

Love and Hatred at the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ

by Ian Paisley

The sermon highlights the contrast between God's love and man's hatred at the birth of Christ, demonstrating the cost of Christ's incarnation and the hope of redemption.

Duration: 40:27

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:15-16, Matthew 1:18, John 6:37, John 19:30, Ephesians 3:19, Ephesians 4:15

Topics: "Christ's Love", "Salvation Through Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of growing in the knowledge and understanding of Christ's love. He encourages the listeners to reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, where he shed his blood and gave his life for the salvation of humanity. The preacher highlights the power of Christ's love to overcome the hatred of hell and bring life and salvation to those who partake in it. He challenges the audience to examine their allegiance and asks them to consider if they are part of the kingdom of murderers or the kingdom of God.

Transcript

We're turning to the Gospel according to Matthew at the first chapter, and we're reading at verse 18. The 18th verse of the first chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise, when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife. And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son, and he called his name Jesus.

God will stamp with his divine approval this word from his own most precious and holy book. I want to speak tonight on the subject, love and hate at the birth of Christ. The world has never witnessed the love like the love which was demonstrated by God, that he loved her so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

But the world has also never witnessed the hatred that was poured out upon the Lord Jesus Christ, immediately after he was born, and to plan his murder and his immediate death. Love as high as heaven itself, hatred as low as hell itself. The love of Christ is as high as heaven, the hatred of Christ is as low.

Two thousand and six years have passed, but the love of Christ does not change, nor has the hatred of the devil and sinful men of Christ has not weakened by one iota. The love is as deep as ever, the hatred is as dark. There are two unchanging forces contending side by side.

The love of Christ which is brighter than all the heavens midnight, and the hatred of Christ as dark as hell's awful midnight. I want to look tonight at the love of Christ in full view of his birth. And then I want to look at the hatred of Christ in full view of his birth.

First, the price our Lord paid to be born of a woman. What did it cost Christ to become incarnate in the flesh? Jesus Christ was God, as the old creed says, the God of gods and light of lights. That was his position as the second co-equal, co-eternal person of the adorable and eternal Trinity.

He was infinite, he was eternal, he was unchangeable in his being. Wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. None was any higher or greater than he in the eternity from which he came to be born of a woman.

He so loved that he came to be born of human flesh. Here is humility indeed. Here is a step of lowliness which baffles all imagination.

O wonder of wonders, astonished I gaze to see in the manger the ancient of days. The angels proclaiming the stranger forlorn and telling the shepherds that Jesus is born. Secondly, our Lord paid the price to become flesh and to dwell amongst us.

As Christians we sing at this time that great hymn, Through true God of true God, light of life eternal, The womb of a virgin he hath not abhorred, Son of the power, begotten not created, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord. Amen. We bless thee, born for our salvation.

O Jesus, forever be thy name adored. Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

From the highest throne of eternal deity, To the lowest pit of the hell of our sins, Christ came. Why? Because he loved us. The word of God declares that he was tempted in all points, Like as we are, yet without sin.

But from the highest throne, thirdly, of deity, He came to the lowest pit of hell. That was the price he had to pay. Christ came because he loved his people.

Having loved them, he loved them unto the end. His was no broken love. It was love that was impeccable, infallible and immutable.

The Bible records, and records as well, That he was pure, that he was harmless, That he was stainless, that he was sinless. How low he stooped! Down, down, down, from the heights of eternal glory, To the darkness of our sinful estate. He came down to the same level that we had fallen to.

For if he did not come down to that level, He could not have reached us, and he could not have saved us. Down from the splendor in glory he came, Into a world of woe, Took on himself all my guilt and my shame. Why should he love me so? Fourthly, from the highest life to the lowest death, Christ traveled in the price paid, To love you and me unto death itself.

He was despised and rejected of men because he loved you. He was a man of sorrows because he loved you. He bore our griefs because he loved you.

He was wounded for our transgressions because he loved you. He was bruised for our iniquities because he loved you. He had laid on him the iniquity of us all because he loved you.

He was taken from prison unto judgment because he loved you. He made his grave with the wicked because he loved you. He was bruised of the Father because he loved you.

He poured out his soul unto death because he loved you. He was numbered with the transgressors because he loved you. He bared the sin of many because he loved you.

He made intercession for the transgressors because he loved you. When I by faith my Savior see, I think of what he has done for me. It strikes my soul with sweet surprise and fills with tears my wondering eyes.

His blood was shed to set me free from everlasting misery. On all his beauties while I gaze and see them in his sufferings blaze, my heart like wax before the fire melts into love and strong desire. His blood was shed to set me free from everlasting.

Was it for me those hands were torn? For me he suffered shame and scorn? Was it my name which written there drew to his heart the bloody spear? His blood was shed to set me free from everlasting misery. Did Jesus find me in his veins? And did my sins awake those pains which like a fire through all his freedom raged in one devouring flame? His blood was shed to set me free. Yes, Jesus did resign his sin and suffered all the pangs of death that we might see his Father's face and taste the sweet of pardoning grace.

His blood was shed to set me free from everlasting misery. Greater love hath no man than this that lays down his life not merely for his friends but for his enemies. All things surrounding Christ's coming into the world were generated by his love.

Thomas Watson the Puritan said, Love is like the wings to the bird, like seals to the ship. It carries the Christian full seal for heaven. When love cools, when obedience slacks and drives heavily because it wants the oil on its wheel, then love feels to win the day and drops in despair.

But the love of Christ never drops. All the way to Calvary he went for me. All the way to Calvary he went for me.

He died to set me free. The love of God residing in the believer's heart is the cure for every plague and the strength of victory for all temptation. In all your getting, child of God, get love.

Much love, more and more and more love. Get to know Christ's love in a fuller, a better, and a deepening way each day. Learn to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge and all understanding.

I was struck again this week by the word of the great Apostle in the fourth chapter of the Ephesian epistle. And there the Lord, Paul the Apostle speaks. And he says, But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

Child of God, washed in the Redeemer's blood, are you growing up into the head, even Christ? Is that love deeper today? Is it sweeter today? Is it nearer to you today than ever it was? But running in an entirely different direction, at Christ's birth was a gigantic wave of satanic and human hatred against the blessed Savior. That hatred can be traced from its first manifestation after the fall of our first parents in the Garden of Eden. And God the Son visited the Garden, for we read of Him that He walked in the Garden of the day.

And if you read the third chapter of Genesis, who was it that walked in the Garden? After the heat of the day, after our fallen first parents, it was the voice of the Lord God. The voice. Who is the voice of the Lord God? The voice of the Lord God is Christ.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, the same as in the beginning. The Word of God. God the Son in paradise lost to our first parents spoke to them of a great battle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the man.

And told of a day when that battle would reach its finish and the head of Satan would be broken, but the heel of Christ would be wounded. The battle of the two seeds is recorded through the whole of the Old Testament. We see it in Cain and in Abel.

We see it in Ishmael and Isaac. We see it in Esau and Jacob. We see it in Joseph and his brothers.

At the time of Christ's birth, it was immediately seen in Herod's plan to kill the infant Jesus. There came to Jerusalem a delegation of wise men from the east. They said, we have seen the star of the King of the Jews.

And we have come to worship the King. And we have come to present Him. And King Herod the Great, as he was called, because he was great in his bitterness and hatred and in his iron rule over the Jewish people, Herod the Great was angry.

And he ordered the wise men to go and seek diligently for the young child. And then bring him word again that he too might go, he said, and worship the King. Herod, of course, was lying.

He planned to kill the King. The gospel narrative is plain. The wise men continued their quest for the King.

And the star continued to guide their footsteps. And it led them and came and stood over the place where the young child was. And in the second chapter of Matthew, you can read the story of the coming of the wise men.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem. And these wise men said, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the King had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet. And thy Bethlehem and the land of Judah are not the least among the princes of Judah.

For out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child.

And when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him. And when they had heard the King, they departed. And, oh, the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold and frankincense, and being warned of God in a dream, that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country.

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there till I bring thee word. For Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise man, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise man.

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And Rama, there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they We hear the trampling of the feet of Herod's murder monsters to Bethlehem. We see the mothers of Bethlehem seeking to guard their little ones from the wrath of Herod. We hear the cries of anguish.

We see the running of the blood of the beings. And we learn something, the hatred of man for the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a reference given here concerning Jeremy the prophet.

This act of savagery and devilry and murder was prophesied of. And if you read the story of Bethlehem, you will also read of the fact that the history of the slaughter was recorded early in the pages of the history of Bethlehem. At Bethlehem, Jacob's wife had a child, a second child called Benjamin.

But as he came to life, his mother died. And it said of her in Genesis that she had great and terrible anguish. In the 35th chapter of Genesis, this child was a child of sorrow, a child of lamentation.

Turn over in the book of Genesis, and in Genesis chapter 42, there is another lamentation. Benjamin is the young man under scrutiny. The searchlight is upon him.

The household of Jacob is perishing for want of bread in the terrible famine that has overtaken the countries of the Far East. The only place there was bread was in Egypt. And they couldn't go back to Egypt because the governor of Egypt whom they didn't know was Joseph, the brother of Benjamin.

He said, if you don't return with your young brother, I will deal with you. You'll get no bread. And so Jacob here is caught up in lamentation.

His mother died weeping when she gave birth to Benjamin. And now the father cries out, Joseph is not. Benjamin is not.

And now Benjamin and the old man Jacob chokes as they cry. Those two incidents were a shadow of what was going to come. The evil of Herod.

When you're reading the New Testament, you will find a number of Herods. Here we have Herod the Great. A reprobate, a murderer, a dictator, and a killer of his people.

We read about another Herod who killed the great emissary who declared the coming of Christ, John the Baptist. He too was a murderer. He was a son of Herod.

And we also read of another son of Herod the Great. And he died eaten of worms in judgment for his hatred of the church and the killing of the apostles. It was a murderous family with a terrible record.

But you know, as you turn over to that portion of scripture, over in the book of Jeremiah, you will find that there is hope, blessed hope, in this sad and terrible record. And we read in Jeremiah concerning this bloodletting that was going to take place. And was going to take place in this very city of Bethlehem.

And in the 31st chapter of Jeremiah, we read about this. And we read about the voice of weeping. Jeremiah 31 and verse 15 Thus saith the Lord, a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping.

Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and they shall come again from the land of the angels. Here we have a note of blessing, of joy, of pardon, and of resurrection amidst the sorrow.

There is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border. God, out of darkness, was to bring a great resurrection. And out of the darkness of the threat and the massacre of the innocents in Bethlehem, God preserved His Son for another death.

A death that He Himself willingly made for your salvation. Was it for crimes that He had done? He was nailed to the tree. No.

It was for crimes and sins that you had done. And stretched naked on the old tree of Calvary, the Lord gave His life. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.

This commandment have I received of my Father. Go this night and climb that hillside of Golgotha outside the city wall. Lift up your eyes and behold the child of Bethlehem.

Marked for death by the devil and the monster Herod. But he escaped to live a life of perfect righteousness for you. To produce a garment that will cover all your unrighteousness.

The garment of His own precious righteousness. And to hang upon a tree and shed His own precious blood. Having power to lay it down and power to take it again.

In order to accomplish. And His final word before He gave up the ghost. Was the word, finish.

For the work was done. And the hatred of hell was overthrown. And the love of God flows in a tremendous river of life and salvation.

To all who will partake of it. He that cometh, Christ. Are you part of His kingdom? Or are you part of the kingdom of the murderers? That's the question.

What kingdom are you in? What king do you give your allegiance to? What path are you walking? I trust tonight that your eternity will be with Christ. Who loved you and gave Himself. Let's bow our heads.

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for Thy word. Thy word is truth. Write it upon all our hearts.

And may the words of our lips. And the meditation of our heart. Be acceptable in Thy sight, O God.

Our strength and our redeemer. And the people of God said, Amen.

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