



THE HEART OF GOD

GRACE COMMUNION INTERNATIONAL, NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA

NOVEMBER 3, 2019

2

SCRIPTURE READING ISAIAH 1:10-18

“10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

11 “What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.

12³ “When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts?”

13 Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations— I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.”

“16 ¶ Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil,

17 learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.)

5 18 “Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.” (Isa 1:10-18 ESV

6

(Lu 19:1-10 ESV)

“1 ¶ He entered Jericho and was passing through.

2 And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.

3 And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature.

- 4** **7** So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.
- 5** And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, **“Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”**
- 6** So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, **“He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.”**

8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, **“Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”**

9 And Jesus said to him, **“Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.**

10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”” (Lu 19:1-10 ESV)

THE HEART OF GOD

9 THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD
THANK YOU JESUS THAT YOU HAVE COME TO
ALL OF US.
AMEN

As we stop and think about the scripture reading of today, we see the heart of God. There are so many other places in God's word where God has revealed who he is towards us. The Scripture we have just are two such examples.

The Vision Concerning Judah
And Jerusalem That Isaiah
Son Of Amoz Saw During
The Reigns Of Uzziah,
Jotham, Ahaz And Hezekiah,
Kings Of Judah.

Isaiah 1-1

BibleWordings.com

Isaiah saw a vision of the spiritual and moral state of Judah during the reign of four kings.

As we read Isaiah 1, God describes how the people of Judah had revolted against him. They had lost knowledge of who God is. The analogy God used is very strong.

“The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master’s crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.” (Isa 1:3 ESV)

He calls them a sinful nation, people filled with iniquity, with sin. They had turned away from the Holy One of Israel.

God says of them that their whole head is sick and their whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, God says.

As a result, their land became desolate.

The people were religious but their hearts were far from God. He called the kings the rulers of Sodom and the common folk, the people of Gomorrah.

God disregarded their multiple sacrifices. He also says very clearly that he hated their new moon festivals and their appointed feasts.

Because they live religiously but not in relationship with God, He said that he would hide his eyes from them. Even if they multiply their prayers, He would not listen.

Then he gives them a very common command, “to repent of their sins”.



REPENT



As we read Isaiah, God gave them hope if they turn to him in repentance.

Those who turn to the Lord in repentance are promised awesome blessings.

Those who choose to continue to reject God and those who forsake the Lord will come to an end, God says.

Judah was given the freedom to turn to God. God never turned his back on them in his grace.

PROMISES FOR THE REPENTANT

Isaiah 1:26-27

*26 Then I will restore your judges as at the first,
And your counselors as at the beginning;
After that you will be called the city of
righteousness,
A faithful city."*

*27 Zion will be redeemed with justice
And her repentant ones with righteousness.*

As we read these verses, we must remember that in the old Covenant, God never promised eternal life to them. He promised physical blessings for obedience and cursing for disobedience.

We must also remember that the old Covenant prepared the way for the coming of Jesus whom God the Father would send to rescue us from a very grave problem that humanity has - death.

Sin had alienated humankind from God completely. It has also alienated us from one another. Human relationship problems abound.

Human righteousness could never meet God's righteousness and holiness.

Humanity had an enormous problem that we could not overcome because no human being has or had lived a sin-free life. Consequently all humanity was under this curse of sin which is death.

In love, God has sent his eternal Son to be incarnate in our human nature to live a perfect sinless life on our behalf. He was able to take away the sin of the world and to

reconcile humanity in himself with the triune God who is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He did not come to condemn the world but to save the world – all those who would come to faith in him. (John 3:16-17)

We need to remember that the old Covenant would be replaced by a new Covenant in Jesus Christ.

A NEW COVENANT PROMISED

Jeremiah 31:31-34 NIV

"The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt,



The rest of God's promise reads the following way:

"32 ...my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer 31:32-34 ESV)

When Jesus came to the earth as God in the flesh, Emmanuel, he pointed the way to eternal life declaring himself that he was:

- the bread of life,
- the light of the world,
- the door of the sheep,
- the good Shepherd,
- the resurrection and the life,
- the way and the truth,
- the true vine

When he came to the earth, he preach the good news of the kingdom of God and told people to repent as he tells us today.

(Next slide)

THE HEART OF GOD

14
**WITH THE
COMMAND
HE ALSO
GIVES US
THE GIFT TO
FOLLOW THE
COMMAND**



15

“He (God the Father) is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” (1Co 1:30 ESV)

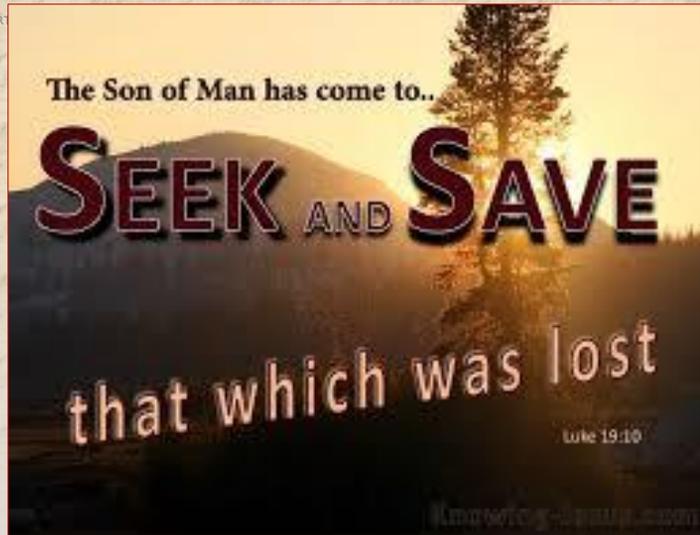
The passage we have read in Luke 19 about Zacchaeus shows the love of God.

We did not go to God first because we were adverse and hostile to him because of our guilt and alienation.

God came to us.

16

THE HEART



It is interesting to note that God had placed in Zacchaeus' heart a desire to search for Jesus.

Jesus addressed him personally and said, **"Hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house" (NAS).**

We are not told what Jesus said when he went to Zacchaeus' house. We read that Zacchaeus received Jesus gladly.

The people of his day grumbled and murmured because Jesus was spending time with a chief tax collector who had become very rich. They indignantly, angrily and resentfully complained. They saw an injustice in Jesus going to eat with a rich tax collector, a sinner.

Luke 19:9-10

And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he (Zacchaeus) also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”



This is an amazing statement that we should gloss over. Salvation came to Zacchaeus house!

How? Because Jesus is our salvation. It was Jesus who come to his house – salvation!

The people did not understand God’s mission to find and seek the lost.

When he met Jesus, Zacchaeus had a complete change of heart. He repented and turned to the Lord. His outlook in life was not longer the same. In other words, he repented. His behavior was changed.

For example, in the Old Testament, when somebody wronged another, he was to make restitution by giving what he had taken from the other adding 1/5 or 20%. (Numbers 5:7.)

If someone stole a sheep, to make restitution, he had to replace it with 4 sheep. (Exodus 22:1 and 2 Samuel 12:6). Zacchaeus put himself in the same category as a rustler, an animal thief, and said that if he had defrauded anyone of anything he would give four times as much.

Meeting Jesus causes the change of heart in a person.

Meeting Jesus and placing our faith in him causes us to have a change of heart.

How? In the New Covenant/Testament, we are told he comes to live in us through the Holy Spirit, giving us a brand new life, eternal life!

God does not give up on people. He has come to seek and save the lost.

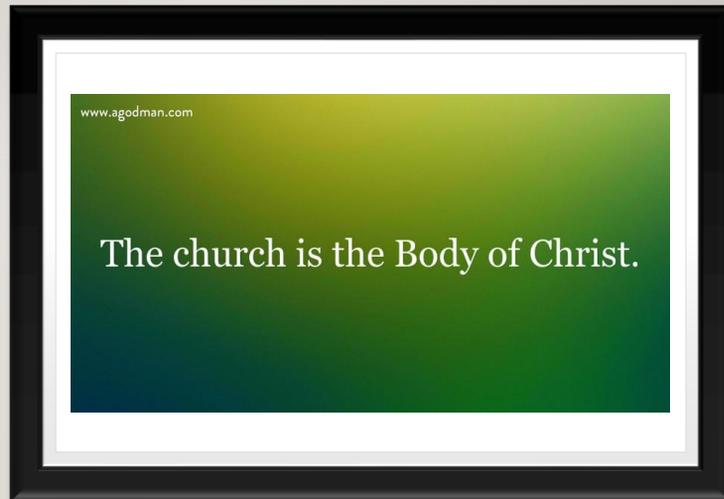
Jesus said of Zacchaeus that salvation had come to his house. He described him as a son of Abraham who is the father of the faithful (Rom. 4:16).

As we read this account found only in Luke about Zacchaeus, we see that Jesus did not call everybody but he focused on that one person on that occasion. Jesus loved him where he was and as he was.

As just stated, when anybody encounters and meets Jesus, that person is not left as he or she was but God, through the Holy Spirit, begins to change that person's outlook in life by giving him or her a new life by the Holy Spirit.

18

“AND HE IS THE
HEAD OF THE
BODY, THE
CHURCH....
(COL 1:18 ESV)



Since Jesus is our head and since he has the attitude of seeking and saving the lost, what should our attitude be towards those who are yet outside the faith?

God is completely for us, for all human beings because he has given to us his son out of love.

Jesus has loved us and called us into his church. Jesus being the head of the church is a great analogy. In our physical bodies, in our head originates our thinking, our perception, our views of the world and of others.

The apostle Paul said, " **From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.**" (2Co 5:16 ESV)

The commission that Jesus has given to his church is clear in Matthew 28. **"18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

(Mt 28:18-20 ESV)

As the body of Christ, as the church, with Jesus being our wisdom, we are to seek and point people to Jesus with love and we great wisdom.

We realize that we do not save anybody but people accepting Jesus will be transformed by the Holy Spirit just as we are being transformed in his likeness by the Holy Spirit.

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (2Co 3:18 ESV)

We also realize that not everyone is called at this time into God's church.

As we interact with others outside the faith, we are to see them as God sees them as precious and loved by God even if you do not know.

It is important for us to stay faithful to Jesus as we are led by the Holy Spirit. God has gifted all of us differently. We live in different circles.

Let us pray to have the mind of Jesus every day, to do good to all people beginning in the household of God. Let us pray to have the mind and the heart of Jesus who came to save and seek the lost.

Let us pray