

# God's Wounded Love

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(Luke 13:31-35)

## I. Introduction

A. The depth of a parent's love is hard to understand... unless you are a parent.

1. Mother carries child for 9 months... an all-out assault on her person.
  - a. Her eventual relief comes only in enduring the agony of the birth itself.
  - b. Once you have a baby, you have a baby-- 2:00 a.m. feedings, sicknesses
  - c. And there are expenses— doctor's bills, clothes, food, braces, college
2. It's really surprising more parents don't adopt the Mark Twain approach
  - a. He suggested you put kids in a barrel and feed them through a hole.
  - b. And when they turn thirteen, you plug up the hole! (*He didn't like kids*)
3. Why do parents do it? No logical reason, only a very illogical one— LOVE

B. But what happens when a parent's love is deeply wounded?

1. We have all known cases where children reject the parent and parent's love.
  - a. Maybe the child adopts a lifestyle that rejects all the parent holds dear.
  - b. Or maybe the child blames the parent unfairly for all that's wrong in life.
2. What happens to a parent's love when that love is rejected or refused?
  - a. Often nothing happens—parent continues to love... and hurt terribly.
  - b. **Story:** Minister whose son had dishonored and abandoned his family
    - 1) The father had no address to find the boy, just an area in London
    - 2) He paid street musician to walk with him playing son's favorite song
    - 3) For days, we walked seeking a son who would not know his love
3. C.S. Lewis (*The Four Loves*) reminds us there is always risk with love  
*To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one.... The only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers of love... is Hell.*
  - a. To love is to risk being hurt, and even a parent's love can be wounded
  - b. To what length will a parent go—or not go—to win back a lost child?

C. God is presented in scripture as the parent who has been wounded by love

1. God is the loving father who seeks his rebellious children (**Hosea 11:1-3**)
2. Our daily reading for Thursday shows us this wounded love. (**Luke 13**)

## II. Wounded Love: The Text (Reading: [Luke 13:31-35](#))

A. Before we look at the text itself, notice briefly the context.

1. **Overall Context:** Last week we saw Luke organizing principle ([Lk 9:51](#))  
*As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.*
  - a. From this point, everything happens on the to Jerusalem... and the cross
  - b. That's the point of "*Surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem*" ([13:33](#))
    - 1) Jesus has his face firmly fixed on Jerusalem and on the cross.
    - 2) No threat from Herod or the Pharisees can divert him from His task.
2. **Immediate Context** is conflict that Jesus has with religious leaders.
  - a. **First**, there is familiar controversy over healing on Sabbath ([13:10-17](#))
    - 1) Jesus heals a woman who has been crippled—on the day of rest
    - 2) Jesus points out they water animals on Sabbath—they are humiliated
  - b. **Second**, Jesus is asked if only a few are going to be saved. ([13:22-30](#))
    - 1) Jesus points out that many who think they are on the inside aren't
    - 2) He tells his audience that they "must make every effort" to enter
  - c. **Finally**, this leads to the Pharisees baiting him ([Luke 13:31-33](#))

B. Their hard hearts leads to this cry of lament over Jerusalem ([Luke 13:34-35](#))

<sup>34</sup> *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"* <sup>35</sup> *Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'*"

1. Jerusalem had been the central city of the Jews from the time of David
  - a. It was there that the Temple stood, the symbol of God's presence.
  - b. Jerusalem was symbol of God's love; also where Jesus would die.
2. Jesus lament over Jerusalem is summed up by **two basic points**.
  - a. **First**, there is God's unrequited love for His beloved people.
    - 1) God is like a mother hen who wants to gather her chicks.
      - a) He loves Jerusalem with a deep love, but it is a love unreturned.
      - b) God showered love on city in so many ways, but he was rejected.
    - 2) Jesus' cry over Jerusalem is the wounded love of a rejected parent.
    - 3) His cry reminds us how much God loves us-- even when we rebel

- b. **Second**, there is also the statement her of God reluctant condemnation.
  - 1) Jerusalem will be left desolate; destruction would be her destiny
    - a) It was Jerusalem who cried, “*Blessed is he who comes in name of Lord*”
    - b) It was Jerusalem who cried, “*Crucify Him! His blood be upon us...*”
  - 2) Jerusalem had rejected God love, and she would pay the price.
- 3. Jesus says His destiny was in Jerusalem, the city that kills prophets.
  - a. He resolutely set his sights on Jerusalem and upon the cross.
  - b. But even then, His love was deep for the city that would kill him.

### III. Wounded Love: Today

- A. The message of the Bible is of a God that loves us more than heaven itself.
  - 1. The message of God’s unrelenting love appears early and repeated often.
    - a. Love is how God introduces himself to His people Israel (**Exo 34:6**)
 

*“The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness”*
    - b. Moses told Israel the reason God chose them was love (**Deut 7:8**)
 

<sup>8</sup>*But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*
    - c. **Psalm 136** boldly proclaims 26 times that “*His love endures forever*”
    - d. Jonah fled from Nineveh is that he knew God’s (**Jonah 4:2**)
 

*“I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love”*
  - 2. But the ultimate expression of God’s love for us is seen in the cross.
    - a. Golden text, “*God so loved the world that he gave...*” (**John 3:16**)
      - 1) Everything else in the Bible led up to God’s statement at Golgotha
      - 2) He would not give up; love pursued us all the way to the cross!
    - b. Jim McGuiggen, in his book *The God of the Towel*, puts it like this:
 

*I don’t know all that went on there that Friday, but I know that the Godhead was dealing with my sin; with your sin; with mankind’s sin! In spite of Jesus’ truthfulness and love, God’s anger reigned there. There was the godforsakenness of God’s own child. In the death of His Son, God does not merely make felt what it means to bear sins and die; He feels it Himself. In some sense, Sin and Death are no longer alien to God. Here God stands openly against God, the Father against the Son. The earth trembles. The sun fades away. There is the horror of the judgment. God is silent... This is what happened on Good Friday at 3 p.m. A Hell deeper and hotter than we can imagine opened its foul mouth and swallowed God’s Son... DON’T TELL ME THAT GOD DOESN’T LOVE YOU. ALL OF THAT TOOK PLACE FOR YOU! FOR MANKIND!*

- B. But please don't equate this love of God with to mushy sentimentality.
1. As Jesus weeps over the lost city, He tells us that it is just that— LOST.
    - a. Jerusalem was the city that killed prophets and that would will Him.
    - b. Jesus pours out God's wounded love, but notice one undeniable fact.
      - 1) Jesus desperately wants to gather them like a hen gather her chicks.
      - 2) But His loves is unreturned, unrequited— *"But you were not willing"*
    - c. Jesus respected their right to reject His love; He would not force them.
    - d. But the Holy City would face the consequence of rejection— ***desolation!***
  2. God loves you more than life itself, but He will not MAKE you love Him.
    - a. God has gone to incredible lengths to make sure you know He loves you.
      - 1) He has given you life with many blessings—the breath you just took
      - 2) He has surrounded you with images of His presence to bless-- people
      - 3) And ultimately, He sent His beloved Son to die to save you
    - b. And now God waits as the loving Father waited for the prodigal to return
    - c. God's arms are open, there are tears in His eyes— how God loves you!
- C. No matter how much God loves you, He will not force you to love Him back
1. God doesn't just love you; he respects your freedom to make a choice
    - a. It hurts Him if His children reject His love, but He respects your choice
    - b. He both offers grace and warns what happens if we refuse (**Dt 30:19-20**)  
*This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life...*
    - c. God encourages them to "now choose life" but he will not FORCE them
  2. In ***The Great Divorce***, C.S. Lewis captures God's wounded love like this—  
*There are only two classes of people: those who say to God, "Thy will be done," and those to whom God must say with tears in His eyes, "Thy will be done."*
    - a. Jesus cried over a city that rejected Him, but He respected their choice.
    - b. More than anything, Jesus wants you to love Him this morning
    - c. He will weep over you if you reject him... and say *"Thy will be done."*
  3. Listen to His gentle voice today... one day, it won't be so gentle!