



Sermon Notes

Walk in the Way of Love Part 2

Twila Senter

April 18, 2021

The whole point of the gospel is our being reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

The key passage for the message is:

Ephesians 5:1-2

1Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children 2and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

The only way we can walk in the way of love is to follow God's example and to know that we are dearly loved children.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

4Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

The word translated "Hear" is the Hebrew word Shema. Shema means to pay attention, to focus on, to listen to in order to understand and to obey.

Today I'd like to introduce a scripture from the New Testament that highlights the importance of hearing.

Romans 10:17

In Romans chapter 10 the apostle Paul is talking about saving faith that comes from hearing the message concerning Christ. He distinguishes between righteousness that comes by the law and righteousness that comes by faith.

Romans 10:8-10

8But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: 9If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is LORD," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

The problem is that we can put our trust in God for the forgiveness of our sins and yet still be deaf to the message of God's love.

And any truth that we resist, we cannot partake of fully.



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Romans 10:1-4

1Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. 2For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. 3Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Now let's substitute the love of God for the righteousness of God in Romans 10:1-4.

Romans 10:1-4 (paraphrased)

1Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may know the love of God. 2For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge (of salvation or of the love of God). 3Since they did not know the righteousness (love) of God and sought to establish their own (righteousness/relationship with God), they did not submit to God's righteousness (love). 4Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness (fellowship) for everyone who believes.

If our goal is just to be righteous we can get pulled into a works based relationship with God. When we go in that direction we move out of fellowship with God.

A works based relationship with God is no longer about his presence, but rather our performance.

Even though the message of Christ was preached to the Israelites Paul writes:

Romans 10:16

But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"

Then he goes on to say:

Romans 10:18 *But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did:*

*"Their voice has gone out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world."*

What about us? Have we heard the message of God's love ? Of course we have. The gospel message is a message of God's love:

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.



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To not believe in the love of God is to not believe the gospel message by which we are saved.

So what are we to do? How are we to more fully receive the love of God once we have heard the gospel and put our faith in Jesus for our salvation?

The apostle Paul gives us a clue in Ephesians 3:16-19

Ephesians 3:16-19

16I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18may have power, together with all the LORD's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians:

Galatians 3:3

3Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?

The same is true for us. We are foolish to believe that we can come to understand the love of God and continue to grow in it without the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the apostle Peter's second letter to the church he gives us a blueprint for becoming effective and productive in our knowledge of Christ.

2 Peter 1:3-11

3His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 5For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our LORD Jesus Christ. 9But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. 10Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ.

