

The Love of God

Lesson 7

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God is Love

1 John 4:8

8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:16

16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

God is Light

1 John 1:5-7

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

A Loving God is full of mercy and patience

Ex. 34:6-7

6 Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;

7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."

God's Wrath

Romans 11:22

22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise, you also will be cut off.

God's Love Shows Concern

God is genuinely interested in us and cares about us.

He is not indifferent about His creation; but is concerned about our well-being.

God's Love Shows Concern

1. What is so amazing about the fact that the creator would care about His creation (Ps. 8:3-4)?

Ps 8:3-4

3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,

The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;

4 What is man that **You take thought of him**,

And the son of man that **You care for him**?

God's Love Shows Concern

2. How personal is this concern (Lk 15:10; Gal 2:20)? Is that fact hard to believe?

Lk 15:10

10 “In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Gal 2:20

20 “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

God's Love is Impartial

God's love is not reserved only for a few (as the Calvinist would say). His love is for all those who bear His image and likeness.

Gen 1:26-27

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Acts 10:34-35

34 Opening his mouth, Peter said:

"I most certainly understand *now* that God is not one to show partiality,

35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

God's Love is Impartial

3. Identify a few examples from the OT that would demonstrate God's impartial love.

4. Pick out a few examples from the ministry of Jesus that would illustrate this point.

God's Love is Self-Giving

God will give Himself in whatever way is necessary to bless us.

He shares His power with us in the bounty of His creation. He shares Himself with us in communion and communication. But the ultimate example of this is seen in the cross.

God came in the flesh so He might die for us. The Creator gave Himself for the creature. 11

God's Love is Self-Giving

5. After John states that “God is Love” what does he say about the ultimate expression of that love (1 John 4:9-10)?

1 John 4:9-10

9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

God's Love is Self-Giving

6. What does Paul conclude as necessarily true in the light of God's sacrifice at the cross in Romans 8:32?

Rom8:32

32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

God's Love is Active

God's love is active in many ways:

a. In His providential blessings

Matt 5:43-48

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’

44 “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.

46 “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

47 “If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

48 “Therefore, you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

God's Love is Active

b. In His chastisement

Prov 3:11-12

11 My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord
Lord

Or loathe His reproof,

12 For whom the Lord loves He reproofs,

Even as a father *corrects* the son in whom he delights.

God's Love is Active

c. In the cross

John 3:16

16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

John 15:13

13 “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

God's Love is Active

7. How does Jesus describe God's active love (Mt 18:11-14)?

Mt 18:11-14

11 ["For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.]

12 "What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?

13 "If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray.

14 "So, it is not *the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.*

God's Love is Active

8. How does Paul describe God's active love (Eph 1:3-6)?

Eph 1:3-6

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

God's Love is Full of Affection

God's love is passionate toward us.

Consider some of the analogies describing God's relationship with His people:

a. Father to child

Hos 11:1

1 When Israel was a youth I loved him,

And out of Egypt I called My son.

Hos 1:4

4 I led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love,

And I became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their jaws;

And I bent down *and* fed them.

Romans 8:15

15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

God's Love is Full of Affection

b. Mother to child

Isa 49:15

15 “Can a woman forget her nursing child

And have no compassion on the son of her womb?

Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.

Isa 66:13

13 “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you;

And you will be comforted in Jerusalem.”

God's Love is Full of Affection

c. Husband to wife

Eph 5:25

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

God's Love is Full of Affection

d. Shepherd to flock

Ezekiel 34:11-22

11 For thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.

12 "As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.

13 "I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

14 "I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in ^brich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

15 "I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord God.

16 "I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.

17 "As for you, My flock, thus says the Lord God, 'Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.

God's Love is Full of Affection

d. Shepherd to flock

Ezekiel 34:11-22 cont.

18 'Is it too slight a thing for you that you should feed in the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? Or that you should drink of the clear waters, that you must foul the rest with your feet?

19 'As for My flock, they must eat what you tread down with your feet and drink what you foul with your feet!' ”

20 Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them, “Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

21 “Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

22 therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.

God's Love is Full of Affection

d. Shepherd to flock

Isa 40:11

11 Like a shepherd He will tend His flock,
In His arm He will gather the lambs
And carry *them* in His bosom;
He will gently lead the nursing ewes.

John 10:11

11 "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

God's Love is Full of Affection

9. Read Deut. 32:9-12. List the various ways God's affection for His people is described in this passage.

Deut. 32:9-12

9 “For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance.

10 “He found him in a desert land, And in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.

11 “Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.

12 “The Lord alone guided him, And there was no foreign god with him.

God's Love is Full of Affection

10. What should be our reaction to the thought of God's love for us (Isa 41:8-10, 43:1-4, 49:13-17, 62:4-5)?

Isa 41:8-10

8 "But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend,

9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth And called from its remotest parts And said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you.

10 'Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely, I will help you, Surely, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

God's Love is Full of Affection

Isa 43:1-4

1 But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!

2 "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you.

3 "For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place.

4 "Since you are precious in My sight, *Since* you are honored and I love you, I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life.

God's Love is Full of Affection

Isa 49:13-17

13 Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted.

14 But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, And the Lord has forgotten me.”

15 “Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.

16 “Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.

17 “Your builders hurry; Your destroyers and devastators Will depart from you.

God's Love is Full of Affection

Isa 62:4-5

4 It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken," Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate"; But you will be called, "My delight is in her," And your land, "Married"; For the Lord delights in you, And to Him your land will be married.

5 For as a young man marries a virgin, So, your sons will marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So, your God will rejoice over you.