

**John 3: 35 and 36a; “The Father Loves the Son”, Sermon # 24 in the series –
“That all may Honor the Son”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on
March 2nd, 2014, in the Morning Worship Service.**

This morning, before we partake of the communion, I would like to bring you thoughts and observations from this text related to the Father’s love for the Son. The Father’s love for the Son is the basis of all of our salvation. I would like to speak to you 1st of all - About the on-going love of the Father for the Son. 2nd – The Father’s bestowal of all things into the Son’s hands. And 3rd – The Father’s assurance given to the faith of the person believing in Son.

1st of all – Let’s think together about the on-going love of the Father for the Son.

“The Father loves the Son”. It does not say, “The Father once loved His Son”, or that He loved Him once in eternity past, and then when He sent His Son into the world to be a sacrifice for sins and sinners that He stopped loving Him. No, the Father has always loved the Son and He has never stopped loving His Son, even when He was born into this fallen, sinful world in His Incarnation and was in many ways poor, despised and needy as a little boy, and as a young man. The Father loved Him when He was born in the stable at Bethlehem. The Father loved Him and watched over Him when Herod sought for His life. The Father especially loved Him even when people who should have loved Him did not welcome Him into this world. The Father’s love for His Son had ordained exactly how the Lord Jesus would glorify Him and fulfill His earthly ministry to accomplish our redemption. The Father so loved the Son that the salvation of all of His elect people would come to pass. He providentially so ordered the events of His Son’s earthly life that He would have good earthly parents to raise Him. They were certainly not perfect people, but they were people of faith in integrity. They knew the Lord. They lived by faith in the promises of God. And they no doubt had taught Him, as a little man, many good things of wisdom which they had learned themselves from the Holy Scriptures. But Jesus knew in His heart of hearts, even when He was a young man, that He must go beyond the teaching of men, to learn from God His Father Himself. He knew that God the Father Himself must teach Him, and He must perfectly live out all that He was taught in order to fulfill God’s holy law on our behalf. Dear Christian, remember this this morning; in every point that you have failed; at every point where you have sinned, Jesus knew that He must do the right thing in your place if you were ever to be saved. And He did.

You will remember that in Luke 2, verse 41 it says: “His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.” “And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.” “When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem.” “And Joseph and His mother did not know it: but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day’s journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances.” “So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.” “Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.” “And all who heard Him were astonished at His answers.” “So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You done this to us?” “Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.” “And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me?” “Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” “But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.” And then, this very revealing comment related by Luke: “Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.” “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” Jesus was subject to His parents, but at the same time He was increasing in wisdom in

relation to His obedience to God first and foremost of all. This is true perfection in a young person.

Now you can see here that Jesus' goal in all of His obedience was to first of all please His Father whom He loved with all of His heart. And the reason that our Lord Jesus pursued this righteous goal was because He was sent by a loving Father into this fallen world. He was born of the virgin Mary and God was His Father, and as such He was without sin. It is not as though Jesus did not love and honor His parents, but here in this instance, He needed to demonstrate to them that there was a higher priority of obedience which He must pursue in order to be wise and holy. He had to be about His Father's business. He always did those things that pleased His Father. In order to keep the law of God perfectly, He full well knew that He had to honor His earthly father and mother. When it came to increasing in wisdom and in favor with God, as this opportunity presented itself to Him, when he came to the temple in Jerusalem, He was so caught up with listening to the teachers there and asking them questions that He did not go back to His parents at the time that they were leaving the city. They left and actually went a day's journey away before they realized that He was not with them. Then they returned, anxiously seeking Him, and they wanted to know why He had done this. Was it that he was being selfish and thoughtless? No, not at all. It was just the opposite. He knew that He had to be about His Father's business, and in His Father's house. And the Father loved Him for this; the Father knew all the reasonings of His holy heart, and He wanted the Lord Jesus to learn and grow in wisdom in this way. As John Gill says on this place, "He seems to tax His parents with ignorance, or at least forgetfulness, of His having a Father in heaven, whose business He came to do on earth; and which they should have thought in their own minds He was now about, and so have made themselves easy." (End of quote) He could not place that obedience to them before His obedience to his heavenly Father. Let us all as Christians remember this; that there is a God in heaven whose business we should be about, if we would be like Jesus; more conformed to His blessed image. And what is His business? His business is being holy and doing good and growing in the knowledge of what will promote those things. Are you seeking merely your own interests, or are you seeking the things which are of Christ Jesus? If you have been changed by the grace of Christ you should be pursuing proven character, by faith in Christ. If Jesus needed to grow in wisdom, do you see that you will need to grow in wisdom, as a young person, in many ways? And even those of us who are older as Christians need to grow in wisdom in many ways. Wisdom and grace and knowledge are needed at all ages. Are you a good learner of the Father, through Jesus Christ your Lord?

Now turn with me over to Isaiah 50, verse 4. "The Lord God has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary." "He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to hear as the learned." (or "to listen as a disciple", it says in the NAS). "The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away." "I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting." Here we have verses which prophetically reveal the thoughts of Christ's heart in relation to His learning obedience by His being taught by His Father who loved Him. God the Father so loved the Lord Jesus that He led Him by means of the Spirit's working powerfully in His heart and mind; He who was given the Spirit without measure. The Father taught the Lord Jesus the way of humbling Himself to do the Father's will, so that He would become obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. He didn't turn away from those who reproached Him; those who tried to say that He was doing something wrong when He was not. They plucked his beard out of his cheeks; they struck His face, and they scourged Him, but it says here that He "gave them" these opportunities. He did not protest, He didn't hide His face from shame and spitting. Dear Christian, see the Lord of glory, that He suffered this for you. But let us understand this as well; He did this even more so

for His Father, to satisfy His justice, and because He knew that His Father loved Him, even though He had ordained these sufferings from the foundation of the world.

God has indeed loved His Son from all eternity, from before the foundation of the world and from eternity past, but when He sent His Son into the world He did so out of love. He sent Him into the world because He had a love to save a peculiar people for His name. He sent Him because He would not have all men perish in their sins. He sent Him because He pitied us in our lost estate. But He sent His Son into the world, most of all, because He loved Him. He knew that our Lord Jesus would perfectly represent Himself; His glory, His Person, His righteousness, His hatred of sin, His compassion and His love for lost and fallen sinners. Therefore, He sent Him because He loved Him and He gave Him the Spirit without measure because He loved Him. And this love is an ongoing love. He always has loved Him, and He loves Him because He loves His own glory as His highest end in creating man. It is indeed true that God the Father was intending to make His Son an offering for sin. It is true that He was intending to pour out all of His wrath there upon Him at the cross, and actually see His Son as sin personified during that awful time when He punished Him there for our sins. But even during that time when He was pouring out His wrath and anger upon His own Son, He still loved Him. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him, He has put Him to grief." "When You make His soul an offering for sin" (Isaiah 53: 10); yet He punished Him out of love, knowing that He was a sinless and righteous sacrifice. This is what we will remember in a few moments in partaking of the Lord's Supper. We will remember the love of the Father for the Son, and the love of the Father and the Son for every believer.

2nd – Let's think together about the Father's bestowal of all things into the Son's hands.

"The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand." What does it mean when it says here that the Father has given all things into His hand? What are the "all things" which the Father has given to Him. Well, I think that we can answer that if we turn over to John Chapter 13, verse 1. "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." "And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself." "After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded." The "all things" which is mentioned here in verse 3 means that the Father had given the Lord Jesus all things necessary to accomplish the mission for which He was sent for; His work of redeeming a people for God's own possession. The redeeming love of the Father would purchase the benefits of our salvation through the humiliation and sufferings of the Son of His love. The Father had given the Lord Jesus everything related to this; the accomplishing of our redemption. He had "given into Christ's hands" everything; His own electing purpose of love and grace in election; Christ having loved His own, that is those who were chosen by the Father before the foundation of the world, He (that is the Son of His love) loved them to the end. To the end of what? The end of their being saved from all of their sins, changed to become holy, and inherit everlasting glory by their being brought into the kingdom of God in this life, and entering the eternal kingdom upon their physical death. All things which would be necessary to bring them to that eternal glory; that is what the Father has delivered into Christ's hand.

Are you not thankful, dear Christian, that this is so? The love of God towards you is eternally great and strong, for He is faithful and true in His love. The Father loves the Son, and therefore He has given all things into His hand; that is both you, in His choice of you, and everything that will be required to save you and changed you and transform you into the image

of His dear Son, He will accomplish in love. Listen to Matthew Henry – “Those whom Christ loves He loves to the end; he is constant in His love to His people; He rests in His love.” “He loves with everlasting love, from everlasting in the counsels of it to everlasting in the consequences of it.” “Nothing can separate a believer from the love of Christ; He loves His own, *εις τελος* – unto perfection, for He will perfect what concerns them, will bring them to that world where love is perfect.” You will notice that Christ manifested this steadfast love of the Father to all of His elect children by washing the disciple’s feet. The reason that our great Savior could do this, could serve His disciples on the very eve of His crucifixion, was because He knew in a special way Himself the love of the Father for Him.

Turn with me over to John Chapter 17 and we will see more verses that relate to the Father’s giving all things into Christ’s hand. Verse 1 says; “Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come.’” “Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You, as you have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.” You see here that the Father has given Christ authority, that is the power to rule over all mankind. But more specifically authority and power has been given by the Father to the Son to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him; that is to all of God’s elect. In verses 9-22 we find Jesus praying not for the world, but for God’s elect in particular that the Father would keep them through His name. (Verse 11) He goes on to pray even more specifically that the Father would keep them from the evil one and sanctify them through His truth; for His word is truth. (Verses 15-17) And He also prays for unity for all true believers as well in verse 20. “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.” “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.” These are the “all things which have been given into the hands of the Son by the Father, out of the great love that He has not only for His Son, but also for every believer as a result of Christ’s perfect obedience and His loving sacrifice. I will now ask you to come down and gather with me up front to observe the Lord’s Supper.

3rd - The Father’s assurance given to the faith of the person believing in Son.

Verse 36a – “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life”. I want you to notice that in these words there is the most basic and needful form of assurance of salvation which can possibly be conveyed to a believer’s mind. “He who believes has”. It is not, “He who believes might have”. It is not “He who perseveres to the end shall be saved.” That is a truth to be soberly considered; but your understanding of the doctrine of perseverance correctly, properly requires that you understand first, that salvation is not by your good works, your efforts, your strength, or your own carefulness to try to do all that is commanded. Salvation is not by your works, it is by the grace of Christ which He purchased for you at tremendous cost to Himself. Your salvation has come to you at the cost of His life. Whatever you do for God either before or after your conversion to Christ merits nothing, and counts nothing in regard to either meriting or keeping yourself in the favor or love of God. All was purchased for you by Christ. The merit of your salvation is not split between you and Christ; He has done all by Himself. It is He alone who saves you and keeps you and changes you into a more holy person, and brings you to heaven. This is what we confess in partaking together of this Supper. It is very simply that we believe in Your Son, Father.

I want you to see from this verse how the Father gives assurance to all true believers. It is through their faith in the testimony of His word. The exercise of faith in the testimony of the Bible; what the Father has declared concerning His Son, accompanied by the Spirit’s witness to our spirit which brings about a sweet assurance. What God has written down for us in the Bible is His word. He who does not believe in His testimony is a liar. 1st John 5: 9 – “If we receive the

witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.” “He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because He has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.” “And this is the testimony; that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” “He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” Let us remember, as we partake of this Supper, that Christ has done everything necessary for us to not only have everlasting life when we die, but to have the assurance of faith even now.