

The Foundation Stone of our Faith
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4/22/18

John 3:14-20

I. **Text** – Read It - Notice the KEY ELEMENTS of this PASSAGE

A. **FIRST** – The REFERENCE to Moses – *Numbers 21:8-9*

a. Setting –

1. Israel COMPLAINING to Moses in the Wilderness

Numbers 21:5 – Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to DIE in the wilderness?
For there is no food and no water, and we LOATHE this miserable food.

2. GOD gets ENOUGH and sends fiery serpents to bite and kill them

Numbers 21:8-9 Then the Lord said to Moses, make a fiery serpent and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it he shall live. And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived

b. Significance – the BRASS SNAKE an emblem of SIN and
DISEASE

1. ALL HUMANITY has been bitten by the SNAKE (*seraph* – *fiery serpent*) of SIN

2. BUT JESUS was raised up on a CROSS for ALL TO SEE

3. We ONLY NEED to LOOK AT HIM and BELIEVE to be HEALED and SAVED from SIN

B. **SECOND** – The PROOF of God's LOVE for US

a. Father GAVE US the ONLY WAY to become COMPLETELY UNITED WITH HIM

b. He SENT HIS ONE AND ONLY SON to ATONE FOREVER our SIN

Atone – expiate or make amends for – to remove our sin from life's equation

The GIVING of HIS SON is the PROOF of HIS LOVE for ALL MANKIND

C. **THIRD** – HIS LOVE commands a RESPONSE from US to BELIEVE INTO Him

a. What does this mean?

1. We must RECEIVE HIM into our lives through FAITH
2. ACCEPTING the TRUTH about JESUS personally
3. EMBRACING the TRUTH of WHO Jesus IS
4. Coming into UNION with the FATHER through SURRENDER to JESUS
5. GROWING in the INNER CONFIDENCE of that REALTIONASHIP

The **FOUNDATION STONE** of our **FAITH** is the **UNDENIABLE INTERNAL REVELATION** that **JESUS LOVES YOU** and **ME** without a **DOUBT!**

And that **NO POWER** in **HEAVEN** or **EARTH** can **STOP IT**

b. What ELSE?

1. He does not CONDEMN, but rather RESCUES!
2. To RESCUE SOMEONE is to DELIVER them from HARM or EVIL!

JESUS is the ORIGINAL FIRST RESPONDER!!

3. Adam OPENED the DOOR to SEPARATION and CONDEMNATION
4. Jesus IS the DOOR that RESCUES US and OPENS the WAY to RESTORATION and RENEWAL

II. That said, Let's LOOK at THIS – *Jude 3*

Dearly loved friend, I was fully intending to write to you about our amazing salvation we all participation, but I felt the need instead to CHALLENGE YOU to VIGOROUSLY defend and CONTEND for the beliefs that we cherish.

A. *Contend –epagonizomai - to fight or to struggle for something when the occasion arises*

1. Key phrase – **WHEN THE OCCASION ARISES**
- B. I'm not the sharpest pencil in the box, but this says to me that MY FAITH is going to be CHALLENGED
1. The ENEMY challenges it to get you to RENOUNCE IT
 2. Father uses those challenges to FORGE IT like STEEL and MAKE OUR RELATIONSHIP with HIM STRONGER than EVER
 3. Paul said to son Timothy in HIS STRUGGLE with false teachers:

1 Timothy 6:11-12 TIMOTHY, YOU ARE God's man, so RUN from all these errors. Instead, chase after true holiness, justice, faithfulness, love, hope, and tender humility (patience). So, FIGHT with FAITH for the winner's prize! Lay your hands upon eternal life, for this is your calling – celebrating in faith before the multitude of witnesses

If your FOUNDATION of LOVE IN JESUS is SOLID and SECURE, the FIGHT is OVER before it BEGINS

Love says you are HIS – Love says you are SECURE – Love says you are SHELTERED

LOVE DRAWS YOU to the FATHER in WHOM YOU WILL FIND PEACE and SAFETY and ETERNAL DIRECTION in the TIMES of TRIAL

MANY ARE CHOOSING TODAY TO DIE A MARTYR'S DEATH RATHER THAN RENOUNCE THEIR FAITH IN JESUS and ONLY the DEEP, UNSHAKABLE LOVE of JESUS ENABLES THIS to even be POSSIBLE!

- C. BUT FOR YOU and ME:
1. He IS NOT ASKING us to DIE a MARTYR'S DEATH
 2. He is EXPECTING US to LIVE a MARTYR'D LIFE!

WILLINGLY laying down our SELFISH DESIRES and PICKING UP HIS!

And ONLY LOVE for HIM will ENABLE ONE to DO THIS

III. Never DOUBT the Jesus CONTENDS for YOU! – Luke 13:6-9

There was a man who planted a fig tree in his orchard. But when he came to gather fruit from his tree he found none, for it was barren and had no fruit. So, he said to his Gardener, For the last three years I've come to gather figs from my tree, but it remains fruitless. What a waste! Go ahead and cut it down! But the Gardener said, Sir, we should leave it

one more year. Let me fertilize and cultivate it then let's see if it will produce fruit. If it doesn't produce fruit by next year, we'll cut it down.

- A. The reference is to Israel who had were the planted of the Lord and whom God had expected a favorable return
 - 1. But Israel had DISAPPOINTED the FATHER
 - 2. Instead of a BLESING, they were a REPROACH
 - 3. So, Father was about to TAKE ACTION
- B. Jesus represents the Gardener who comes in MERCY and LOVE
 - 1. He was SEEKING A REPRIEVE
 - 2. He was asking that the TREE be GIVEN another OPPROTUNITY to break up the hard soil, be FED and WATERED so that the SOIL could be TRANSFORMED and the TREE YIELD FRUIT

Just as the GARDENER NEVER wanted to GIVE UP on the FIG TREE, so JESUS NEVER WILL GIVE UP on YOU!

You can GIVE UP on YOURSELF, but the LOVE of JESUS NEVER ALLOWS HIM to GIVE UP ON YOU!

Romans 8:38-39 So now I live with the confidence that there is nothing in the universe with the power to separate us from God's love. I'm convinced that His love will triumph over death, life's troubles, fallen angels, or dark rulers in the heavens. There is NOTHING in our present or future circumstances that can WEAKEN HIS LOVE. There is NO POWER above us or beneath us – NO POWER that could EVER be found in the universe that can DISTANCE US from God's passionate love, which is lavished upon us through our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One!

- C. If our ROOT is SECURE our TREE will be SECURE also
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar was CUT DOWN, but 7 years later he SPROUTED back UP from a RENEWED ROOT
 - 2. Job was POUNDED a LONG TIME, but a ROOT arose from the ASH HEAP from a RENEWED ROOT

LOVE RENEWS and RESTORES ALL of US to the PLACE of FRUITFULNESS in LIFE

IV. Song – Your Love Never Fails

Nothing can separate
Even if I ran away
Your love never fails

I know I still make mistakes
But You have new mercies for me every day
Your love never fails

You stay the same through the ages
Your love never changes
And may be pain in the night
But joy comes in the morning

And when the oceans rage
I don't have to be afraid
Because I know that You love me
Your love never fails

The wind is strong and the water's deep
I'm not alone in these open seas
'Cause Your love never fails

The chasm is far too wide
I never thought I'd reach the other side
'Cause Your love never fails

'Cause you stay the same through the ages
Your love never changes
Because I know that You love me
Oh no, love never fails

'Cause you stay the same through the ages
Your love never changes
It may be pain in the night
But joy comes in the morning
And when the oceans rage
I don't have to be afraid
Because I know that You love me
Love never fails