

Escape From Babylon

The Series Part 20

THE HEART OF GOD

Zechariah 2:7-10 *“Come, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.”* (8) For Yahweh of Armies says: ‘For honor he has sent me to the nations which plundered you; **for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye.** (9) For, behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they will be a plunder to those who served them; and you will know that Yahweh of Armies has sent me. (10) Sing and rejoice, daughter of Zion; for, **behold, I come, and I will dwell within you,’ says Yahweh.”**

Christianity is a team sport; a corporation of believers. This is all centered around the love of God. He has not demanded love without setting forth the perfect example of love. We must understand this love of God to better be able to love each other. Then we will see that to love each other is to love God and Christ.

The Affection Of God

Let us understand the love and care of our God.

Isaiah 46:3-4 “Listen to me, house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, that have been carried from their birth, that have been carried from the womb. (4) Even to old age I am he, and even to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear. Yes, I will carry, and will deliver.”

Deuteronomy 1:30-31 “Yahweh your God who goes before you, he will fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes, (31) and in the wilderness, where you have seen how that Yahweh your God bore you, as a man does bear his son, in all the way that you went, until you came to this place.”

Deuteronomy 32:9-14 **“For Yahweh’s portion is his people. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.** (10) He found him in a desert land, in the waste howling wilderness. He surrounded him. He cared for him. He kept him as the apple of his eye. (11) As an eagle that stirs up her nest, that flutters over her young, he spread abroad his wings, he took them, he bore them on his feathers. (12) Yahweh alone led him. There was no foreign god with him. (13) He made him ride on the high places of the earth. He ate the increase of the field. He caused him to suck honey out of the rock, oil out of the flinty rock; (14) butter from the herd, and milk from the flock, with fat of lambs, rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the finest of the wheat. From the blood of the grape, you drank wine.”

Romans 5:8 “But God commends his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

The Affliction Of God & Christ

When His people hurt, He feels their pain, suffering with them. Nothing that happens to the children of God goes unnoticed. When we suffer, He suffers. When we are in pain, He is in pain.

Isaiah 63:8-9 “For he said, “Surely, they are my people, children who will not deal falsely;” so he became their Savior. (9) **In all their affliction he was afflicted**, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them. He bore them, and carried them all the days of old.”

Exodus 3:7 “Yahweh said, “**I have surely seen the affliction of my people** who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for **I know their sorrows.**”

The Same Goes For Jesus Our Lord.

Acts 9:1-5 “But Saul (PAUL), still breathing threats and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, (2) and asked for letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. (3) As he traveled, he got close to Damascus, and suddenly a light from the sky shone around him. (4) He fell on the earth, and heard a voice saying to him, “**Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?**” (5) He said, “Who are you, Lord?” The Lord said, “**I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.**”

John 15:1-7 “**I am the true vine**, and my Father is the farmer. (2) Every branch in me that doesn’t bear fruit, he takes away. Every branch that bears fruit, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. (3) You are already pruned clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. (4) **Remain in me, and I in you. As the branch can’t bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me.** (5) **I am the vine. You are the branches. He who remains in me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.** (6) If a man doesn’t remain in me, he is thrown out as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, throw them into the fire, and they are burned. (7) If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, you will ask whatever you desire, and it will be done for you.

Matthew 25:31-46 “But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. (32) Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the

left. (34) Then the King will tell those on his right hand, ‘Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; (35) for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in. (36) I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me.’ (37) **“Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you a drink? (38) When did we see you as a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you? (39) When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?’ (40) “The King will answer them, ‘Most certainly I tell you, because you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ (41) Then he will say also to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels; (42) for I was hungry, and you didn’t give me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink; (43) I was a stranger, and you didn’t take me in; naked, and you didn’t clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’ (44) “Then they will also answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and didn’t help you?’ (45) “Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Most certainly I tell you, because you didn’t do it to one of the least of these, you didn’t do it to me.’ (46) These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”**

We cannot neglect the needs- be it social, mental, physical, emotional, or any other need- of the Body of Christ. For every time we do, we are neglecting Christ Himself and God Almighty. For every pain neglected, every wrong looked over, and act of indifference, create suffering for God and Jesus.

John 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also love one another. (35) By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

THE PERSONHOOD

Let’s take a closer look at the Body of Christ.

The Head

(Ephesians 1:20)

which he worked in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places,

(Ephesians 1:21)

far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come.

(Ephesians 1:22)

He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things for the assembly,

(Ephesians 1:23)

which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

(Colossians 1:18)

He is the head of the body, the assembly, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

The Body

(1 Corinthians 12:12)

For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

(1 Corinthians 12:13)

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all given to drink into one Spirit.

(1 Corinthians 12:14)

For the body is not one member, but many.

(1 Corinthians 12:15)

If the foot would say, “Because I’m not the hand, I’m not part of the body,” it is not therefore not part of the body.

(1 Corinthians 12:16)

If the ear would say, “Because I’m not the eye, I’m not part of the body,” it’s not therefore not part of the body.

(1 Corinthians 12:17)

If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the smelling be?

(1 Corinthians 12:18)

But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body, just as he desired.

(1 Corinthians 12:19)

If they were all one member, where would the body be?

(1 Corinthians 12:20)

But now they are many members, but one body.

(1 Corinthians 12:21)

The eye can't tell the hand, "I have no need for you," or again the head to the feet, "I have no need for you."

(1 Corinthians 12:22)

No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

(1 Corinthians 12:23)

Those parts of the body which we think to be less honorable, on those we bestow more abundant honor; and our unpresentable parts have more abundant propriety;

(1 Corinthians 12:24)

whereas our presentable parts have no such need. But God composed the body together, giving more abundant honor to the inferior part,

(1 Corinthians 12:25)

that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

(1 Corinthians 12:26)

When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Or when one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

(1 Corinthians 12:27)

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

Now, remember when we read above that God's people are the apple of His eye, and we learned that we are the Body of Jesus, and Jesus is the head of the Body?

Q) So, what is God seeing, that is the Apple of His Eye?

A) Jesus, His own Son, and those found within Him!

Don't Despise

Matthew 18:10-14 “See that you don’t despise one of these little ones, for I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. (11) For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost. (12) “What do you think? If a man has one hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine, go to the mountains, and seek that which has gone astray? (13) If he finds it, most certainly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. (14) Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”

As we have learned, all those who believe and follow Jesus are a part of the Body of Jesus. That everything the body endures, Christ endures with us. We are His. So, how much should we care for each other? Much like the sheep analogy given by Jesus, how much rejoicing must there be when a part of His body that has been wounded or lost, is then made whole and healed. Jesus feels everything that happens to Himself and those who make up His body. We cannot allow suffering to occur within the body if it is within our power to heal it. To do so is to turn our back on Jesus.

James 4:17 “To him therefore who knows to do good, and doesn’t do it, to him it is sin.”

Q) How then should we care for Jesus?

A) By taking care of those who make up His Body!

Q) Can we say we love Jesus if we don’t love His body?

A) No!

1 John 4:20-21 “If a man says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who doesn’t love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? (21) This commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should also love his brother.”

You cannot love God and Jesus without loving those of His household. You must love your brothers and sisters to prove your love for God. God does not want your adoration, your praise, or anything else, if you cannot love those of the Body!

Let's look at Love

(1 Corinthians 13:1)

If I speak with the languages of men and of angels, but don't have love, I have become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.

(1 Corinthians 13:2)

If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, **but don't have love, I am nothing.**

(1 Corinthians 13:3)

If I give away all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but don't have love, it profits me nothing.

(1 Corinthians 13:4)

Love is patient and is kind; love doesn't envy. Love doesn't brag, is not proud,

(1 Corinthians 13:5)

doesn't behave itself inappropriately, doesn't seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil;

(1 Corinthians 13:6)

doesn't rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

(1 Corinthians 13:7)

bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

(1 Corinthians 13:8)

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will be done away with. Where there are various languages, they will cease. Where there is knowledge, it will be done away with.

Love Each Other

1 Thessalonians 4:9 "But concerning brotherly love, you have no need that one write to you. For you yourselves are taught by God to love one another,"

1 John 3:23-24 "This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he commanded. (24) He who keeps his commandments remains in him, and he in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit which he gave us."

1 John 4:7-12 “Beloved, let’s love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves has been born of God, and knows God. (8) He who doesn’t love doesn’t know God, for God is love. (9) By this God’s love was revealed in us, that God has sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. (10) In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. (11) Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another. (12) No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love has been perfected in us.”

Serve Each Other In Love

Matthew 20:26-28 “But don't act like them. If you want to be great, you must be the servant of all the others. (27) And if you want to be first, you must be the slave of the rest. (28) The Son of Man did not come to be a slave master, but a slave who will give his life to rescue many people.”

John 15:13 “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”

LET OUR CRY BE!

Colossians 1:24-29 “Now **I rejoice in my sufferings** for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for **his body’s sake, which is the assembly;** (25) of which I was made a servant, according to the stewardship of God which was given me toward you, to fulfill the word of God, (26) the mystery which has been hidden for ages and generations. But now it has been revealed to his saints, (27) to whom God was pleased to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; (28) whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; (29) for which I also labor, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily.”

Romans 12:1-2 “Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. (2) Don’t be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.”

“I have called on you, for you will answer me, God. Turn your ear to me. Hear my speech. Show your marvelous loving kindness, you who save those who take refuge by your right hand from their enemies.

Keep me as the apple of your eye.

Hide me under the shadow of your wings, from the wicked who oppress me, my deadly enemies, who surround me.”

Psalms 17:6-9