

Program 24 "I Love You!" signed God

Page 1 When Jesus Says "Must", It's A Must

John 3:1-18

Full text for this section is not available.

PROGRAM 24 PAGE 2

"I LOVE YOU!" SIGNED GOD

Page 2 What If.....

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1

When Adam and Eve were driven from the garden of God's presence, you and I were with them. It looked like Satan had won. Sin was victor. Separation was complete. From then on, every human being would see written against him: "Criminal. Convicted for sin. Crime deserving of penalty of death - forever."

Think about it. What if God would have stopped there? What if He had never intervened but still left us a Bible with only one terrible truth: "You are going to die and then I am going to sentence you to hell and the company of demons. There is nothing that can change this verdict!" Every day would be a nightmare and every night a time to stay awake to try to postpone the sleep of death.

But God didn't stop there! He performed a fact so incredible that only faith can take it in. God came to earth in the person of Jesus the Messiah and had our sins placed upon Him so that we could have His righteousness placed in us. And at what a cost! A crown of thorns on Him so that we might have a crown of life! Human spit on His face so that our faces could behold His glory! "Away with him" screamed in anger against Jesus so that we could hear His "Come unto me." His hands and feet pierced that we might feel His hand holding ours and our feet walking golden streets.

All He asks of us is to love Him, obey the voice of His Spirit and appreciate forever His removal of the charge "Condemned!" that was against us and replacing it with two glorious words written in Messiah's blood: "NO CONDEMNATION!"

My prayer: "Oh my Father, I can only repeat the words of a hymn: 'I stand amazed in the presence, of Jesus the Nazarene; and wonder how He could love me, a sinner condemned, unclean. How wonderful! How marvelous!' Thank you, precious Jesus!

PROGRAM 24 PAGE 3

"I LOVE YOU!" SIGNED GOD

Page 3 When Your Faith Fails

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." I Corinthians 1:9

A good way to appreciate faithfulness is to see its opposite. What pain is caused by faithlessness! A wife's heart broken by a husband's adulterous affair. A baby dying a horrible death when left for hours in a car parked in the broiling sun while the mother was chasing after a boyfriend. Such examples of lovelessness and faithlessness often reduce me to tears. But it is in those anguished times that I look up and see splashed across the heavens the word "FAITHFUL" as a description of the character of God.

Don't ever look to people - even to a loyal husband or wife - to meet all your needs. They can't. No human can. That is the Father's role - and He passes every test unflinchingly. Total faithfulness equals total reliability. It means you can count on God every time, all the time. See why no one else can fill that role?

How excited would you be to receive a very personal invitation to spend an hour - or even a day - with the governor or senator of your state - or even the president? But look at our verse again. You have been called into the fellowship of God's only Son - not for a day but for eternity! You enjoy His invisible presence now, but you are guaranteed your personal audience to see your King face to face. But from where you are to where you must go will require all of the faithfulness of God. Faithfulness when your own faith caves in. Faithfulness to dry your every tear, to convict you when you sin, to make the Bible come alive, to care for you in ways beyond finite comprehension. God is faithful! Be grateful that He is!

My prayer: "Father, I rest in the glorious truth of 'Great is Thy faithfulness' and rejoice that only You are the all-sufficient One who can meet my deepest needs."

PROGRAM 24 PAGE 4

"I LOVE YOU!" SIGNED GOD

Page 4 "Open My Eyes, Lord!"

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." I Peter 5:7

My wife Norma and I love to share together what God is speaking to our hearts. She gave me the title to this book when she said, "Most people associate extravagance with material things, but it is God who is so extravagant in offering us His most intimate presence." An extravagant God! And He never stops looking at you, speaking to you, and seeking your love and attention even as He offers you all of His own!

Isn't it amazing how people mis-read us? I am viewed as an extrovert who must always be around people. Others see me as a confident person who surely doesn't battle worry! The truth is I crave and love aloneness where it's just Jesus and me. And in the natural, I tend to be a worrywart in too many areas of life. That's why this is one of those super-personal verses that I quote and live on every time anxieties come to bury me in doubt, fear and worry. Here's how the Amplified puts it: "Casting the whole of your care - all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all - on Him; for He cares for you affectionately, and cares about you watchfully."

It's easy to believe God loves the other guy or gal. But this verse isn't saying "He cares for your neighbor" or "He cares for those with super faith and problem-free lives." It says He cares for YOU! Jesus longs to carry what you can't - every worry, anxiety and concern that tries to overwhelm you. He wants to overwhelm you - with His love - and He loves it when we run to Him any time - all the time - with "Here Lord, I can't handle this but You can. I hand it all to You to figure out and to make come out for Your glory and my good."

My prayer: "Open my spiritual eyes to Your greatness, nearness, gentleness and loveliness, Lord Jesus. Help me to admit and believe the astounding truth that You care about every detail of my life."

PROGRAM 24 PAGE 5

"I LOVE YOU!" SIGNED GOD

Page 5 No Wonder He's The Only Perfect Father

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Hebrews 6:10

Appreciation! How we all crave it. Need it. Thrive on it! And when it's not offered after we have done our best for someone, the disappointment and hurt can go so deep as to leave a lasting scar. Like the precious woman who gave her all to make a selfish husband feel important. It was never enough, as he heaped scorn and criticism on her but never a word of thanks and appreciation. We've all gone through that tunnel one way or another - at home, school or on the job where no matter how hard we try it's never enough for some people.

How different is the God who loves you. He's the only perfect Father and He loves you so much that you're never out of His sight - no, not for a moment. He not only remembers - but records - every kind and loving deed you do for others, and especially so when it takes place with fellow Christians. Why does the Father take pains to mention "work and labor of love" toward the saints - the people of God? Perhaps because we often find it harder to love and serve fellow Christians than we do the lost of this world. It's easy to see ourselves "saved" and the other guy "lost" and our actions as important if that "sinner" is to accept Christ. But our Christian brother or sister is often another story. It's easy to feel threatened, jealous or critical of one who walks with Jesus - especially if their lives convict us. Or to feel anger and resentment if we think that fellow saint is not to the level of spiritual maturity we envision.

How do you view fellow Christians? The Father will not forget every kind deed you do. Your prayers and arms of support for your pastor.

Gifts and encouragement to missionaries. Ministering to the elderly, poor, orphans, shut-ins and those who are sick and dying. God never forgets! So stay busy lengthening your "good works" sheet and remember to do all in His Name, never yours.

My prayer: "You see me, You know me, and yet You love me. Father, just as You lavish Your kind works on me, so let me find new ways to serve others - especially Your saints."