

Remnant Life Church
February 14, 2021
Amazing Love, How Can It Be?
Pt 1
Romans 5:5-11

Valentines day is anticipated by people in many different ways –

- For some it brings back memories of elementary school where everyone got the little candy hearts and cards with an unlegible name scrawled on the back
- For some it is the memory of a beautiful evening when someone very special surprised you with a wonderful romantic dinner
- For some it may be a painful reminder that, at least on this valentine's day, there is no one special in your life
- And for some it is the one time of year when their spouse makes an effort to show some affection

Since the earliest days when man began to live together in groups called families and clans, people have been looking for love

- But if I can borrow a line from the 1980 Johnny Lee country song they're 'looking for love in all the wrong places'
- How else can we explain the continued decline of marriage, the continued increase in divorce, and a culture that is embracing and promoting the perversion of the biblical definition of marriage
- In other words, its becoming 'Hey! Whatever you can find that works for you, just go for it!

So where do you go to find true, lasting love?

- Well, we know we can't go to society, they obviously don't have a clue
- We certainly can't go to Hollywood, their definition of love is so convoluted and perverse that when a man and woman stay married out there for more than 6 months they want to produce a documentary called, "How they made it work despite the odds"
- You can't go to authors or playwrights, many of them are just writing out of their pain of failed relationships
- You can't even go to religion with so much abuse and manipulation coming to the forefront of those who were once trusted unquestionably
- So, I'll ask again, where do you go?

Maybe its time we go to the source, the author, and the creator of love – God

- After all, it was God who placed within our very DNA the need for love
- Those who claim they have no interest in love are really saying that they don't want to fail at love again
- We all have interest in love – it is how we were created
- But the world has taken the beauty of God's love and twisted it into a shallow, empty, and temporary emotional spark attached to physical impulses
- We must go back to the source!

Right away, we must understand the differences in God's love and the world's definition

- God's love is eternal and everlasting
 - **Jer 31:3** - *I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.*
- The world's love is temporal and fleeting
- God's love is without attachments and unconditional
 - **Rom 5:8** - *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
- The world's love is not only conditional but it keeps score
- God's love pursues you
 - **Psalm 139:5-8** - *You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*
- The world's love wants you to beg and run after them
- In other words, God's love is inescapable
 - **Rom 8:38-39** - *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The thing about love is that it does operate in and of itself, alone – it nurtures and feeds other emotions in our lives

One of the most important of those is hope

- The hope we have in God, through Jesus Christ, is because of His unfailing, unwavering love
- A View From A Hearse - a book about the Christian view of death and dying written by Dr. Joseph Bailey, a clinical psychologist and Christian.
 - He writes about being in a hospital trying to console a single mother whose small boy had a terminal illness and was about to die. He speaks to her from the Christian perspective, and this is what he said to her, "Even though the medical outlook is hopeless, we can still have hope. We can know that when our child dies, he will be completely removed from sickness and suffering, and he will be completely well, and happy." That's what we believe as Christians.
 - But the mother was not a Christian and she said to Dr. Bailey, "If I could only believe that! But I don't believe it. When he dies, I'll just have to cover him up with some dirt, and then try to forget that I ever had him."
 - Doesn't that break your heart? Isn't that so sad to think there are people out there who don't have the hope we have as Christians?
 - How different her view was from King David's, who when his little child died, said, "He cannot return to me, but I can go to him."
 - As Christians, we have hope.

READ – Romans 5:5-11

The English Methodist pastor of the 1700's Charles Wesley wrote the words to over 6500 hymns and songs of worship

- Among those are the words to *Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing, Christ the Lord is Risen Today*, and *Hark, The Herald Angel Sing*
- Perhaps none is more loved, well-known, or widely sung than *And Can it Be*, published in 1738
- The chorus of the song speaks of what we know today,
 - *Amazing love, how can it be, that thou my God shouldst die for me?*

What is it that makes God's love so amazing?

1. God Loves You – Even Though You Are a Sinner

- a. **Rom 5:8** - *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
- b. Being a sinner is our natural condition but what does that make us without God's love?

i. Powerless

1. **Vs 6** says that "*when we were still powerless*"
2. That means we have no ability to change our condition
3. There are no self-help books available at B & N that are going to make any difference or help your sin condition
4. The sooner you humble yourself and not only accept but admit you are powerless to deal with your problems, the sooner you will allow God to fully enter your life
5. When you do, He gives you the ability, the power to make the changes

ii. Ungodly

1. The second part of the 6th verse says that we are ungodly
2. How does that apply to my life?
 - a. It means that when you consider all of the positive attributes of God
 - b. You and I are exactly the opposite
 - c. He is perfect, we are broken
 - d. He is forgiving, we find it very difficult if not impossible to forgive
 - e. He is compassionate
 - f. We hold grudges

iii. Enemies

1. **V 10** says that "*...when we were God's enemies*"
2. This does not mean God was at war with us
3. God's relationship with us is nothing like our relationships with each other or between nations that are enemies
4. It means that our relationship was severed with Him because of sin

- c. But even in that condition we will still want to make ourselves look good

- i. Another great old hymn of the church is *At The Cross*
- ii. Written by Isaac Watts
 1. A contemporary of Wesley
 2. But a little older being born in 1674 (Wesley in 1707)
 3. A line in one of the verses says, "...*should He devote His sacred head, to such a worm as I*"
 4. That line has undergone many changes
 - a. Some hymnals have changed that to read *to such a sinner as I*; and others *to such a person as I*
 - b. Concern that people did not want sing about their being a worm
 5. Bet Watts takes his line from the Psalms when David writes "...*but I am a worm, not a man*" compared to God's greatness (**Ps 22:6**)
- d. If we refuse to admit who we really are apart from God, we are doomed to live as the world does
 - i. You can be a Christian and still live apart from God
 - ii. Apart from his character, his attributes, his goodness

The first thing that makes God's love amazing is that He loves us even though we are sinners

- Please do not delude yourselves into thinking none of this applies to you
- **Isa 64:6** - *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.*
- *Amazing love, how can it be? That though, my God, wouldst die for me!*
- His love is amazing and it is for you!