

“Displacement: the Most Expulsatory  
Power of Divine Love”.  
Sermon for 28 September 2025

Here is my text for this message is 1 John 2:15: **15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

Divine love, which Jesus describes here as **the love of the Father** is the power and prerogative of God to make of us **a new creature in Christ**. Now this piece of spiritual intelligence is of such vital importance that through the presentation, through the explanation, the telling and retelling (our main activity on Sunday mornings) of this truth we come to know, memorize understand, apply and internalize its life changing capacity—the life altering **power of the resurrection**. Yes, the supreme manifestation of divine love is found in the fact that the crucified, dead and buried Jesus rose from the dead on the third day as he had plainly and repeatedly prophesied, expounded, taught and explained as the actual/real fulfillment of certain divine promises):

***The pure, gracious love of the Father which raised Jesus from the dead is absolutely capable of causing the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear and those who are spiritually dead are raised to life—to the hope, the vigor, the strength which activates all these things: sight, hearing, mobility, vitality itself.***  
That’s my story, beloved, and I’m sticking to it.

Back in Exodus, we read of the moment in time when God hears the cries and distress of His people held in bondage in Egypt—during their four hundred year captivity and decides to act. There are those who think that God’s compassion was too little, too late. If they were God, which is their secret ambition(!), they would have, due to the suffering, indignity and pain of slavery, and the spiritual oppression that slavery entails—due to the cost of human suffering, they would have shown compassion earlier than God did. Scripture explains this timing with the phrase, **in the fullness of time**—that is at precisely the right moment, neither too early, nor too late, God acted **that the timing of God being one of His manifold perfections with care, compassion and exactly on time**. Consider the conjunction of things—mind you, not coincidence, not by happy accident as it were. For one thing, God created Moses and trained him up, using his life circumstances even to the advantages of Pharaoh’s household to, at the right moment, assume his God-given role as the anointed leader of Israel: the man of God appointed to do the nation forming task of making a nation out of a enslaved population. That was no mean feat! Think of the habits, values, the mind sets of the Hebrews living as a despised underclass in Egypt for generations after generation. Slave culture is deeply embedded, requires acculturation (culture) and accommodation and a willingness to submit to their social standing—to the “ways things were” for them. We call that process “socialization.” And we tend to believe that a person is well adjusted when they have adapted to their social setting so as to either get along, go along, exist and, perhaps, “thrive” in that culture.

Now it is worth pausing to note that this accommodation may be to very unhealthy subcultures, tribes, cults, gangs etc. The world view and mindset of the slave is part of what keeps the society, for better or worse, functioning. There is a criminal subculture, homelessness is another, youth culture, drug culture, the gay scene, the military and government workers in various departments all tend to enforce, reward and promote those who know the protocols, and adhere to the unspoken rules/standards and values of their

subculture. Conformity is common, endorsed; nonconformity, not so much. So when God wills a reset, or when God intervenes and changes things up—that reality can be exhilarating and terrifying simultaneously! Fear and hope, insecurity and courage are mixed into the eventfulness of the divine will!

The eventfulness of the divine will is evident in such things as Creation—there was nothing in existence and nothing going on at all *and as things came into existence all kinds of things began to happen in a coordinated and integrated manner*. Thus creation was/is both an act and an event. The Hebrew captures this sense in the word **debar**, *meaning the word that is the act*. Hence God said, **Let there be light. And there was light** and so forth. God says, *Receive My love and My Holy Spirit and we are “born-again.”* Salvation is also a creative act of God and an event comparable in power; a game changer! And just like Creation itself, being saved in a continuous event—some say it is progressive, and others say, it begins and never ends.

However, my focus this morning is on the expulsatory power of **the Father’s love** as it displaces lesser loves, such as the lesser love of the world, a love for the world and the things of the world which fill the human heart as long as the Father’s love is not there to displace, expel and repel it! The great powerful affection of God—a spiritual force powerful enough to displace love of the world:

- This includes worldly wealth, possessions, social prestige, property, work, all earthly pleasures and delights and all lustful pursuits—everything temporal including family lineage. Culture.

And, having lost those things, replacing those loves, pursuits with the Father’s love and divine love as our chief necessity in this life.

Think of this change agency, this powerful divine love as dynamite used constructively, creatively even as something powerful enough *to blast out of our hearts* the affection, the habitual chains of addiction—the sedating impact of drugs which cause us to imagine that the painful things have been dealt with *when no such thing has actually occurred*. Drugs deliver a profound delusion for the pain is by drugs, truth be told, only temporarily shelved. They only insulate us from the pain, ameliorate (improve) the pain, but do not heal the cause of our pain—only the healing power of divine love can achieve that! The reality of this healing power is captured in the biblical title of Christ as **the great physician**. (Mark 2:17 & Luke 5:31) If we pursue the idea that Christ is the embodiment of God, God appearing in the flesh, then Jesus represents a manifestation of divine love and is included in the expression **God is love**. **Jesus also embodies “the authority of the Father” and by acting in the Father’s Name acts on the authority of the Father. John 12:49) For I did not speak on my own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent me, has given me commandment, what to say, and what to speak.** Real healing brings real change, metamorphosis:

And **metamorphosis** is a divine gift. It is a wonder of nature, a miracle. It is not the outcome of one’s experience, or of one’s education! But the gracious outcome of divine power. “In a metaphorical sense, it can refer to mental or intellectual self-realization or a profound shift in a person’s character” which we commonly denote as conversion. This is a “miracle” or “wonder,” for the words were interchangeable in the Elizabethan Age (the time of Shakespeare)! This divine intervention is the fingerprint of our God, the God who intervenes.

Now every time a fisherman fetches a fine, large trout out of a pool in the river, he alters the ecology of that spot in the river. And the same thing occurs when a sinner repents and enters the kingdom of God. Everything shifts when a man lame from birth comes home walking, the blind seeing and the deaf hearing, or the sick are healed—the ecology of that family is altered once for all. I have often wondered where that testimony went. Surely they were living in Jerusalem at the time.

In two instances of Scripture, John 9:1-12 where Jesus heals a man born blind and Acts 3:1-8 where Peter and John continuing the healing works of the Lord heal a man born lame both showcase the disabled, from birth, we must ask what happened to them: escaping the beggar's existence, seeing for the first time ever, and walking, leaping and running for the first time ever. Healings of the lame, the halt or the blind are **demonstrations of the newness** which gives the lie to the assertion *that everything is just going along as it always has*. As surely as the material universe came into existence—had beginning, and had no past to be weary of, these healed men embodied the exhilaration of **being made new, whole, healthy** whereas all they had known before was decrepitude and disability—this is to say nothing of those who obtained, health and liberty, deliverances. They were beneficiaries of Jesus's ministry and they did not have to wait for the White Throne Judgment of Revelation to become fully capacitated—freed from bondage to weakness, ill-health and spiritual oppression! For them, the new heaven and the new earth occurred, in their here and now, while they remained in this world order!

*It pleased God to heal them and it was pleasing to God for them to be healed*, both! And surely their lives were qualitatively changed. Their status changed, their position changed, their social standing changed—they had to adjust, and everyone they interacted with had to adjust to them. The human ecology of their various life settings were quite as disrupted as the trout stream we spoke of earlier. Beggars could no longer beg; they would have to do other work. They moved from begging alms, we might hope, to giving alms; from being helped to helping others. Resurrections were significantly more disruptive than physical and spiritual healings—as they adjusted to the “new normal,” as in unseated and drug free lives, as forgiven people. And day by day their past, the days of disability were left behind them; they became memories. We may wonder if they continued to be thankful, and grateful; or did their new habits and behaviors bury that thankfulness? Did they become too habituated too soon? **Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.**

Reconciliation, spiritual reparation is work. Sometimes it's hard changing diapers, redoing painful bandages, gross, humbling work—sometimes humiliating work that requires swallowing pride, or revisiting unhappy and difficult places, situations, sick dynamics. Radical change/healing can occur. Bad habits can be expelled by fresh, new and better habits and better habits leads directly to better character. Three pairs of faith matters come to mind: a. conviction and repentance; b. affection and compassion, and c. motive and goal setting. Sometimes the only way to expel a strong affection is to invite and stronger one in to takes its place. For example the lust for drugs can be expelled by a love of Jesus—as we move from striving to meet our needs ourselves to allowing Jesus who can meet our truest, deepest needs by loving and submitting to Him—your will, Lord, not my will be done. I wonder, sometimes, if trust isn't simply faith taking a risk!

Perhaps we get to conviction through getting fed up with our selves. That is a mild form of repentance. It may come from reflecting on our lives and our choices. Are they worthy, or

worthless? And compassion can lead us from self-serving to the serving of others—if we choose to show concern, care and affection. Motive is largely a matter of pondering what we are here for, determining what we are hoping to get from the moment, those present, your circumstances and then asking ourselves, “Is this the best I can ask for?”

**Amen**