

The Love of God

DEFINITION

- ◆ The American Heritage Dictionary defines love as "an intense affection for another person based on familial or personal ties".
- ◆ Theologically it is defined as, "the attribute of His nature that moves God to give us His eternal and spiritual blessings."
- ◆ It is this attribute that guarantees that all things will work together for good for those that love the Lord.
- ◆ It is the basis of His redeeming work that initiates His Mercy and Grace in the work of the Atonement.

4 SCRIPTURAL STATEMENTS REGARDING GOD

1. "God is spirit" (John 4:24).
 2. "God is light" (1 John 1:5)
 3. "God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:28,29)
 4. "God is love" (1 John 4:8)
- ◆ Each statement is fully and equally true. God is Spirit who in His essence is Holy. However, these verses declare that God is also summed up perfectly as love, light, spirit and fire.
 - ◆ God's love is rooted in holiness, therefore it is a holy love that He loves us with, not a feeling that is effected by emotion or a perverted love based upon ones desires.
 - ◆ Many who talk about the love of God today are total strangers to the God of love.

5 ASPECTS OF THE LOVE OF GOD

1

THE LOVE OF GOD IS SELF-DETERMINING.

- ◆ There was nothing whatsoever in the objects of His love to call His holy love into exercise. In other words there is nothing in us to attract or prompt His love towards us. It is highly impor-

tant if God is to be honored that we should be quite clear that God's love for me and for each of "His own" was entirely unmoved by anything in us.

- ◆ The only reason why God loves any of us is found in His own desire and will: "*The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved thee*" DEUTERONOMY. 7:7,8.
- ◆ God has loved His people from everlasting, and therefore nothing in us can be the cause of God's love towards us from eternity.

"We love Him, because He first loved us" 1 JOHN 4:19

- ◆ God did not love us because we loved Him, but He loved us before we had any of love for Him.
- ◆ What is there in me to attract the love of God? Absolutely nothing. Rather, everything of me repels Him, everything in me causes Him to loathe me—sinful, depraved, a mass of corruption with "no good thing" in me.

- ◆ Romans 5:8
- ◆ John 13; 1

2 THE LOVE OF GOD IS ETERNAL.

Since God is eternal, then all His attributes are eternal including His love. Just as God has no beginning, His love has beginning; it is an eternal quality of God. Therefore, God's love toward me had no beginning and it can have no ending! Since it is true that "from everlasting to everlasting" He is God and since God is "love", then it is equally true that "from everlasting to everlasting" He loves His people.

- ◆ Jeremiah 31:3
- ◆ Ephesians 1:4,5

3 THE LOVE OF GOD IS SOVEREIGN.

- ◆ Since God Himself is sovereign and since He is love it follows that His love is sovereign.
- ◆ Because God is God, He does as He pleases. Because God is love, He loves whom He pleases. Such is His own express affirmation: "*Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*" ROMANS. 9:19.
- ◆ There was no more reason in Jacob why he should be the object of love than there was in Esau. They both had the same parents and being twins were born at the same time, yet God loved the one and hated the other! Why? Because it pleased Him to do so.

- ◆ Since it is true that God loves fallen sinners, why then does He hate fallen angels? Again because God is Sovereign
- ◆ There is nothing in a human that causes God to love us other than His sovereignty.

4 THE LOVE OF GOD IS INFINITE

- ◆ Everything about God is infinite. He fills heaven and earth. His wisdom is unlimited. He knows everything of the past, present and future. His power is unlimited, for there is nothing too hard for Him. So His love is without limit.
- ◆ His love has depth to it which no one can fathom. An extent that has no bounds and it is not based upon our response to Him.
 - ◆ Ephesians 2:4
 - ◆ John 3:16
- ◆ No tongue can fully express the infinitude of God's love, or any mind comprehend it: it "*passeth knowledge*" (Ephesians 3:19).
- ◆ The most extensive ideas that our limited mind can understand about Divine love are infinitely below its true nature. Our love is a mere emotion that changes daily based upon circumstance.

5 THE LOVE OF GOD IS IMMUTABLE

- ◆ Just as God Himself is unchangeable so His love can not change. His love towards us is full and complete and though we sin and grieve the spirit His love is constantly the same.
- ◆ Discipline vs. Judgment is the evidence of His love. He does not cast me aside, but restores me to His presence.
 - ◆ John 13:1
 - ◆ Hebrews 12:2
 - ◆ I Corinthians 11:32

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

*“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ROMANS 8:32-39

OBJECTS OF GOD'S LOVE

THE FALLEN CREATION

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ROMANS 8:19-22

THE LOST SINNER

- ◆ God revealed His perfect act of love as an expression of His mercy by providing Christ as a means of salvation for the lost. His love to the unsaved was in the provision of Christ.

“God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” ROMANS 5:8

THE ADOPTED CHILD IN CHRIST

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 1 JOHN 3:1

THE BACKSLIDDEN BELIEVER

- ◆ Zechariah 1:3

Jesus said: Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. REVELATION 3:19-20

THE FAITHFUL SAINT

APPARENT OBJECTIONS

1. If God loves me then why.....
2. How can a loving God....
3. A loving God would never send a person to hell
4. God is love now but in the Old Testament he was a God of wrath



LIFE APPLICATION

- ◆ God's Love is an active expression of His grace towards you as His Child
- ◆ God's love encourages you in knowing "He grieves when we grieve" (Isaiah 63:9)
- ◆ Just as Jesus wept at the death of Lazurus so Jesus bears our burdens
- ◆ His Love is the effect we feel from His grace in troubled times
- ◆ Nothing can separate us from His love
- ◆ Our Love to God is in our obedience.

"And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it." 2 JOHN 1:6

- ◆ God's discipline is evidence of His loving nature. Hebrews 12:5-11
- ◆ True love is expressed in the way we treat our fellow believers.

"And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us." 1 JOHN 3:23