

Zion's River—Discipleship

Spiritual DNA

Session 2—God's Radical Love, Part 1

May 30th, 2023

1 Quick Review

- The Importance of Spiritual DNA

- The Core DNA of Zion's River
 - The "Gospel of the Kingdom" is always the message.
 - God's love is always the answer.
 - God's Spirit is always the path.
 - Heaven is always a *now* reality.

- Where does the Spiritual DNA course fit-in with your growth and partnership at Zion's River?

2 The Beginning of the Gospel

- If you do not understand the true nature of the love of God, you will not only get the Gospel wrong, but your Christianity will degrade into a religious system, like any other.

- **John 3:16-17**—The Gospel begins with God's love.
 - God's motivation begins with love for us, not disgust, or even hatred.

- **Luke 19:9-10 (NIV)** — **9** Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."
 - Key Word: Lost

- **Mark 2:17 (NIV)** — **17** On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."
 - God is not looking for the good or those who can maintain their goodness.

3 To truly understand God's love, you must see what truly happened in the Garden of Eden.

- **Genesis 3:1-8**
 - What was Satan's initial temptation?
 - Satan convinced Eve to question God's motives.

- Eve sees the tree as “desirable for obtaining wisdom.”
 - The desire to know “secret wisdom” was about gaining the power of personal righteousness—I can be right in my own eyes.

- Shame was birthed when Adam & Eve realized they lost fellowship with the Father.
 - We are always covering-up our lack.

- Adam and Eve’s desire to be the determiners of their own righteousness and their own destiny gave birth to sin.

- Our problem is the same: we desire the right to be right and to be the determiners of our own destiny.
 - Like it was with Adam & Eve, we’re continually reaching for the fruit of the “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.”

 - There’s no greater battle in our freewill than the issue of self-righteousness.

 - Sin is the consequence of self-righteousness.
 - **James 1:13–15 (ESV) — 13** Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. **14** But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. **15** Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

- The Power of free-will is given to all creation, regardless of where and when they reside.
 - When did Adam and Eve fall?

 - When did Satan fall from heaven?

 - The problem of “self” has little to do with location.

- As soon as you seek your own righteousness and holiness, it automatically puts you in a place of failure and condemnation.
 - Since you can’t live in a place of “less than,” we also create our own level of righteousness by which we condemn ourselves and judge everyone else.

- The Word of God clearly reveals how Jesus removes the curse that came through Adam in **Romans 5:12-21**. (See also **Matthew 1:21**; **Acts 13:38**; **1 Corinthians 15:3-4**; **1 Peter 2:24**)
 - Sin and death came to all because of Adam's choice to believe himself rather than the Father.

 - Righteousness and grace come to all because of Jesus' choice to believe His Father.
 - Note **v.18 and 20!**

- Now that death reigns, the kingdom of darkness is still using the same tactic as in the Garden.
 - **Hebrews 2:14-15 (ESV)** — ¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

 - We remain enslaved as long as we're controlled by the bookends of this life.

- A Prophetic Understanding of Our Times
 - **Judges 17:6 (ESV)** — ⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

4 The Love of God

- **John 3:16-17 (ESV)** — ¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.
 - The mission of Christ is not to increase condemnation!

- **Romans 5:6-10 (ESV)** — ⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.
 - Notice the timeline: you were forgiven and reconciled before you were saved!
 - God's love is radically different than ours!

- **1 John 4:16–19 (ESV)** — 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 judgment, 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.
 - Central to God's love is His hope to break-off all fear from our lives.

- **1 Corinthians 13:4–8a (NIV)** — **4** Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5** It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. **8** Love never fails.
 - God is love. He will not go against His own character!

 - Love “keeps no record of wrongs.”

- **Hebrews 10:12–14 (ESV)** — ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.
 - Praise the Lord—Jesus' sacrifice has been applied across the entire timeline!

 - We are free to BECOME what the blood already says that I AM!

- **The Prodigal Son—Luke 15:11-32**
 - The posture of the Father is one of waiting expectantly.

 - When did the Prodigal cease being a son?

 - There's a lesson in the older son's attitude: religious pride.