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“Soccer Sunday”
John 3:16,17
July 16, 2017, Adrian Moskal

Pastor Steve shared with us briefly what we talked about this week at soccer camp. What he didn't share was why. I am here to share why.

I get to share the greatest love story ever told. It is a tragedy, a thriller, an epic drama, and a victory of all victories.

It starts with God. The bible starts with God because the entire bible is about God and this amazing story of the greatest rescue story ever told. If you go away from here with 2 things, I want you to understand who is God and how much he loves each one of us. So, let's start at the beginning:

(2)

Genesis 1:1 NLT

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Let's look at the first 4 words first. In the beginning God. In the beginning God. What this means, is that before there was anything, there was God. God always has been. He is infinite and eternal. Our brains have a hard time understanding infinite and eternal but that is what he is. We struggle with it because we are finite and we have a beginning. It is all about him. We spent our week talking about the Lord's prayer because talking to God is a big deal.

Let's finish this first verse, or we are never going to get out of here. Over the next bit of the bible it shares how God created the heavens and the earth and everything on the earth. Because God is **infinitely powerful**, he spoke it into existence.

Included in this is humans, he created them man and woman. Adam and Eve lived in harmony with God until they ate the fruit from the tree that God said not to.

Adam and Eve sinned when they disobeyed God and ate the fruit. Because God is **holy**, he abhors sin. His holiness means he cannot be a part of sin. Because God is **just** (which means he seeks justice), there had to be consequences to their sin.

(3)

Genesis 3:22,23 NLT

Then the Lord God said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!” So the Lord God banished them from the Garden

of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made.

Because God is just, the consequences of their sin was that they were banished from the garden, they would now know death, and their sin separated them from God.

We are barely into our story and we have seen the inciting incident, Adam and Eve ate the apple which caused man to be separated from God by their sin. We have also seen how God is infinitely powerful, holy, just, and **merciful**. Much of the bible shows how man continues to sin against God and he continues to walk with us, forgive us, seek us, and love us through history.

Let me tell you a story about love. It is a story about how a husband and wife loved a son. I was about 17 years old and our neighbours had a son. His name was Jesse. Jesse was 6 years old and he was one of those kids who just stood out. He was supremely talented at sports, especially hockey. He was the cutest little boy you could ever lay eyes on. His eyes lit up when he smiled. I remember him like it was yesterday. Jesse died in snowmobile accident. His parents and family were crushed. It is something that they never got over. Their love for their little boy was so great that they still walk in grief.

I tell you this story so that we appreciate how much his parents loved him. I have two daughters and I can't imagine the grief if something happened to them. I grieved his loss but not like a parent. If you have kids, you can appreciate the depth of their love for him.

I have talked about a lot of God's attributes: all powerful, holy, and just. Well God is also infinitely **loving**. He is love.

(4)

The thing about God, is that in everything action God does, he does it with all of his attributes in perfection. In other words when God acts, he acts powerfully, holy, justly, mercifully, and lovingly. He has many more attributes and he does them all perfectly.

This takes us to my main passage. Our sin is between us and God and yet he loves us.

(5)

John 3:16,17 NLT

For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

God loved us so much he came up with the solution to our sin issue and he did it in perfection of all his attributes. He gave his one and only son. Let that sink in. He sent Je-

sus to live a sinless life, to die on a cross for the penalty of our sins, and rose again conquering sin and death.

People talk about how does a loving merciful God allow such terrible things to happen in the world (wars, poverty, child hunger, etc). The fact is that God grieves all of those things because he abhors sin. In fact he sent his son to earth to die and rise again because of his love for us.

This is how God loved the world. He gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. "Believes" in him does not mean a head knowledge of but it means whoever puts their trust in Jesus (in who he is and what he has done).

The fact that God loved the world so much that he sent his son to die for it. How much does God love those who have sinned against him (which includes all of us) that he would send to die that which is most precious to him. The love for your child is great. He sent Jesus so that each one of us could be reconciled to him. That we could have a relationship with Him and thus be called a child of God.

In doing that, Jesus is the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. Because he lived a life without sin, his justice is perfect in this action as well as his love and holiness. Each action he does, all of his attributes are in perfection. Justice, mercy, holiness and love.

This is God's big rescue plan for the world. Jesus didn't come to condemn the world but to save it.

(6)

Romans 6:23 NLT

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

God's justice and mercy is perfect. His plan is perfect because He is perfect.

(7)

Ephesians 2:8-10 NLT

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. ¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

God saved you by his grace when you put your trust in Jesus. By grace that means it is free. Therefore, you can't earn it by doing good things, you can't work for it. It is a free gift. In spite of our flaws and sin, he sees us as his masterpiece when he sees us through the lens of Jesus.

And finally, those who believe in him were saved so that they can do good works that God has planned for them. That is the power and purpose of the gospel of Jesus. That is the good news for each of us. God gave his Son so that each one of us, if we put our trust in Him, shall not perish but have eternal life.

(8)

John 3:16,17 NLT

For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

This free gift of eternal life is open to any who ask for it. That is the thing about a gift, you have to receive it. You have to talk to God and ask for it. The talking to God is just prayer. It is saying that I am done living my life for me. I am done going my way. I want to go the way of Jesus and put my trust in Him and what he has done. It is that simple. If you have done that today, you are part of the family of God. If you have done that, let us know. We would love to celebrate with you.

I started this sermon by saying I wanted you to go away knowing 2 things. I wanted you to know more about God and how much he loves you. I hope you got both of those today.