

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on June 18, 2017**

**"The Love of Our Father –
John 3:16-21 (Mirror Bible)"**

[In today's sermon, "The Love of Our Father – John 3:16-21", Pastor Craig Kuhlman shows that the love and affection of our heavenly Father is for everyone since the beginning of time.]

Notes

Introduction – Honoring Fathers:

- Happy Father's Day!!
- Pastor Craig asked members to be thinking about their favorite memories of their fathers or specific circumstances that reflect their father's love so they could share them with the congregation.

Favorite memories, quotes, and short stories:

- 10 various members gave heartwarming memories about their fathers.

The love of our fathers:

- Whether your relationship with your human father was a positive one or could have been better, the fact is that we have an amazing Father in heaven who loves us more than we could ever know.
- The common theme to all of these stories was the time investment by their fathers.
- It's natural for fathers to think that they should give their children the physical things they didn't have when they were growing up.
- But the lesson demonstrated here was the time the fathers spent with their children whether it was intentional or unintentional which help develop lasting memories.

The love of God the Father:

- Beginning with John 3:16, we know these verses as a hallmark Gospel passage from John about the love of God.
- Other scriptures that appear to go contrary to these verses must be interpreted through the light of the Gospel and Jesus' words.
- We don't really know who the Father is unless it comes from the revelation of Jesus.
- John 3:16-21 focuses on what the love of God means and how the love of our human fathers can be redeemed by God in a way that we can recall it positively.

John 3:16 (Mirror Bible), The entire cosmos is the object of God's affection!

- Now that's an amazing phrase. This tells us that everything in creation – the entire cosmos – is the object of God's affection.
- In the movie, "The Shack" there is a theme that keeps going through the entire film.
- Papa says to Mac, "I'm really fond of you!" And "I'm fond of others."
- Mac then asks Papa, "Is there anyone you're not fond of?" The answer: "I haven't met one yet."
- So God's affection and love and fondness extends to each one of us, whether we feel we should deserve it or not.
- When we know what God thinks of us, then our thoughts about us change.
- And that leads us to live with no fear, no shame, no guilt and no doubt in our relationship with God.

And he is not about to abandon his creation – the gift of his son is for humanity to realize their origin in him who mirrors their authentic birth – begotten not of flesh but of the Father!

- So here we see not only does the Father loves us, but He acted on that by giving us His Son, who enables us to be reconciled, redeemed, forgiven of all of our sins past, present and future.
- And we have nothing to do with this incredible gift.

In this persuasion the life of the ages echoes within the individual and announces that the days of regret and sense of lost-ness are over!

- So when we see that, when we understand that, when we trust in that, when the Holy Spirit has opened our eyes, we know who we are by first knowing who God is.
- That means that any sense of loss or regret is now past.
- The context of this goes back to John 2:23, where Nicodemus approaches Jesus at night time, because he wants to come to Jesus under a veil of secrecy.
- Nicodemus saw that Jesus couldn't teach the things he was teaching without being God, but just couldn't step out in that faith at that time.
- Now, today we have that same dialogue face to face with God.

17) God has no intention to condemn anyone – he sent his son, not to be the Judge but the Savior of the world.

- The world is the entire cosmos.
- This means that not one of you here and not anyone outside this building can say. "We weren't included in that equation."
- God sent His Son to be Savior of all mankind and in that process of Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension brought humanity into union with the Father.
- And then we have to acknowledge and understand and put our trust in and have faith in that relationship.
- When we do this, it becomes our co-union with God.
- That's why this passage is known as the Gospel passage to evaluate all other scriptures through this lens.

- And what we're seeing here that the Father had this love on his heart for humanity since the beginning of time.
- And so when John talks about union and Jesus talks about union, we understand that in three ways:
 - There's first the perichoretic union – the Father, Son and Spirit together from the beginning of time have a face-to-face relationship in love and in mutual purpose, separate persons, yet one God in which the Father declared the first moment of salvation and said, "This is what we're going to do for humanity."
 - The second element of union is the hypostatic union, through the incarnation, God on earth becomes man or a human being for all time. He now exists in heaven as the God-man, divinity in humanity together for all time. This is our second moment of salvation.
 - The third element of salvation is the spiritual union with the Holy Spirit who encourages us to respond to what the Father and His Son have done for us, to respond in participation with them.
- From John's word here, we see that there is no reason at all that anyone should not come to an understanding of salvation and participate in that love relationship of Father, Son and Spirit, unless they choose not to.
- Now if you are feeling the Holy Spirit's direction of calling you into that relationship of God's love, please don't spurn that.
- To be in a loving relationship with God was His purpose since the beginning of time.

18) Faith and not flesh defines you! In the persuasion of your authentic sonship there is no separation or rejection!

- So, from God's standpoint, none of us are separated from Him or rejected from Him.
- Separation comes from us and our reasoning.
- We know that true love is NOT forced love.
- In His plan of salvation for us, God does everything for us and even leads us to making that right decision, yet it's still our choice.

For someone to prefer not to embrace this is to remain under their own judgment sustained by their futile efforts to define themselves through personal performance. In their stubborn unbelief they reject what is revealed and redeemed in the Name of the son, begotten only of the Father and not the flesh.

- So there's an element of not believing. There's an element of not participating with what God is doing for us.
- God says that it's not under His judgment that we fall – it's under our judgment.
- Yes, there is a judgment, but it doesn't come from Father, Son and Spirit, but rather it comes upon ourselves if we choose to spurn that love of God and not to enter into participation in that relationship.
- Salvation is not human performance based but rather it first comes out of belief and then participation and response.
- There is a response required which allows the Holy Spirit to remove the blindness from our eyes and help us embrace God's love for us since from the beginning of time.
- In their stubborn unbelief, people reject what is revealed to them.

- So, who rejects the relationship? – God, No, we do!

19) And this is the crisis: the light is here right now, yet people are so addicted to their own darkness that they prefer a life of labors, annoyances and hardships!

- We can allow these physical things to define who we are.
- But that's not what true grace is all about.
- True grace is simply accepting God's gracious gift to us.

20) When someone is engaged in something worthless, they often fear exposure and feel threatened by the light!

- See there can be a source of real fear, shame, guilt and doubt if we choose to not trust and have faith in God.
- But when we accept God's gracious offer of grace, then there is no basis for fear, shame, guilt and doubt in our relationship with Him, at all.

21) He who discovers the poetry of truth, faces the light unashamedly – his lifestyle boldly displays the workmanship of union with God! His works speak for themselves – “Made in heaven – wrought in God!”

- So, who would like that phrase stamped on the back of their T-shirt?
- You know what, we all have that shirt.
- But it's our choice whether we choose to put it on.
- It's our choice whether we choose to wear it in pride.
- It's our choice to provide those shirts to others.
- The love of our Father, Son and Spirit is given to us so graciously – it's ours for the asking, it's ours when we put our trust in Him.
- Happy Father's Day.

Closing Prayer