at the curtain separating the holy place from the holy holies. And before he would go inside, he was instructed to take a sensor of burning coals.

So he probably had to set the bowl of blood down and he took the sensor of burning coals and he grabbed two handfuls of fine incense powder and he poured it on the burning coals. And what would happen? Immediately it would be billowing in smoke and then he would take that sensor billowing with smoke and the blood in the bowl and go behind the curtain. And he was told this, you must pour the incense upon the sensor lest you see the atonement cover and die.

So he would step behind the curtain separating the holy of holies from the holy place, stand before the ark. Probably he would have to set the sensor down. It's billowing with smoke in this enclosed room with the curtain and he dips his finger in the blood and he sprinkles it before the ark of the covenant seven times, seven times.

And once he's done that the blood splashes upon the mercy seat or the atonement or the propitiation. It's the same word. Right where God meets with his people the blood flashes but he wasn't done.

After that the priest was to turn around with his back to the ark of the covenant in the mercy seat and he was to dip his finger in the bowl of blood and sprinkle it seven times on the back of the curtain, the curtain. Now I want you to picture Jesus on the cross because the hymn writer will might the sun in darkness hide and shut his glories in because it says on the day of the cross that at the ninth hour darkness came over the land right at a time where it should have been nice and bright. Why would darkness come over the land? Because God was literally doing in creation what was happening with the high priest was inside the tabernacle on the earth but Jesus in his spirit was entering the tabernacle in heaven.

And think about it Jesus in his last seven words he we know he's shedding his own blood for the sins of mankind and what happens when the seventh time our Lord sprinkles his own blood on the back of that curtain and he says it's finished. What happened? There was an earthquake and the veil in the temple was torn into from top to bottom indicating God was no longer separated from his people. You and I now have direct access to the father through the blood of Jesus Christ and this was happening when he made atonement.

It's just I like picture it in your mind because I've gone through it in my mind several times just the seventh time our Lord Jesus sprinkling it finishing making atonement and it's done. Atonement has been made. It's just for us to humble ourselves and believe and receive what God wants for us to receive.

Any other thoughts or questions before we close? It's about that time. Meditate on these things. Yes for the time.

If I say yes I'm going to be lying because I heard mumbling. Not your fault it's my ears. Yes we are sure and you're and you're buying the lie of the enemy.

The thief comes only to steal kill and destroy. Now we think it's unfair. You know there were Native Americans traded away lands for these treaties and trinkets and we think man they didn't know what they were doing.

Well what do you think you're doing? You give into some pleasure and some sin and rejecting the goodness and love of the father who only desires that you have life and have it more abundantly. We're just as foolish you know to do that. If God's loved you enough to be the only one who died for you and made everything necessary so that you could live and be forgiven and get to know him.

No boyfriend, no husband, no wife, no one on earth loves you that way. No one else has a better interest for you. No one else has a better plan for you.

No one else has a better desire for you and it's about time you realize that. You can get something out of that person you're putting your hope in. You can get something out of it.

You can get some pleasure. You can get some fun. You can get all that but you can't get God's best from anyone except God because he can make a relationship beautiful when it's his way, his time.

The devil's what ruins what God desires as good by tempting us to be too early, too soon, use it in the wrong way. That's what sin is all about. So anyway, let's stop and have a time where we can...

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/bxXtAl7ilpQ.mp4>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/alan-martin/because-of-his-great-love/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net