**R839 (104) Rumination for 21 Feb. 2021 by K.C. Ung**

The **T**heme: God’s *Agape* Love (1) [berita-bethel-ung.com](http://www.berita-bethel-ung.com)

The **T**ext: *God is love* [Agape] I Jn. 4:8b

The **T**hots:

Last Lord’s Day was St. **V**alentine’s Day **F**ocusing on “**V**alentine Love **V**ersus Di**V**ine Love”.

Today, the meditation **F**ocuses **F**ully on Divine (*Agape*) Love, i.e., God’s **S**elf-emptying **S**acrificial Love.

And the **S**tandard Text is taken from **John 3:16** (and Rom. 5:6-10).

**John 3:16**

***For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,***

***that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.***

***For* C**onnectsGod’s Divine **Love** (in 3:16) to the **S**tory of the **S**erpent on the **C**ross in Jn. 3:14

 *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:*

* + 1. The **S**erpent, a **S**ymbol of **S**in, was to Fore-**S**hadow the **S**laying of **S**in by the **S**on of God
		2. in the **S**acrifice of Himself to **S**ave the world from the Penalty of **S**in by His Death on the Cross.

 *That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.* Jn. 3:15

***God*** The **C**reator, the **S**elf-existing **G**od, the **G**reat **I AM in Love…**

1. **C**hose **S**overeignly to *Love Israel* ***F****orever* – I Kgs. 10:9
* *The LORD did not set His love upon you,*

*nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people;*

*for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the LORD* ***loved*** *you…* Deut. 7:7

1. **C**hose **S**upremely to Love the **C**hurch and the **C**hristian from before the **F**oundation of the world:
* *According* ***as He hath chosen us*** *in Him before the foundation of the world,*

*that we should be holy and without blame before Him in* ***love****:* Eph. 1:4

* *Ye have not chosen Me, but* ***I have chosen you****, and ordained you,*

*that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain…* Jn. 15:16

* *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world,*

*but* ***I have chosen you*** *out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Jn. 15:19

***So* I**thas many meanings. Among them are:

* + - “***I****n this manner... in the way described*" as in Jn. 3:14. Thayer

*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even* ***so*** *must the* ***S****on of man be lifted up:*

* + - **I**nvolving **I**ntensity and means "***so*** *greatly*", [i.e. **so** **G**reat is **G**od’s Love]… Thayer.
		- **I**mplying **I**nfinitely all the way, i.e. a Love that **S**tretches to the end…cf. *uttermost* Heb. 7:25

 ***Loved*** It is *agapaō –* a **S**elf-emptying **S**elf-**S**acrificing Love. Phil. 2:7-8, HSCB

* + - In the **P**ast*: He emptied Himself…becoming obedient to the point of death even to death on a cross*
		- For the **P**resent and **P**rospective Future, His Love still **P**reserves us: Rom. 8:39
		*Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us*

 *from the* ***love of God****, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

* *Oh, love that only God can feel, And only He can show!*

*Its height and depth, Its length and breadth*

*Nor Heav’n nor earth can know!*  - Fanny Cosby

***the world*** God Loved the **S**inners in the World:**Jn. 3:17**

* + - *For God sent not His Son into the world to* ***C****ondemn the world;*

*but that the world through Him might be saved.*

* + - …*for God* ***C****ommendeth His Love toward us in that*… **Rom. 5:6-10**
* ***w****hen we were without* ***S****trength…}*
* ***w****hile we were yet* ***S****inners… } Christ died for us.*
* ***w****hen we were enemies…* }
* *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent*

*His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.* I Jn. 4:9

***That He gave*** In Love for us***,*** God **S**acrificed His **S**on to die in our **S**tead: Rom. 5:6, 8, 10

* Cf. What God told Abraham to do with his Beloved **S**on:Gen. 22:2
* *And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest,*

*…and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.*

* Cf. God would do the **S**ame with His Beloved **S**on. Jn. 3:16

 *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son…* To be continued.

*This love beyond all measure Of earth or sea or sky,*

*Could only show its full overflow, When Jesus came to die.* Eliza E. Hewitt

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK R. 839**

1. *God so Loved the World that He gave…*

By this, the text means that God loves all Sinners in the world, whoever they may be;

in whatever condition they are, wherever they may be, whenever they had lived, no matter who, God loved them all and He proved His love for them all by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, without sin and without spot, to take their place to be penalised and punished in their stead as their Substitute.

*O what a wonderful wonderful day*

*Day I will never forget*

*After I'd wandered in darkness away*

*Jesus my Savior I met*

*O what a tender compassionate friend*

*He met the need of my heart*

*Shadows dispelling with joy I am telling*

*He made all the darkness depart*

Chorus *Heaven came down and glory filled my soul*

*When at the cross the Savior made me whole*

*My sins were washed away*

*And my night was turned to day*

*Heaven came down and glory filled my soul.* John W. Peterson

How do you respond to God’s Agape (Self-emptying, Self-sacrificing) Love for you?

Here are some Challenges for us to prove that we love God or His Son:

* *He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me:*

*and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me*. Mt. 10:37

* *He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me:*

*and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him,*

*and will manifest myself to him.* Jn. 14:21

* *He that loveth me not keepeth not My sayings: and the word which ye hear*

*is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me.* Jn. 14:24

In the light of the above, can you claim that you love God, the Father or the Son?

 **REFLECT**

1. God loves the world of **S**inners (See #1 above)

But Christians are not to love the World and its **S**ystems of evil **W**orks

 Counter to God’s **W**ord and God’s **W**ill – (I Jn. 2:15-17)

*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world,*

*the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

* The World hates Christ –

*The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth* (lit. to detest and persecute*),*

*because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.* Jn. 7:7

* And the world hates Christians because of Christ –

*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.* Jn. 15:18

*Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.* I Jn. 3:13

* Christ is no more in the world…
* but Christians are left to live ***IN*** the World. Jn. 17:11

*And now I am no more* ***in*** *the world, but these are* ***in*** *the world…*

* And they need to remember they are not ***OF*** the world: Jn. 17:14

*I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them,*

*because they are not* ***of*** *the world, even as I am not* ***of*** *the world.*

* But they are to go ***INTO*** the World to tell them that God loves the World of Sinners:

*He said unto them, Go ye* ***into*** *all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

Mk. 16:15 **REFLECT**

**Points To Ponder:** *We are* ***IN*** *the World, and not* ***OF*** *the* ***W****orld*

*but we need to go* ***INTO*** *the World to preach the* ***W****ord!*