

11/5/23- 'TRUTH & DECEPTION' (#8)

PASTOR NATE

Impacts of
Human Emotion

- Pastor Nate speaks of human emotion(s) and how strongly it drives us....to the point of even transforming us. He identifies the many mass shooting events (eg. Va. Tech). Common denominators: (1) most all perpetrated by boys/ young men; (2) typically from broken homes with no father or an abusive one. (3) all were dominated and transformed by their emotions (ie .rage) which consumed them; (4) underlying even that rage was fear...the ultimate driver of their emotions.

Rage/Fear
vs.
Love

- Fortunately for society (and ourselves) and notwithstanding some of these same circumstances and emotions, we manage to avoid extreme loss of control. But, as in Pastor Nate's case - - and so many of us - - these emotions manifest themselves in sadness, anger, etc. Countering that for most of us.....was the love we felt from someone(s) close to us.....people who helped us process the bad stuff in our lives.

Over-Powering
Effects of
God's Love!

- We ALL deal with these two strong competing forces in our lives....LOVE and FEAR. We can be influenced more so by the latter (which will *always* be there), leading to all kinds of destructive behavior....or.....allow ourselves to be transformed/fundamentally shaped by the love we experience ...THE ULTIMATE SOURCE OF OVER-POWERING, TRANSFORMING LOVE IS GOD HIMSELF. This is the core message today.

1 John 4: 7-8 - - (7) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. (8) Anyone who does not love does not know God because God is love.

Love Each
Other

- "LOVE ONE ANOTHER".....this is the 3rd time in this Book that John commands us to do so. It must be important!...if not sometimes difficult! John defines love for us ...with God being the source *AND* the personification of love. In that context, when we experience love from any source, we're getting (just) a glimpse/taste of the perfect, overpowering love of God.

Know/Love
Him

- John says that, in order to love one another (truly and consistently), you have to be 'born of God' (ie. 'Born Again')....experiencing a newness/freshness of life through God! And you have to know Him.

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- 1 John 4: 9-15 - (9) In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. (10) In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (11) Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (12) No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us. (13) By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. (14) And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. (15) Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.
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... As God
LOVES US!

Be 'Born
Again'!

Trust In
Him!

- Two steps to be 'born again': Step One: Understand how God has loved and sacrificed for us (ie.-He sent His Son!!!) 1. V-9...So that we might live through Him...2. V-10..who willingly/lovingly substituted Himself for our sins.... (propitiation). 3. V-14..To be the Savior of this world. The pre-supposition to this 1st step???...from birth, we are inherently sinful in our rebellion against Him.....which separates us from Him. That separateness would keep us from His love *except* that God loved us so much He sent Jesus, on our behalf, to satisfy His wrath over our sins.
- Step 2: We need to meaningfully respond to that love. We have to believe, genuinely, that Jesus is the Savior of the world and YOUR (only) SAVIOR to whom you place your complete faith and trust (V 15) God abides in him and he in God). This is to be BORN AGAIN to eternal life with Him.
- Born Again is *not*: being born in religious heritage....or, merely trying to be "good"...nothing can pay the penalty for your sin short of believing and trusting in Jesus Christ who paid for your sins...past, present and future.
- Being Born again....starting that relationship can happen anytime....through His grace, its your choice to genuinely and completely put your faith and trust in Him. Upon being adopted into His family, your life is transformed!

1 John 4:16-21 (16) So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in Him. (17) By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgement, because as He is so also are we in this world. (18) There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. (19) We love because he first loved us. (20) If anyone says, "I love God", and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. (21) And this commandment we have from Him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Heartfelt
Faith In
His LOVE!

Abide In
Him!

His Love/
Our Acceptance
is
Transforming!

- So, to be "BORN AGAIN" is to both have knowledge (intellectually) of and pure/ absolute belief (in our hearts) of Jesus Christ and God's love for us. Pastor Nate relays personal story serving to emphasize the 'human process' of transforming from 'hoping for love' to acquiring true confidence, trust and surety in love. Believing in God's love 'from the depths of our being' is life transformative. Thereby: 1. We abide in Him (V 16) 2. His love is perfected in us (V17); 3. We can have confidence (V 17); Perfect love casts out fear (V 18).
- Don't be damaged by your fears and its impact on your capacity to love.....rely on God's love...receive it and reflect it.....allow it to transform us.
- Pastor Nate gives testimony that he came to know/trust in the Lord at eight years old.....then was subjected to various church culture that embraced the notion that the kind and quantity of sin could completely break a relationship with God.....causing one to be unworthy of and ineligible for salvation. He persevered through these tenuous times because of God's love for him. Ultimately and at college, CRU and related *bible-based* teaching inspired and restored him (in the re-realization of Christ's love for him).....and allowed him to manifest that confidence as a student leader in faith....indeed, transformed by His love.
- This experience reinforces V 19.....WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US!!!

EMBRACE GOD'S LOVE!!!