

God's Love Towards Man

by Erlo Stegen

Jesus Christ came for all people, and salvation doesn't come by education but by revelation.

Scripture: Titus 3:3

Topics: "God's Love", "Salvation"

Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes God's immense love towards humanity, highlighting that Jesus Christ's coming into the world was a divine act of kindness and mercy for all people, regardless of race. He contrasts the response of the wise men and shepherds, who sought Jesus, with the indifference of the Jewish leaders who knew the truth but did not act on it. Stegen warns against being spiritually dead like those who know the truth yet remain unchanged, urging listeners to seek a personal revelation of Jesus rather than relying on intellect or tradition. He calls for repentance from envy, malice, and disobedience, reminding everyone that salvation is not earned through works but through faith in Christ. The sermon concludes with an invitation to experience the living Jesus and His transformative power.

Transcript

Summary of sermon by Erlo Stegen , 13 January 2013

Titus 3

3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Firstly, as we've recently celebrated Christmas let's look at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into this world.

It is heartbreaking if we consider the lives our ancestors lived and many live to this day. If Jesus hadn't come all of us would still be immersed in heathendom. Great is the work done by the Lord Jesus!

The reason we are saved today is because Jesus Christ had been revealed to us.

Jesus came for all people, not just for the whites or blacks - He came for all.

When Jesus was born the angelic host came down rejoicing at His birth. They directed the shepherds to the Lord Jesus. Not long after those from the east were also led to Him by the star. They just went astray when they took their eyes off the star and started to use their own intellect, thinking He must be born in Jerusalem, the royal city. When Herod heard it he gathered together all the scribes and pharisees and enquired where the Christ was to be born. They told him the truth, in Bethlehem.

The wise men left and were led by to Bethlehem to the place where Jesus lay.

The pharisees, scribes and leaders of the Jews knew that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, but not one of them went. They knew the truth but it didn't change their lives.

Today there are many Christians just like that. They know the truth but it doesn't change their lives. They are simply like road signs who direct others but don't go themselves. Are there any such in our midst? Then you're spiritually dead.

But when the shepherds and the wise men from the East heard the truth they immediately took steps to go and see the One born for the salvation of the world.

When the wise men from the east found the Christ child they bowed down and worshipped Him and took out their presents, gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold signifying He is king, frankincense the royal incense and myrrh His death on the cross.

It's heartbreaking regarding the Jews that, "He came unto His own but His own received Him not". The Bible says that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will sit at the tables of heaven and they will come from the east and west to sit with them whereas the children of the kingdom will be cast out!

Be very careful that you who consider yourself a Christian be not one of those cast out!

Jesus Christ appeared from heaven and revealed Himself to those who are Jews and those who are not Jews. When Christ came to this world God made it clear to the whole world that He came for all. Woe to you if you reject that and say I'm going to carry on in my own tradition and way.

Secondly, we don't find Jesus by our intellect or our great wisdom. As the English saying goes, "salvation doesn't come by education but by revelation". Education won't help you anything unless Jesus has been revealed to you. It will only make you a clever devil.

Saul, who became Paul, was trained in the Jews' religion and excelled. But he said, "... when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood" (Gal 1:15-16)

The difference is this, the Jews from Jerusalem knew the truth but didn't go whereas the shepherds and the wise men from the east actually went to Him and brought Him gifts.

The wise men from the east were directed to the Lord Jesus by the scribes and pharisees, who didn't go themselves. There are still people like that today.

Louis Harms' father told each of his children what they should become. He had to become a minister and he submitted and went to a theological seminary. But after awhile he went back to his father and said to his father that he's stopping his studies since the university professors only dished up hay. His dad was extremely angry and would have none of it and sent him back to complete his studies and he submitted. But he was tired of the intellectual hay the professors gave them. He therefore regularly went to the library to do his own studies and read the Bible for himself. Once as he was studying the Bible God revealed Himself to him and he was soundly converted. Once his studies were completed he started the mission that sent out the missionaries to Africa. When he preached he also didn't mince his words but preached the word of God in truth. Africa was full of cannibalism, even the zulu name for South Africa means, "there where there are many cannibals". But when the Gospel came all these evil practises came to an end. The Gospel brings about progress and changes lives. Wherever the Gospel goes deep in a nation that nation goes forward and makes progress.

You might say those were terrible people and you never did those things. But the Bible says that there are no one without sin. As the saying goes, "you are not what you think you are but you are what you think".

Jesus said that, "you have heard it being said that you should not commit adultery, but I say to you that if you so much as look at a woman with lust you have already committed adultery in your heart".

Your education could even be a hindrance to you. You might say all the things you do and how you pray and read your Bible, but you cannot be saved through your works. Jesus must be revealed to you.

Luther tried to earn his salvation by works and punished himself but failed. But one day as he was doing his daily works, like a bolt of lightning it came to him that you are not justified by the works of the law but by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ - and that is how you are justified. You need to meet with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's look again at our text. "3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. 4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,"

These people just lived as they liked in their foolishness, they were disobedient, enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures, living in hate and malice and envy, just as we see on TV and magazines today.

Are these things found in your life, even though you've never killed someone?

Maybe you are full of envy because another is lifted up and not you? You must repent of that. So too if you hate another.

Examine your life what you are like. Do you find any of these in your life? Then repent of it today!

The family of a certain man wanted to bring him to KwaSizabantu, but he didn't want to come because there's no booze here. They bought him two bottles of booze and brought him, but as they turned in at the gate the bottles rolled against each other and both broke and the alcohol was spilt. His eyes were opened that Jesus is alive and he came and related the story and was soundly converted.

Jesus is alive. Would you come to Him today?

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