

The Love of God - the Greatest Power in the Universe

by Peter Brandon

The sermon explores the profound nature of God's love as the greatest power in the universe, emphasizing its unconditional and transformative qualities.

Duration: 47:20

Scripture: Romans 5:1

Topics: "God's Love", "Transformation through Christ"

Description

Peter Brandon emphasizes the unparalleled power of God's love, which is the greatest force in the universe. He explains that despite humanity's weaknesses and sins, God loves us unconditionally, demonstrated through Christ's sacrificial death for the ungodly. Brandon illustrates how God's love is not only a comforting presence but also a transformative power that can change lives, as seen in the lives of those who accept it. He encourages the congregation to open their hearts to this love, which is poured into us by the Holy Spirit, enabling us to reflect Christ's love in our lives.

Transcript

The subject tonight is a verse 1 and we're going to look at the subject of the love of God, the greatest power in the universe. Now shall we turn to Romans 5 and we shall read from verse 1. Those who are not too familiar with this great letter, the apostle has explained in the third chapter how a person can be justified, that means made right with God. Having explained that in the fifth chapter he now speaks to those who have been justified and this is what he writes.

Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only so but we glory in tribulations also. Knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope and hope make it not a shame because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodless. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

Much more than being now justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life. And not only so but we also joy or boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement or as it should be rendered the reconciliation.

Now God will bless to us the reading of his word. Now before we open the scripture shall we ask the Lord to open our heart shall we have just a little word of prayer. Father we pray that in a very special way tonight as the scriptures are opened the Lord will come and open our hearts so that we might understand the truth of God in a new way.

We would ask the Lord to make us honest with ourselves before God, enlighten our minds concerning the reason why the Lord Jesus actually died. And we pray that this may be a kind of a meeting where we shall really meet with God in a special way that our lives may be completely changed by his love. Lord grant this to us in the name of the Lord Jesus amen.

Just about two years ago I was shown over a very powerful nuclear station in Britain. The man that was showing me over this nuclear power station was a Christian and he was the superintendent. Then he said something that made me terrified.

He said would you like to stand on a reactor? So I said no I wouldn't. He said it will be perfectly safe. In fact he said you will be more safe on that reactor than you would be if you were in the sea on a sunny day.

With that encouragement I put on some clothes and some special shoes went right into the power station and then I stood on this reactor. Now first of all I must be quite frank with my congregation a tinge of fear went through the whole of my body. There were seven uranium rods and those small uranium rods would be equivalent to ten thousand tons of gold.

So you can imagine there was some power there. Eventually I got off the reactor and I was pleased to get off and then I changed my clothing and then washed and then I was x-rayed and computerized and I could see that there was hardly any radiation at all in my body and I was very pleased to get out. But quite frankly when I stood upon that reactor two things entered my mind.

First of all that power can be frightening and then power can be constructive. For instance with nuclear power man has invented various bombs that can almost destroy the world in which we live. There are at least four nations in the world by just pressing a button could destroy civilizations in 48 hours and yet it could be a possibility within 20 years that petrol would be excluded from cars and all of us could have a little bit of radium in a capsule and we could put it in our car and that would keep us running for a year.

So you can see man's power is constructive and it's destructive. But God's power is always constructive and the greatest demonstration of God's power is seen in his love. In fact John actually says something that always baffles us.

He says fear has tormented us. That perfect love casts out all fear. We live in an imperfect world.

My speech and communication is very imperfect. Your reception of my speech too is imperfect. The clothes that we wear imperfect.

The hall in which we are now sitting imperfect. The environment in which we have lived imperfect. Everything that we see and touch is marked by imperfection.

And yet in an imperfect world we have the privilege tonight of speaking of perfect love. Not just love but perfect love. Now what is it? In Romans 5 we have a beautiful outline of perfect love.

And first of all he gives us the men whom God loves. Meaning the mankind. Secondly he shows to us the manner in which God loves us.

And then lastly he concludes by talking about the masterly miracle of God's love. And that really is masterly. Now first of all the men in whom God loves.

Now there is an old saying and we laugh at it but it's true. And it says this. Love is blind but marriage is an eye-opener.

Have you heard of that? Now what does that basically mean? When two people fall in love they do not know each other completely. So that when the marriage takes place they learn certain things about each other that's new. In some cases it causes a break in marriage.

In other cases people laugh at their faults and failings and get on with one another very nicely indeed. But you see love basically is blind but when two people are married then we get our eyes open to the realities of living together. Now that's a fact.

Now God's love is not like that. Before he loves us he knows us precisely. And that is why in this scripture he gives us an outline of the human race.

First of all he tells us that we were ungodly. Now just listen to the scripture and then with the help of God I'll try and explain it to you. When we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

The word ungodly is associated with the word without strength. Now what does that mean? A young man just two years ago was swimming the channel. That little bit of water between the English coast and the French coast.

It is a span of 21 miles. And he was only 14 years of age and he was breaking all records. He got within three miles of the French coast and then he said to the man in the cutter that was giving him some lessons pull me in.

The man couldn't believe it. He said pull me in. And when he pulled him in the boy collapsed.

And he just said this I'm finished. I can't make it. Now that's the meaning of the word ungodly.

Now how is it that the ordinary man in fact the man that's human is weak. Number one there has never lived one man that's kept up to his own ideals. Not one.

We all make new year's resolutions. We all turn over a new leaf only to blacken it don't we. Now we don't want to do it but we do it.

Why? Because there's weakness within us. Secondly I hear people saying something like this. I'm going to give up smoking.

I'm going to give up drinking. I'm going to give up swearing. I'm going to give up losing my temper.

Now these are very good ideals but can they do it? Of course not because we are weak. This will surprise you. The other day I was reading the confessions of 40 British Prime Ministers and they all died with a

sense of failure and disappointment.

Now why? They made promises and they wanted to keep those promises but they weren't strong enough to fulfil them. Even Mr Hawke said by the year 1990 there would not be one poorly child in Australia. Now that's a great ideal but will he be able to keep it? Now you all know better than what the preacher does.

Secondly God has given to us a very simple moral examination. He's given to us 10 commandments, only 10. Did you know how many commandments you have in the Australian highways? 350.

I was rather surprised. And in your airways according to your paper you have 1,005 commandments. In our seaways we have 4,010 and quite frankly it needs solicitors in order to understand these laws.

But when God wanted to govern the whole conduct of the world he gave to us 10 commandments. And there has never lived one person apart from our Lord that's kept those commandments. Not one.

The greatest moralist that ever lived was a man by the name of Paul of Tarsus. The only person that ever could really say touching the law blameless but when he became a Christian and he saw the finer points of the law this is what he said. The good that I would I do not.

The evil that I would not that I do. I find in the law that when I would do good evil is present with me. And then he blurted out oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me.

But this is the miracle. God knows all about our weaknesses and how weak we are. But he still loves us.

Still loves us. Isn't that just wonderful. Secondly there's a word here that many people get offended with because we preachers do not explain it.

You see we use a lingo sometimes that people just do not understand. And quite frankly we must seem sometimes like people that come from Mars. Because we speak a language that they cannot really understand.

And we use this sinner. Now what do we mean? Now we just do not mean the drunkard in the gutter or the harlot on the street or the poor lad that's full up with drunks. These people of course are sinners but it's much more than that.

The word sinner is always associated with our birth. Now let me explain. A leopard when it's a cub is the most beautiful beast in creation.

But that leopard is born to kill and it will kill. There are certain snakes that have outstanding markings the moment they crawl out of the eggs. But if they are poisonous they are born to sting and they will sting.

I'm listening to a canary every day. And would you believe it today I had to laugh. I started to whistle at it.

And it looked at me in total disgust. It thought I was one of those cockney sparrows you see. But that little canary was born to sing and it will sing.

It will never stop it singing. Now when a baby's born and I've just had a little baby born into our family. A darling little girl called Anna.

Just born last Saturday to my son. That's our fifth grandchild. That little baby is born with the potential to sin and it will sin.

Irrespective how cultured the mother might be and how disciplined her training might be. That mother Pauline will never stop that little girl from sinning. Now why? Because it's born with sin and it's a sinner by nature.

In fact the word sinner here has to do with strength. Now here's the contradiction if you like. The word ungodly is always linked with weakness.

The word sinner is always linked with strength. Now how can we be strong and weak at the same time? Well let me explain. We are weak to do that which is good and strong to do that which is evil.

I said to one of my grandchildren the other day and she's a beautiful little curly headed girl. I said come here Miriam Joy. And she straightened herself up clenched her little fist and said Where did she get that from? You see it's the strength of rebellion that's in it.

And dear friends all of us have got this rebellious nature. Don't throw stones always at the young people. We've all got it.

The most respectable. We've got this rebellious nature called sin in us. And therefore God calls us all sinners.

But this is the miracle. He knows all about the strength of our rebellious nature. But he still loves us.

Still loves us isn't it wonderful. Now he doesn't love our weakness and he doesn't love our rebellion but he loves us in it. Now if you come with me to verse 10 you will notice that another term is used.

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God. Now the word enemies is full of interest. Now first of all on the side of God there isn't a tinge of bitterness.

When we use the word the wrath of God dear friends we must use that very carefully. It doesn't mean to say that God boils over with a bad temper. You see there are two kinds of wrath.

There's a wrath of a mother who loses control when she's going to punish her child. And lots of people associate the wrath of God with a God that's very angry and boiling over with temper. Now my dear friend that's not the idea of the wrath of God.

When you go to the law court especially if a man has been guilty of murder when the case has been set and when everything is finalized the judge comes forward and you see the wrath of the judge. Now he doesn't lose his temper, doesn't raise his voice, doesn't shout and bawl. Coolly, calmly he exacts upon the guilty person the heaviest penalty of the law.

Now in that way we have the wrath of God. It's his calculating judgment upon sin. Now my dear friends I want you to look at this.

The idea of the enemy is never associated with God but always associated with man. Now I want to do something that is not theological but in one way it's helpful. I want you to imagine if you can a brilliant man who has almost created a human being and he brings this human being into his house and he heaps upon him every blessing that he can so that that person that he has created is just like one of his children.

Brings them into his will and everything. But after about six months he finds that that creature is violating his property, crossing all his laws, hurting his children, vandalizing the home and his patience is almost

exhausted after 18 months. And he and his wife discuss the matter together and they say look it's an enemy, it's dangerous, it's going to really hurt the children.

In fact shortly we'll have a fatality on our hands. What are we going to do? He leaves the being for another six months and then they have a discussion and they say this we'll have to put him down. He's too dangerous and that's right.

God has been putting up with the rebellion of the human race for 6,000 years and look what they have done to the world. We have now the ozone layer being pinned. We have now the sea being polluted.

We have now our rivers being spoiled. We have now large acres that are turning to a dustbin and it's all selfishness. Man has crossed the laws of God, violated all his property, waved his fist at the throne of God, just doesn't want him.

But this is the miracle. God still loves him, still loves him. Doesn't that a kind of break him? It does me.

Every time dear friends I think of my own weakness, I think of my own rebellion, I think of the times I've hurt God by my sin. I'm amazed that he still loves me and he still loves you. He knows the very worst about you but has the capacity to really love you.

Now that's the first aspect of perfect love. Now secondly we must go deeper. Follow me because this is really beautiful.

First of all as you look at this narrative you will notice the manner in which he loves and you will see an intervention in God's love and it's seen in two brilliant words but God, but God. You get the same idea in Ephesians 2 when Paul says you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world according to the prince and the power of the air the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience by whom we all had our conversation in the lusts of the flesh fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature the children of wrath even as others but God who is richly merciful for his great love wherewith he has loved us. It's very interesting to go through biblical history.

Immediately sin came into the lives of our first parents, God intervened in judgment and righted them. The world was in a chaotic state in that period called the antediluvian period. Now may I say this dear friends, if any of you have intellectual difficulties with the history of the bible that can be eradicated.

The flood is now a proven fact. You would be a very foolish person today to try even to disprove now the evidence of the flood. We have dug up the Samarium period, we have now discovered the antediluvian period and the world that then was, was overflowed with water and terror.

And the ark is no longer a fairy story but a fact. But it was a time when God intervened and flooded the world in judgment. Again the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah became homosexuals.

And when people become homosexual whether it's in the old or the new testament they become diseased. This is not new, this is a fact. And when people become diseased then God has to intervene.

You see the wrath of God sometimes is future, sometimes it's present. And those two cities were destroyed by fire. And archaeology has proved that those two cities were destroyed by fire.

But he intervened in judgment. I have no doubt at all that when we were evacuating our troops from France, God intervened and for the first time in the history of the journal it became a meal time. And that's why they could get one complete army back to Britain.

God intervened. But this is not God intervening in judgment, it's God intervening in love. And we are living in a period, it started at the coming of Christ and probably it will end at the turn of this century, when God has been dealing with the nations in grace and love.

And it's a wonderful period. I'm so glad to be alive at the end of this period of grace and love when he is dealing with men and women not according to their sins but in accordance with mercy and grace. So it's about God.

Secondly not only look at the intervention of God's love, look at the illustration of God's love. Now it's beautiful again. First of all we must understand the background otherwise we shall misunderstand it.

In the Roman times a person could do what they called a vicarious sentence. For instance if there was an unkind judge, and there were many, and a man was righteous and you all knew he was righteous, someone could step forward in Roman times and die for him. You can't do it in British law, you can't do it in Australian law, but in some states of America you can do a vicarious sentence.

Now Paul has that in mind and he sees a righteous man coming into court and an unrighteous judge condemns him and he throws out the challenge. Who will die for a righteous man? He says a very few. Secondly he sees coming into the law court a good man and when we see him we hold our breath and we say how could they possibly judge a man like this? And the man condemns him and Paul says how many would die for a good man? He says just a few.

And then they bring into the court someone that we would call a rascal and as we look at him we can see he's lined with bitterness, he's got a sadistic face, he's got a malicious tendency, he's a dangerous man and as we look at him we can see number one he's weak to do that which is good, he's strong to do that which is evil, he's an enemy to society, he's condemned and right this time. Now says Paul who will die for him? And we all get a shock, a door opens in heaven and heaven says I will and it's the Lord Jesus that volunteers to die for that person just like us. But then I want you to note now the manifestation of love.

Now notice what it says but God commends his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Now during the war I was in bomb disposal work in the navy and we went to a particular job where a rocket had fallen and about two streets were demolished and in one vast house that had collapsed they said there was a mother and three children and we were digging fanatically and then we came to an indoor air raid shelter and we looked under that there was no one there and we were sad because we thought the woman and her children could all be alive. Then just about a yard from the air raid shelter we found a body it broke our hearts when we found sailors just wet and carefully we lifted this body it was the mother and underneath were three little children unconscious but alive.

That love that she gave her body to those three children because she loved them. God did something better than that the Lord Jesus went to a cross of wood and he allowed wicked men to plait a crown of thorns I wish I had one here and to plunge it mockingly on his head. He allowed them to buffet him to such an extent that his face was marred more than any man beyond recognition and then he allowed men to take a scourge and I wish I had a scourge and he allowed them to use that scourge upon him 39 times so that his back was like a ploughed field and then after he had allowed all this indignity and vulgarity he

actually allowed them to smash nails into his hands and face and when they had done their ugliest worst he turned to the men that had crushed the crown of thorns upon his head those soldiers that have secreted their spittle into the wounds that their hands have made the very men that pierced him he said father forgive them they know not what they do that was love but more love from the sixth to the ninth hour he passed into a state that that was on the cross.

Can I put it to you like this if you could see the smallest lie as God could see the smallest lie you would get such a shock you would say something like this oh no if you could see a lustful thought as God sees it you would have such a shock you would never get over it.

Jesus saw it all if you could see God's judgment his righteous judgment upon the smallest sin your mind would bend you couldn't comprehend it it means eternal separation from God the Lord Jesus loved us so much that he was prepared to pass into a state before God where all the judgment for sin could fall upon him and so realistically was he made sin he cried the language of a soul in hell my God my God was about to say to me and dear friends that's a measure of God's love for you would you mind if I raise my voice there's not a tinge of hypocrisy in the love of God it's more real than the universe it's strong it's deep it's wholesome it's warm it's living it's vital the mighty love of God and God's love conquered when he had completed dealing with our sins so that God's wrath was

exhausted in him he said with a loud voice finished didn't mean that he was finished he completed the work and then he died and that's the measure of God's love would you mind dear friends if I point it he loved you so much that he hung upon the cross for you for you for you for you and for you so that you can actually say and this is not exaggeration he loved me and gave himself for me now if I stop there wouldn't that be a wonderful message but that wouldn't be perfect love someone might be sitting here and you're thinking seriously and you would say something like this but look Peter I'm living in a body yes I know you are and I have problems with this body I've got weaknesses you're quite correct I've got weaknesses and I've got strong emotions that I know that are not right and I

have difficulty with myself yes you're correct we all have difficulty with ourselves what is he going to do for me in a body that's good questioning but more you will say this I live not in the 19th century world I live in the 20th century society where man is being computerized when we're living in the nuclear age and whether they like it or not we're living in it I'm living in a world that's being hemmed in by excessive population and by pollution I'm living in a world where as you say four nations could blow it to smithereens the problems there's difficulty I'm living in a world when they have broken down all the absolutes a marriage has been thrown to the wind it's the 20th century we're living in what will the love of God do for me in the 20th century friends he's got an answer the

love of God now note this it's breathtaking but it's true it's shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost now that speaks of effusion unfortunately you will never understand the beauty of this until you understand the Greek text it's the idea of a great waterfall it's not the idea of a stream it's not the idea of a waterfall it's the idea of a great waterfall when the river is in spate and the water's pouring over that's the meaning of the word I shall never forget the first time I saw the Niagara I was so spellbound you'll think I'm silly I just stared for 10 minutes just stared and I looked at myself I couldn't believe it I was as wet as the water I was soaked I got the spray and I was soaked right the way through there were some people who could afford more than what I could and they

had protecting clothing and they went in little boats and they got more spray than what I but they only got the spray then would you believe it and this is materialism there are some people who could afford a little more and they had protecting clothing and they went underneath the pool and they got more spray but they only got the spray to get the full force would have been suicidal would be to go right under it and let it pour on you you just couldn't stand it but the force of this word is this the mightily mighty culvery love the love that we have seen at the cross in all its glory and grandeur in all its magnificence not some of it or most of it but all of it is poured into our hearts by the holy ghost you see when you become a christian the holy spirit the third person of the trinity

comes into your life and he brings within your life the love of god and he puts that love within you now isn't that wonderful if it's true the love of god shed abroad in your heart by the holy ghost but how does he do it i hope you don't think i'm sentimental tonight but we all love our mum and i love my mother she was the one who taught me christ came to know the lord when she was 42 she was an amateur dancer in london and at the age of 42 the lord wonderfully saved her and she led her four boys to christ and you revere your mother when she does that and i shall never forget mother when she was dying she never went in with any of her children there were eight of us one died she had them all at home the only time she went into hospital she died and she had cancer and i remember seeing her

before she went in she was there in south end up the ladder pinning balloons all over the ceiling she loved christmas decorations and she was 81 and she was doing that the next time i saw her i knew it was the love and dear mother she just withered away and there i was watching my mother and i wanted to do something i wanted to give to her a little bit of the acceptance of my life i longed to do it but i couldn't do it but jesus can you see dear friends he's able to put himself in you in the power of the holy spirit and when those apostles were with the lord jesus they were listening to him for well over three years and after three years of ministry they all failed even peter let down the lord with a few nasty words of blasphemous but when he was absent and the holy spirit was present

they were revolutionized they were entirely different men now why because the love of god had been transported transplanted infused right into them and it was the powerful love of god in that revolutionized them beloved he can do it in your life in this building there is the holy spirit is here tonight just as electricity is rotating that fan and the fans are the best a wonderful power that we've harmed the holy spirit is in this building and he's waiting to come into your life and there are only two things stopping him from coming into your life one is your sin and that can be cleansed through the precious blood and the other is your will and there comes a moment in your experience when listening to a simple message like this you will say lord i want the love of god in my heart i long

for this i long to see that love in my heart revolutionizing transforming so that when people get near to me they can see something of christ in me and that's christian it's not just a negative thing of having a fire insurance and just having that thank god for that saved from judgment it's christ in your life beautifying magnifying the lord jesus and when you get near to a spirit filled christian this is the lovely thing you can see features of the lord jesus in us the love of god shed abroad in your heart by the holy ghost we've had a breakthrough with the punks in london you know the boys with those mohagan haircuts and i shall never forget being in the service when they all walked in four rows of them they had bobber boots tartan trousers tartan skirts studded leather jackets safety

pins through the nose and ears red white blue hair and the girls just looked like witches but the amazing thing was this instead of turning the service upside down they just listened three nights they came

admittedly when they heard us sing they found it very very difficult to control themselves because all they have is hard metal rock so we put up with that in fact we cut out the singing but they came and then it was a sunday night i shall never forget it and i went into the inquiry room there was a knock on the door and in came the bobber boots and two girls one lad just lifted up his arm and said can god do anything for me and he was pricked all over i shall never forget seeing that arm that lad was saved but we buried him at the age of 21 what a terrible waste of life that is a young

man by the name of simon knelt down and i can see him now crying to the lord to forgive him and save him i went back six months afterwards and said well what's the secret of the christian life as far as you're concerned simon do you know what he said god's taken away all the hate all the kills all the shudders of death and he's put love in there and i love people now i don't think it will be long before he will be in australia and it will be lovely to hear that voice speak you would never recognize him as a punk but the lord has saved him the love of god was shed abroad in his heart by the holy ghost wouldn't it be lovely if there was an open heart right now right now in the quietness of this building to receive the savior

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