

We come this week to the final two verses of our Savior's High Priestly Prayer—if you recall, He prayed for our preservation (vv11-16), sanctification (vv17-19), unification (vv20-23), and glorification (v24)—in other words, He prays for the whole of our salvation—from the beginning to the end.

And yet, there is another way of looking at this prayer—we've been examining it in terms of various petitions, but we could also consider it in terms of various descriptions of those prayed for.

For example, because our Savior prays for His beloved people, they are joyful (v13), holy (v17), unified (v21), hopeful (v24), and loving (vv25-26)—these are these things that characterize the people of God—joy, holiness, unity, hope, and love.

Christians are characterized by love—love to God and love to others—this is true of individual Christians and local churches—a true Christian is loving, and a true and healthy church is loving. Wherever true love is missing, true religion is also missing, as the latter (true religion), always produces the former (true Christian love).

Thus, we come to our topic this morning, of Christian love, and from vv25-26, I want to suggest three things about it—It is Educated Love, Mediated Love, and Universal Love.

- I. It is Educated Love
- II. It is Mediated Love
- III. It is Universal Love

#### I. It's Educated Love

1. That is, true Christian love is realized or experienced in a heart knowledge of God the Father, in Jesus Christ our Lord...
2. [1] Christians know that the Father sent the Son, v25—"O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me..."
3. The world does not know God, and the reason is rather simple—it does not know that Christ is sent by God...
4. Put another way—the world does not know God, because it does not know Christ, who is the way to the Father...
5. In contrast to the world, Christ knows the Father—Christ knows the Father directly without any mediation...
6. But Christ isn't the only one who knows the Father, so does His people—"and these have known that You sent Me..."
7. The eleven disciples, and every other Christian, know that Christ came from the Father to atone for our sins...
8. Thus, to know that the Father sent the Son, necessarily includes two things—knowledge of Christ's person and work...
9. [a] Knowledge of Christ's person—to know the Father sent the Son means, you know He is a divine person...
10. If the Father sent the Son into this world, then of necessity He must have previously existed, as God's eternal Son...
11. [b] Knowledge of Christ's work—to know the Father sent the Son means, you understand why He was sent...
12. This presupposes the doctrine of the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection—all that Christ did as the sent One...
13. Now, obviously, to "know" the Father sent Christ, means you know this, or you believe this, from the heart...

14. Such people have come to know that they need a Savior, and they have come to believe in Christ as their Savior...
15. [2] Christians know the Father's name, v26—"And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it..."
16. To declare the Father's name simply means—Christ will savingly make known His Father to His elect people...
17. Christ does this by His Spirit and through His word—Christ savingly and experientially makes His Father known...
18. By "name" is simply meant God Himself—the totality of who God is—His love, mercy, holiness, and justice...
19. Notice our Savior speaks about this personal revelation as something past and future—"I have declared to them...and will declare it..."
20. There are two ways to understand this statement—most likely, He means—He declared His Father's name to the apostles and will reveal it to those who will believe through their word...
21. But it's also possible that our Savior means—He will increasingly reveal His Father's name to each believer...
22. For example—back in 1994, He revealed His Father's name to me, and He has continued to reveal this name to me as a Christian...
23. Thus, it's possible our Savior means—He will initially and continuously reveal His Father's name to His people...
24. But either way—this is a tremendous promise—Christ will make known His Father's name to every elect person...
25. And thus, it's through knowing Christ as the sent One and the Father's name, that we come to know God's love (vv25-26)...
26. Lesson 1—To truly know God is to know Him as love—that is, He is not merely loving, but GOD IS LOVE...
27. Now, this doesn't imply that God is more love than He is holy, righteous, or wise—He is equally all of His attributes...
28. But it is to say, those who come to truly know God, know that it was love that planned and purposed the gospel...
29. The Father chose a people because of love, He gave them to Christ because of love, Christ died because of love, and He called us to Himself because of love...
30. It is for this reason, the love of God is most evidenced at the cross of Christ—here His love is evident for all to see...
31. Most professing Christians, and even those who don't claim to be Christian, speak often about the love of God...
32. And yet, if a person doesn't savingly know God, they know nothing of God's love, despite all of their claims...
33. A person who talks much about the love of God and little about the cross of Christ, knows little or nothing about God's love...
34. V25—we have come to know the Father sent His Son to die, v26—through which we come to know God's name and love...
35. Lesson 2—To know God more is to know His love more—how do Christians come to know God's love more intimately...
36. Well, our Savior here tells us—if we come to know God's love by knowing God, then the more we know God, the more we will know His love...
37. This is the end goal of all knowledge—this is the end or final purpose of theology—to know God's love more...
38. How do we know God more intimately and personally, but by spending time with Him through His word and prayer...
39. And the more we get to know Him (or His name), the more we will know Him as love, and experience that love in our hearts...
40. Lesson 3—Those who know God, love God and others—those who know God most, love God and others most...

41. God's love is in us in two ways—by sense and by effect—[a] by sense—that is, as we have seen, by experience...
42. [b] By effect—and by this I mean, to the degree that we know His love for us, we in turn love Him and others...
43. The more we know God and thus His love, the more we will in turn, love God, the brethren, and our neighbors...
44. Perhaps I can put it this way—the more clearly we know God, the more we see in Him every reason to love Him...
45. 1Jn.4:8—"He who does not love does not know God, for God is love"—the person who doesn't love doesn't know God...
46. The more we know of God's love for us, the more we are motivated and moved to express our love for Him...
47. Now, obviously brethren, this is one of the many things that separates the Christian faith from all other religions...
48. Only Christianity says this—come and know God's love for you, and in turn, you will love Him and others...
49. One obvious and important way, to love God more, obey God more, is to know God's love more intimately...
50. Richard Phillips—"To understand the doctrines of grace that Jesus has so strongly emphasized in this High Priestly Prayer—doctrines such as sovereign election, particular redemption, and the perseverance of the saints—is to be melted by the love of Christ so that our love for others grows..."

## II. It's Mediated Love

1. By this I mean, the love of God that Christians come to know, is a love that is first focused upon Christ Himself...
2. V26—"And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them..."
3. Here I want to suggest two things about the love that the Father had for His Son—it originates in eternity past in the covenant of redemption and it's experienced in time, when we become members of the new covenant...
4. [1] It originates in eternity past in the covenant of redemption—"that the love with which You loved Me..."
5. From v24 we learned that the Father loved Christ from eternity within a covenant between the Father and Son...
6. V24—"For You loved Me before the foundation of the world"—that is, the Father loved the Son within the covenant of redemption...
7. The Father loved the Son because He agreed to become a Man, live a perfect life, and die to atone for our sins...
8. Thus, the love of the Father for the Son, both in v24 and v26, is what we might refer to as a covenantal love...
9. The Father loved His Son within the covenant of redemption, or that eternal covenant between Father and Son concerning the redemption of sinners...
10. It is for this reason we learn, the Father loved the elect, from eternity, IN CHRIST, or in relation to a Mediator...
11. Perhaps I can put it this way—the Father loved us from eternity, within the covenant of redemption, as viewed in Christ our Mediator...
12. Eph.1:4-5—"He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will..."
13. Notice, He chose us "in Christ (or through Christ)", which means, He chose us in relation to Christ as our Head...
14. But I also want you to notice, the reason He chose us—"In love He predestined us"—He loved us because He loved Christ...

15. [2] It's experienced in time, when we become members of the new covenant—"that the love with which You loved Me may be in them..."
16. What does our Savior mean when He speaks of God's love "in us"—"that the love with which You loved Me may be in them..."
17. Well, I suggest it fundamentally means to know and/or experience that love—to know its influence in our hearts...
18. To have the sense, awareness, and assurance of His love for us—to have a heartfelt knowledge of His love for us...
19. Jn.17:23—"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..."
20. Here our Savior speaks about the world, coming to know (from the heart), Him as Mediator, and His Father's love (He desires that sinners come to have the Father's love in them)...
21. Rom.5:5—"Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us..."
22. The Spirit "poured out" the love of God "in our hearts"—that is, He enables us to know and enjoy this love (which gives us strong confidence and assurance)...
23. 1Jn.4:15-16—"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he is God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him..."
24. This is what to have the Father's love "in us" means—it's to "know" and "believe" the love that God has for us...
25. Lesson 1—The Father loves His people for the sake of Christ—this is another way of saying, we are loved in Christ...
26. Now, every word in this phrase is important—WE ARE LOVED IN CHRIST—God really loves each of His people...
27. But WHY does He love them—Does He love them because they are in and of themselves lovely—NO—we are not lovely in ourselves...
28. But the Father loves us because of Christ—He loves us—He loves you and me Christian—because of Christ...
29. The Father loves His people with the same love that He loves Christ, and the reason being—we are loved in Christ...
30. Eph.1:6—"He made us accepted in the Beloved (the One He loves)"—the Father, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies us in Christ...
31. The word rendered "He made us accepted" literally means "to make graceful or lovely"—it refers to the bestowal of grace...
32. The Father has made us acceptable or lovely "in the Beloved"—or "in the One He loves" or "in Jesus Christ"...
33. In other words—He loves us with the same love He loves Christ with, because we are in covenant with Him...
34. Matt.3:17—"And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased..."
35. Notice, our Father does not say "with whom I am well pleased" but instead "in whom I am well pleased"—He is pleased with Christ and all who are IN HIM...
36. Lesson 2—The Father will always love His people for Christ's sake—this is true from eternal past to eternity future...
37. Dear brethren, the Father can cease loving His people, only when He ceases to love His beloved and perfect Son...
38. Rom.8:39—"Nothing (death, life, things present or future) can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord..."
39. Lesson 3—The people of God come to know God's love only in Christ—we must distinguish between the fact of God's love and the knowledge of that love...
40. Though the Father loved the elect from eternity, as He chose them in Christ, they don't know that love until they are savingly in Christ...

41. Perhaps we could distinguish between the love of God toward us and the love of God in us—God's love is toward us eternally, and in us savingly...
42. Thomas Manton illustrated this by suggesting that God's love toward us, is like a precious ointment shut up in a box...
43. The Father has always loved us in Christ—and yet, this love is unknown to us, until He puts this love in us...
44. It's not until He converts us, that He opens the box, and pours this ointment out upon us, for us to smell and enjoy...
45. Song of Solomon 1:3—"Because of the fragrance of Your good ointments, Your name *is* ointment poured forth; therefore the virgins love you..."

### III. It's Universal Love

1. Every Christian will know Christ as the sent One, they will know the Father's name, and they will know His love in Christ...
2. V26—"that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them"—this is a universal blessing...
3. Every Christian has God's love in them and Christ in them by His Spirit—or, perhaps better said—Christ brings with Him the knowledge and awareness of God's love with Him as He takes up residency in our hearts...
4. This means, because Christ indwells His whole church, every member has the love of the Father within them...
5. This doesn't mean that every Christian enjoys the sense of God's love to the same degree, but it does mean, this is no benefit for some Christians, but it's true of all Christians...
6. But then the question might be asked—Why does the Father desire that His love be in every one of His children (in closing, I want to suggest three reasons...)
7. [1] God's love is within us to glorify Him—it glorifies God when His children know and enjoy His love for them...
8. My dear friends, to doubt His love as Christian people, in no way brings honor, glory, or pleasure to our Father...
9. I believe every parent here this morning, would be mortified if they thought their child doubted their love for them...
10. No, this blessing is for every Christian and not just some of them, Jude 1:21—"Keep yourself in the love of God"...
11. [2] God's love is within us to benefit the church—the more we know His love, the more we love Him and others...
12. Our Savior is on the verge of leaving His people—He would no longer be among them in a bodily and physical sense...
13. These eleven men would no longer know His love in this tangible way, and yet, He would continue in them (by His Spirit)...
14. And so there is a sense in which He would continue to love them, in and through the hands and hearts of His people...
15. [3] God's love is within us to display it to the world, Jn.13:35—"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another..."
16. We learned a few weeks ago, that our unity will be used to create a hunger in those who come among us from the world...
17. As unsaved people are invited to church, and sit among us for some time, they see true unity and love within us...
18. And this, under the blessing of God, will be used as salt to make them thirsty, that they too would desire to know such love...
19. Oh my unsaved friend, this morning—you have tasted something of love in this world—you have likely known something of a mother's or father's love...
20. But what is this in comparison to the love of our Heavenly Father—a love that's endless and freely bestowed (but remember, this love is only known in Christ)...