

## **SERMON - GOD'S LOVE: THE GOLD STANDARD**

### **John 3:16**

**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**

### **Introduction**

A gold standard is simply the best of the best. It is an excellent example by which others can strive to emulate or to equal. In sports, the gold medal is ranked higher than the silver or the bronze. It implies prestige and greatness.

Many see the *I Have a Dream* speech of Martin Luther King, Jr. as the gold standard of public speaking. Many see Beethoven's *Fifth* as the gold standard of symphonic writing. Every field of endeavor has a gold standard, whether it is sports, arts, science, law, leadership, or theology.

There are many types of love, and all are fine in their proper place, but God's divine love is the gold standard. As most churchgoers know, the New Testament word for God's divine love is *agape*. It is defined as unconditional love. It literally means "no gap." The first use applied to the protection of kings, emperors, and their family members. The body guards would form a human wall around the protected person. There was no gap or empty space in the formation. No condition or circumstance would allow any of the guards in the formation to break rank and leave the formation. The protected person had unconditional protection. The literal meaning of *agape* almost bursts through in the very pronunciation.

Our familiar text accurately describes God as the gold standard of love. God gave the greatest gift, Jesus, to the greatest number of people, the world, at the greatest expense, the cross, for the greatest duration, eternity. Let's look at this gold standard and see how it affects all aspects of our lives.

### **Exposition**

#### **1. God Is Love-That Is Why God Is A Trinity.**

(There Must Be A Lover And The Beloved.)  
 (Love Is Not An Attribute-It Is God's Essence.)  
 (Love Is What Makes God Divine.)

#### **2. Human Love In All Of Its Forms Is A Reflection Of God's Love.**

(A Reflection Is Never As Strong As The Primary Source.)  
 (Sometimes The Reflection Becomes Distorted.)

### **3. True Love Is a Paradox.**

(It Is A Need That Can Only Be Satisfied By Giving.)  
(It Is At Its Best When Reciprocated.)

### **4. Love Can Easily Be Confused With Other Phenomena.**

(Love And Like Are Not The Same.)  
(Love And Lust Are Not The Same.)  
(Heat And Light Come From The Same Candle-  
But They Are Not The Same.)

### **5. The Devil Will Make You Think God Does Not Love You.**

(Trials, Tribulations, Chastisement, Relative Deprivation.)  
(Believe John 3:16-Not the Devil.)  
(John 3:16 Reflects The Gold Standard.)

### **Closing Thoughts**

I am sure you have heard the common expression: "Love is blind." God's love is not blind; He sees more than any of us. He sees more and He forgives more. We see less and we forgive less. Because God is love, when we repent, He forgives all of our iniquities.

God's love is so pronounced that time and dimensions cannot contain it. God's love is so strong that nothing can separate it from a believer. No future circumstance will keep God from loving us. In short, God loves us, and there is nothing we can do about it. The reason we can do nothing about it, is because we had and have nothing to do with it. God made a decision to love us and His mind is made up. Nothing can turn His love off, nothing can make His love cease, and nothing will ever cause Him not to love us deeply and personally. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

### **Related Scriptures**

**Matthew 22:37-40**

**Romans 5:8**

**Romans 8:35-39**

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:13**

**1<sup>st</sup> John 4:8**

**1<sup>st</sup> John 4:16**

### **End Note:**

1. As you learned in English class, that little "a" added to the beginning of a word means the absence of what follows. Asymptomatic means no symptoms of the disease; amoral means no morals. Atonal means music with no tone center or key. Likewise, a-gape-

means no gaps. *Agape*, as it was first used, becomes very vivid in the movie, *The Gladiator*. In a main scene, Caesar goes down to the floor of the colosseum to speak to the winner, who would not kill his opponent. It was common practice for the winner to slaughter his opponent. The praetorian guards move post haste to build a protective circle around him. They watch his every move and do not allow a gap in the formation. God's love puts a protective circle around us and there are no gaps in it.

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