

SLIDE Children's Moment

December 7, 2014

Title: The more you share His love, the more you get in return

Object: A Bag of Hersey's Kisses

SLIDE Scripture: "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, *and* running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."
(Luke 6:38)

I have something to give to each of you this morning and I think it is something you will like. **SLIDE** I have a Kiss for each of you. (Pass out the Kisses) Did everyone get a Kiss? You didn't have to pay for it, did you? No, that Kiss was freely given to you. I paid for them and gave them to you. Now that you have it, you may do whatever you want with it. You may either keep it and eat it yourself or you may give it away--it is up to you to decide. We are going to take about one minute for you to think about this. During that time, you may decide to keep your kiss, or you may take it and give it to someone else here this morning. It is your choice. **SLIDE** What will you do with your Kiss?

At this point, there are several things that might happen.

(1.) All of the children may decide to keep the Kiss for themselves. You would then show them your remaining Kisses and explain that you would have given them more if they had given theirs away.

(2.) Several of them may give their Kiss away. You would give them several more, depending on how many you had left to give away.

(3.) There may be only one or two who give their Kiss away. You could give them a whole lot more Kisses.

Well, I see that some of you decided to keep your Kiss for yourself and some of you

decided to give your Kiss to someone else. **SLIDE** For those of you who gave your Kiss away, I am going to give you some more Kisses. For those who kept your Kiss, well, you still have it, don't you.

SLIDE As all of you know, a kiss is one way that we use to show someone that we love them, so this morning, we are going to let these Kisses represent God's love for you. God's love is given freely, isn't it? We don't have to pay for it. **SLIDE** Jesus paid the price when He died on the cross. When you have God's love, you can keep it to yourself, or you can choose to share it with others. As you share His love-- as you choose to give it away--the more you get in return. You see, that's the way it is with God's love. **SLIDE** The more you share the love of Jesus, the more He gives in return. As you enjoy your candy Kiss this morning, I hope you will think about God's love for you and that you will choose to share it with others.

Let's pray. Jesus, thank You for freely giving Your love to us. Help us to remember that You have told us to share it with others. Amen.

We learn lessons from the past, from history and from the teachings of those who have lived life longer than we have. This morning I am hoping we will learn from the scriptures God gave to mankind nearly two thousand years ago. If we forget or fail to learn we certainly will be doomed to make the same mistakes as were made in the past. Can anyone tell what the historical significance of December 7th is?

The **attack on Pearl Harbor** was a surprise military strike conducted by the Japanese Navy against the naval base in Hawaii on the morning of December 7th 1941. The attack led to the United States' entry into World War II.

This attack was intended as a preventive action in order to keep the U.S. Pacific Fleet from interfering with military actions the Empire of Japan was planning in Southeast Asia against overseas territories of the United Kingdom and the USA. What is not often remembered is there were simultaneous Japanese attacks on the U.S. held Philippines and on the British Malaya, Singapore and Hong Kong.

353 Japanese fighter, bomber and torpedo planes attacked the U.S. base. This resulted in all eight U.S. Navy battleships being damaged and four were sunk. The Japanese also sank or damaged three cruisers, an anti-aircraft training ship, and one mine-laying ship. 188 U.S. aircraft were destroyed; 2,403 Americans were killed and 1,178 others were wounded. It was a terrible loss because we failed to learn from the past, not the distant past but from just 37 years earlier. As part of their study and training U.S. military academy students studied the **Battle of Port Arthur**; which marked the commencement of the Russo-Japanese War on February 8th 1904. It began with a surprise night attack by a squadron of Japanese

destroyers on the Russian fleet anchored at Port Arthur, Manchuria. The war ended in a Japanese victory. For a major European power to lose to the Japanese was not only inconceivable to the world at large but also weighed down Russia with dire circumstances for the Imperial regime; the Russian people, from the nobility down to the recently emancipated serfs, they lost confidence in the military and in the Tsarist political system. This led directly to the Russian Revolution of 1905.

Failure to learn important lessons from the past affects the present and the future. It is unbelievable to me, as a student of history and the Holy Scriptures that the religious leaders who studied and taught the Old Testament scriptures could have missed the implications of Jesus' teachings and miracles. The Jewish history is full of examples of Israel's failures to heed God and the resulting consequences. Israel's rejection of Jesus Christ was the result of centuries of rebellion, turning their backs on God, misusing the privileges given to them by God and denying the divine truth found in the scriptures. The ultimate truth came to them in Jesus Christ, fulfilling every scripture, but because of their failure to learn from the scriptures, Israel once again fails due to spiritual hard heartiness.

As Christians with both the gift of the Old and New Testament scriptures are we going to learn from the mistakes of the past and look to the promises of God for the present and the future? We have been building upon the teachings of Christ through the first twelve chapters of John and now enter into chapters 13 to 17 which contain the final teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus to His disciples. These next five chapters may be seen as love letters from the Lord to His bride, the church. Jesus is the great and true Bridegroom of the church and to all those who are His church. These chapters extol His special and enduring love for His faithful

believers.

God's Love – Not for Everyone

This first verse of chapter 13 is truly holy ground. But, holy ground for the Lord's people only. At this juncture what I am saying irritates some people for the scriptures teach partiality on the part of God and they view this as both unjust and unfair. We can immediately begin to see that it is just that the Lord came not for everyone if we view the next chapters as love letters from our Lord and Bridegroom to His bride the church. Putting this idea in practical terms – what would you think of a married man who has made a covenant vow to his wife and knows her intimately, but writes intimate and endearing letters to many other women? Marriage is a private relationship and is therefore exhibits partiality. In the same way Jesus has taken to Himself a bride, a special people, the church. It is fitting and right and expected that He should have a special loving and intimate relationship and write words for His bride only. Is this partiality? Yes, from a human point of view. For the chosen of God it is the grace of God. It has nothing to do with merit. To put it simply, mankind, in general, has rejected God and has chosen to go their own way and but God out of His infinite mercy has still chosen some to be His.

Love of God and Love of the World

It is not shocking in view of God's special love for His bride, in the next five chapters that the first verse begins with a contrast between those who are Christ's bride and those who are not. The contrast between God's chosen and the lost is made shaper as we progress though to the end of the gospel of John. Here we hear the voice of Jesus leading us into a greater understanding of His new place before God the Father, Jesus' new position before the world and His commitment

to those who believe. Listen to the words of the Apostle John who knew Jesus well and was inspired by God the Holy Spirit, ¹“Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” The first question that is raised here is, “Who are Christ’s own?”

The answer has already been given many times by the Apostle John. They are those people chosen by God and given to Christ. Jesus said clearly, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.” (John 6:37) In order to seal this promise Jesus explained in chapter 10, “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” (John 10:11)

Who are those the Father gives to Christ and that He will lay down His life for? They are those who “...received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12-13) When God the Father gives a person to be Christ’s bride then God gives “...eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.” (John 10:28-29)

The world mentioned here in verse 1 is the fallen world out of which God comes and saves His chosen elect. The Greek word for “world” is *kosmos*. The word cosmopolitan is made up of two words, *Kosmos* meaning world and *Polites* meaning citizen. A citizen of the fallen world is cosmopolitan. So the world is made up of human beings that live with their first allegiance to its fallen system ruled by Satan and the people of the world live in rebellion against God. The Apostle John wrote in another letter, “See how great a love the Father has

bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” (1 John 3:1)

Since the fallen world does not know God it does not know or understand those who are saved by God and live for Him. As the Lord Jesus stated, “I have given them Your word (*the Word of God*); and the world has hated them (*believers living the Word of God*), because they are not of the world (*the Word of God separates believers from the world*), even as I am not of the world.” (John 17:14) Christians are to receive the gifts of the world; food, water, shelter and life, and beyond these necessities the beauty of creation, and be thankful to God for these. We are to love the world as God’s creation and those He created in His image and seek to evangelize the lost. Christians are also to reject the world and its fallen path and be committed to live by God’s grace an entirely different life from the fallen world.

Some for All and All for Some

We need to understand that ***God has done some things for all mankind***. God created all people, sustains them, keeps them from the worst of all possibilities, has tolerated them in their rebellion, and by this has keep them from hell for a time. On the other hand ***God has done all things for some of mankind***. These are those He has called to be His own. They do not lack and ultimately will never lack any good thing from God. God loves the world for He created it, even though it has rebelled. God’s loves His church for He has married those who are the church. In verse 1 of chapter 13 we see the first principal that Jesus “loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” Jesus makes clear His meaning in the last verse of His love letters to His bride, saying, “I have made Your name (*God the Father’s name*) known to them (*the elect or chosen*), and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” (John 17:26)

We see that there are special privileges for God's chosen – how deeply God's loves us. There are also responsibilities as God's church – as we are deeply loved by God we are to deeply love others. Jesus as said to us, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another." (John 13:34)

If Jesus loves those He has called as His bride and we are told "He loved them to the end." Then this makes clear that Jesus left this earth to prepare heaven for His people. The scriptures instruct us that not only has He prepared a place for us in heaven, but that He will return one day to guarantee that His bride gets to heaven. Jesus gives us assurance, "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:2-3)

As Christians, as the chosen bride of Christ, the scriptures tell us that Jesus prayed for us as those who God has given to Him. Yet, we struggle to take this privilege of prayer seriously. We are privileged to have a relationship with God and He desires to hear from us and He wants to speak into our lives and hearts. We are so very busy doing the tasks of the world we do not take the time to read God's love letters to us, His bride, and we do not send love letters back to our God through prayer. Verse 1 tells us, "He loved them to the end." Love is the key to all that God has done and is doing.

Past, Present and Future Love

"Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." We see that God the Father loved His chosen so much He sent His Son to die for their

redemption. Jesus, God the Son, loves the elect, you and I so much He gave His life for our salvation. So the answer to all that God has, is and will do is love.

However, we must as soon as we say this recognize that the love of God is beyond us to fully understand or explain. If we ask, why does God love us? Why does Jesus love us? We realize there is no answer we can give. I know some of you and you know me so I can safely say that God does not love us because we are so lovable. God is loving - but we are filled with hatred and sin – we now sin less since He regenerated our souls, but we remain sinners. The reason God loves us is because He has chosen to love us – beyond knowing He loves us, His love is unexplainable. It is beyond human reason. We could stop here and ponder God’s love for us until we return home to be with Him. But, we are told in this verse that God loves us without reason and He also loves us until the end. His love is eternal – **“He loved them (us) to the end.”** This verse calls our attention to being able to observe God’s love from the past and the present love Jesus Christ had for the people He preached His gospel to. It demonstrates the God is love by His very nature. If He loved His disciples and followers who walked with Him – then we know He will also love us to the end.

God showed His great love for us because He created mankind in His own image. He created us to the highest possible existence of all His creation. God created people, the only creation that is able to have communion with Him. God showed His love and continues to demonstrate His love by giving the Holy Spirit to regenerate the dead souls of His elect. God gave of Himself to each believer to dwell within them as the Holy Spirit that they might become more than they were, much more.

Full Extent of God's Love

Finally God showed the depth of His love for His chosen by giving Jesus to pay for their sins so they could be in His presence. All the sacrifices of the Jews could not atone for their sins unto salvation. Only Jesus was able to atone once and for all – for all sins; past, present and future. Jesus will continue reconciling people back to God the Father until He returns bringing the end of history.

The second half of the verses says, “**He (Jesus) loved them to the end.**” We may ask “**to the end**” of what? This has several dimensions. First, it means Jesus loved the disciples and His followers until the end of His earthly life. Secondly, Jesus loved His disciples and followers to the end of their lives. At the end of their lives His love did not stop. However, it changed because they were now in His gloried presence for eternity. The Greek word translated as “end” is *telos* meaning to completion or perfection. Jesus loved His own while He walked the earth and now loves His own as the Father calls them throughout history. Jesus loves the elect to perfection and completeness.

If You Love Him, Love others

As we have examined these rich truths of God's love, how then as His elect should we apply these truths in our own lives? We need to look at this from two sides; first, who God is for, His chosen or believers and secondly, who God is to the unbelieving world.

If God loves us without human reason and has loved us from eternity past before the foundation of the universe then we should strive to love one another with the same passion. We will never love others in this life as Jesus has loved us, but He calls us to try – try to love others more than ourselves – to love unselfishly, without

discrimination and without wavering. When we begin to love in this way we not only serve others, but we honor Him.

Now let ask those who do not know the love of Jesus or those still belonging to the world. Let me ask you a question that flows out of everything the scriptures have taught this morning. If God loves with a love so deep it defies understanding how can you afford to be without God's amazing love? Your dad and mom cannot love you with this depth of love, your husband or wife cannot love you this unselfishly, you neighbors and dearest friends are unable to love you without restraint, it is only Jesus who is able to love with perfect and everlasting love. I am pleading with you to consider the cost of not giving your life to Him. One day, for some soon and for others still years away, one day you must stand before God on His judgment seat and give answer for everything you have done to offend the only pure and holy God. You will have to answer for your rejection of His love and salvation. How will you survive that day if you have not given yourself to Christ and let Him cover your unholiness with His holiness? What will you do without Jesus standing at your side and saying to God the Father, "This one is my own; this is one for whom I died; this is one whose death of sin I paid; this is one I love to the end." Please hear me without Christ and His unending love you are lost forever. Fortunately, God's grace is still available; you may still come to Christ, but for how long? We do not know – so do not hesitate – come to Christ this day.