

“He’s My Savior!”

February 15, 2026 Romans 5:6-11, John 3:16-17, Isaiah 53:1-6

Many of us celebrated Valentine’s Day this weekend. We had the opportunity to express our love for the special people in our lives. I have to laugh because I didn’t plan it this way... but I think I know who did (Look Up!) It just so happens, coincidentally, this morning I am going to talk about the greatest expression of love that the world has ever known. We read in John 3:16 that God so loved the world... in other words that he so loved you and me... that he gave us the most stupendous gift ever given. To coin a phrase from our Thursday night study of the book of Hebrews,

- if you think receiving a bouquet of red roses is great, then you got to know that God’s gift is even greater.
- If you think a dinner at Chillinghams downtown is great, then God’s gift is so much better.
- If you think a gift card for a spa weekend is great, then God’s gift is far superior to that.

You want to know what love is? Paul tells in Romans 5. I am going to read it again. He says,

At just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

That's love! Self-sacrifice for another. You don't last 50 years in marriage without sacrifice and compromise, right _____? If you love someone, you will sometimes go to extreme measures to show that love. That's what we have here.

God revealed his love in coming to earth and becoming one of us. When the apostle John tells us that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God and *then* he tells us that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, that's Jesus. He is essentially telling us that in him, God was with us. We talked about that last week. Jesus became one of us... so that he could fulfill the requirements of the law. He took our place on the cross as a substitute, suffering the penalty for human sin so that we could be forgiven, reconciled and granted eternal life. He saved us from eternal death and torment. That's love. ***That's why we call him our Savior.***

I will talk more about this in a few minutes. First, I want to talk about the nature of Christ. Last week we discussed the fact that Jesus was fully human. He was like us in every way. This week I want to talk about his divinity.

The apostle Paul writes in Colossians 2:9 that "For in Christ all the fullness of the deity, or as it says in the King James version, the Godhead, dwells in bodily form." The term "fullness", from the

Greek word, *pleroma* indicates that Jesus is not just partially divine, but possesses the entire divine essence of God.

That's what the incarnation was all about. Essentially, Colossians 2:9 teaches that Jesus is fully God and fully man, serving as the ultimate revelation of God and the sole source of spiritual completeness for believers. What's more, Jesus has all the same characteristics as God.

In Hebrews 13:8 we read that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. The fancy word for that is immutability. Because he is in effect God, he never changes. Jesus is the same always. So when Jesus says something... you can take it to the bank. He is not like us who are fickle and change our minds with the drop of a hat.

Jesus also reveals his divine nature in his ability and willingness to forgive sins. As a matter of fact, in doing so he often finds himself at odds with the religious authorities. They are infuriated that Jesus claims the authority to forgive people, which is something that only God can do. In Mark 2 Jesus forgives the sin of a lame man and the Pharisees go wild and say, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Yet time after time, Jesus not only heals people but he forgives their sins and tells them to sin no more.

Jesus also raised the dead on a number of occasions, the most famous being his friend, Lazarus. This points to his omnipotence. In Matthew 28 he tells his disciples that "All power is given to me." He has the power over disease, death, nature, demons and more. He stilled the storm. He cast out demons. He healed the lame and sick and as I just said, he raised the dead.

We also get the sense that he was omniscient. He knew things he couldn't have known if he was just a man. For example, we see this in the call of Nathaniel, the meeting with the woman at the well, his keen understanding in his exchange with Nicodemus.

Finally, Jesus tells his disciples that he will be with them, whenever two or three are gathered together. That is omnipresence. He is everywhere, all at once. He will never leave them and he will be with them to the ends of the earth.

So let's get back to the work of Christ. Years ago, a member of the congregation in Norwich said to me... and this was no great revelation but the affirmation of a truth... that the key point in the Christian story was the resurrection. He said, "If Christ was truly raised from the dead, then everything he said or did was validated and had to be true.

This is exactly what the apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15.

But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is worthless, and so is your faith. In that

case, we are also exposed as false witnesses about God. For we have testified about God that He raised Christ from the dead, but He did not raise Him if in fact the dead are not raised.

For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins

There you have it. But what is this faith that Paul talks about? It has to do with the work of Christ. It points to his death on the cross and the saving grace it brings to all who believe.

Of all the world religions, Christianity is the only one that talks about atonement and redemption. It is not a system of ethics. Jesus wasn't just a good moral teacher like Buddha or Confucious. Christianity is the story of redemption and how we were made right with God through the work of one person, a person named Jesus.

It all goes back to the fall of humanity and the disobedience of Adam. It created a rift between us. God's holiness could not be broached by sinful humanity. Only the purest of souls could be in the presence of a holy God. Even the greatest among us, Abraham, Moses, David, Esther, could not find their redemption through their own efforts. It would take one man who lived in perfect obedience to bridge the gap and open the door for our salvation. That's why the incarnation is so critical to our understanding. Jesus had to be fully human in order to be an acceptable offering, sufficient for our redemption. Hebrews 2:14 says, "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in

their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death..."

The very purpose of his coming in the flesh... was to be the perfect sacrifice to pay the price for the sins of all humanity.

As Rev Joshua McClure would say, Christ and his atonement is the scarlet cord running through every page in the entire Bible. As one scholar said, "Cut the Bible anywhere, and it bleeds; it is red with redemption truth." One out of every forty-four verses in the New Testament deals with this theme, and that the death of Christ is mentioned in all one hundred and seventy-five times.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, "I delivered to you first of all, that Christ died for our sins". It is primary to our understanding of who Jesus is and what he does for us. There can be no Gospel story, message or preaching without the story of the death of Christ as our Redeemer.

The Scriptures define the work as Christ in several ways. First, his life was given as a ransom. This goes back to Leviticus 25:47-49 where it outlines the way to deliver a thing or person from bondage is by paying a price. Sin is like a slave market. We are "sold under sin." Christ, by His death, buys us out of the market, delivers us from the service of sin. He sets the prisoners free, by paying a price - that price being His own precious blood.

Second, Jesus was the propitiation for our sins. Propitiation means a covering. The mercy-seat covering the ark of the covenant was called propitiation. It is through His blood that God covers, overlooks, and pardons the penitent and believing sinner. The death of Jesus Christ is the basis on which a righteous God can pardon a guilty and sinful race without compromising His righteousness.

Third, we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son, by His Cross. That is the message of the scriptures. We can now enjoy fellowship and life eternal with God because of what Jesus did on the cross. He paid the price which opened the door to a renewed relationship with our heavenly father.

Finally, he took our place and our punishment. He was a substitute. We read in Isaiah 53. He took our pain, bore our suffering, was pierced for our sins and crushed for our iniquities. In other words, God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us. Christ died in our place, bore our sins, paid the penalty due our sins; not by force, but willingly. But most importantly after our reconciliation with God is the fact that the power of Satan and sin no longer has a hold on us. We are free from the curse. The power of darkness has been broken. We no longer need to be the slave of sin and Satan. Thank God that we are free and now we can live to the glory because Jesus is our savior. Amen.

