

The Love of God

God loves us. 1 John 4:7 tells us to know that in our minds, but often we don't live that way. We forget about the Bible verses about God's love that reaffirm to us His care and concern for us.

Many of us grow up doubting the love of God because of the relationships we have with others. Broken relationships, hurt from others, or even our own bad choices and cause us to doubt why God would choose to love us. Sometimes well-meaning churches even misguide us into thinking that we need to earn God's love by behaving or acting "good enough". God demonstrated the greatest act of love when Jesus Christ died on the cross for us. We no longer have to work toward being love, it is given freely for all.

But the reality of God's love surrounds us day by day, as revealed in these inspiring Bible verses about God's love below. We learn that God's love is steadfast and unchanging, comforts us, is revealed to us through Jesus Christ, poured into us through the Holy Spirit, and compels us to love one another.

- How precious is your unfailing love, O God! - Psalm 36:7
- Your grace fountain keeps overflowing with love upon all who pray to you. – Ps.86:5
- Lord, your nurturing love is tender and gentle. You are slow to get angry yet so swift to show your faithful love.- Psalm 86:15
- Give thanks to the great God of the heavens! His tender love for us continues on forever!- Psalm 136:26
- The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. - Zephaniah 3:17
- We can now experience the endless love of God cascading into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who lives in us!- Romans 5:5

What makes God's love different than ours?

1. God's love is different from human love because it is a beautifying love. God does not find people who are beautiful and then decide to love them. Rather, he makes the objects of his love beautiful. They owe their beauty to him.
2. God Loves the Unlovely. By contrast, God loves us when we are unlovely to him. He finds us languishing in the filth of our sin and chooses to cleanse and make us holy. Samuel Crossman expresses this idea beautifully in his hymn: *Love to the loveless shown, That they might lovely be*. Christ is a husband who makes the church beautiful when he weds her, not a husband who wants to wed her because she is beautiful. Martin Luther put the contrast between divine and human love very well in his twenty-eighth thesis for the Heidelberg Disputation in 1518: "The love of God does not find, but creates, that which is pleasing to it. The love of man comes into being through that which is pleasing to it."
3. Because LOVE is who He is...God is LOVE. Why does God love us if he does not find us beautiful? Quite simply, because this is who he is, as Leon Morris explains: "He loves not because of what we are, but because of what he is: he is love." Chesed and Agape

5 truths to always remember about the love of God

1. God's love is **incomprehensible**.

No human mind can comprehend God. We cannot *define* God. We cannot provide a comprehensive account of who he is. He "dwells in unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:16). If God is incomprehensible, then so is his love. While we may and must speak truthfully about his love, we can never fathom it, because it is *divine* love, as different from our love as his being is different from our being. *If God is incomprehensible, then so is his love.*

2. God's love **can be experienced**.

We cannot define God but we experience His love, because He has made it known. In the Bible, in the person of Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, and by the glory of the cross. It is possible because God makes himself known to us in reality. The power of the love of God is the power that will change you and the world around you. True transformation comes by the power of His love.

3. The pictures of God in **the Bible** show us His love.

God is Father, a beloved Heavenly Father filled with love. He loves the wayward and brings them back to His heart (Prodigal Father). He clothed the naked couple in the garden, because He loved them and didn't want shame to be part of their lives. He gives good gifts, He provides for our needs, He shows through nature, circumstances, even through the loving care of friends and family that God is love. The picture of JESUS as the LOVER of OUR SOUL – and Jesus came to reveal the Father. The Bridegroom God! His heart is ravished over YOU!

4. Beware of leaping to **wrong conclusions** about God's love.

We are often slow to see the love of God in our present circumstances and quick to misinterpret the love of God by our circumstances.

This comes out very clearly when someone says something like, "If I were a God of love then I . . ." The reasoning that follows is usually untethered from God's wider portrayal of himself in Scripture. When we do this God becomes in effect just a massive projection of our own selves, a shadow cast onto a screen behind us with all of our own features magnified and exaggerated.

The next time you are tempted to come to a wrong conclusion about God's love, stop and look again at the blood of the cross. Take communion and praise Him for His love that was made visible.

5. God's love truly received always draws out from us **a response of love**.

In others words, love begets more love. The contemplation of divine love in its biblical fullness is never something that ends in itself. Our rest in God never finds its fulfillment in ourselves but always leads us out of ourselves toward him and toward others. The love of God is to be lived as well as learned. The love of God *for* us begets love *in* us for him and for others. The true Word of love that we have in the Bible, if we have it truly, will abide in us, and will not return empty as, by miracles of grace, we make glancing reflections of the immeasurable love of God visible to others in our own lives.

What Jesus wants is for us to love Him like He loves us. He demonstrated that love for us on the cross. Jesus suffered and died for us, bearing our sins on Calvary's cross, not because He was forced to, but because of His love for us and His desire to bring us into relationship with the Father.

Jesus has never lost His passion for us. His love for us burns white hot. His desire to be in relationship with us is as strong today as it was when He made us, it is as passionate today as it was when He hung there on the cross and said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Jesus loves us and He wants us to return the love. We the Church, are His bride. He loves us like a husband loves the wife of youth.

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