

## Knowing God Series #14

"Our Infinitely Loving God" Pt 2



### Review

- I. The nature of God**
- II. The Attributes of God**
  - A. God is infinitely GREAT in His ability / capacity**
  - B. God is infinitely and perfectly PURE in His morality and judgments**
  - C. God is infinitely GOOD in His relationships**
    - 1. God's infinite love**

### THE CONCEPT OF GOD'S LOVE

I had a suspicion that I would not be able to communicate what I wanted to communicate concerning God's love. It doesn't take much to discover the huge place love occupies in the scriptures. God is love. It is who He is and directs all of His relationships. It is the basis of His eternal interaction within the Trinity. The members of the Trinity are separate yet one. They communicate with each other. They have distinct personalities flowing out of one essence. Love permeates their relationship. They have never related any other way throughout eternity. The Father pursues and practices meaningful and fulfilling connection with the Son and the Spirit, the Son the Father and the Spirit, the Spirit the Father and the Son; perfect and satisfying community.

He created us to relate in community with the same passion for meaningful connection. At the beginning, Adam and God meaningfully communicated and related in the garden. Sin changed all that. Jesus, the second Adam, came to restore the kind of relationship God had with His creatures in the beginning.

Listen to the longing of Jesus concerning US!

*"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. John 17:20-21*

God promises ultimate restoration of unity and community.

*What harmony has Christ with Satan, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," says the Lord Almighty. 2 Corinthians 6:15-18*

Each of the members of the Trinity pursues and practices meaningful connection (loves) with us with the same intensity as they do with each other. It is absolutely mind blowing!

Love is the basis of all God's interaction. He loves in complete balance and harmony with all of His other attributes. All His other attributes balance and complement His love.

### **What is it?**

Love is better described and illustrated than defined. The people at the time of the New Testament employed three different words which we usually translate "love".

The three common words translated "love" all involved the idea of some kind of mutual benefit.

**Eros** – Feeling love focused on mutual pleasure.

**Storge** – Family love focused on mutual family connection. (parent child, siblings)

**Philos** – Friendship love focused on mutual companionship, brotherhood, interests, and warm fondness

We could use the word "love" to express any one of these concepts.

"I love you dear." You make me feel good.

"I love you sis." I am glad you are part of my family.

"I love you friend." I enjoy hanging out with you brother.

David had such a relationship with Jonathan (who was considerably older).

*I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; you have been very pleasant to me. Your love to me was more wonderful than the love of women. 2 Samuel 1:26*

This was not erotic love but a deep friendship connection.

God pursues relationship and practices benevolence with His flawed and helpless creatures apart from their merit or loveliness. His passion comes by reason of His own choice to pursue and practice meaningful connection.

The Holy Spirit dusted off an unused Greek term to refer to this kind of unconditional love.

**Agape** – Foundational love based on the will and character of the one loving.

It is a passion to pursue and maintain a meaningful relationship based on the character of the one loving apart from the character and conduct of the one being loved.

*Agape love begins with a **DESIRE** to meaningfully connect with people that stimulates a **DECSION** to pursue connection and results in **DEEDS** that demonstrate care, promote and maintain connection.*

God has a passion to meaningfully connect with His creatures.

God pursues such a connection with His creatures.

God demonstrates that passion and pursuit with unconditional acts of love.

The whole message of the Bible is about the establishment of the kingdom of God with perfect unity and community between the king and all the citizens.

## THE APPLICATION OF GOD'S LOVE

- **God's love for us**

John wrote about coming to know and believing God's love for us.

*I (Jesus) in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. John 17:23*

Interesting that living together in unity is one of the graphic proofs of genuine love.

How do we know that God really loves us?

### **The Scriptures declare it over and over.**

God so loved the world.

God's love actually encompasses all the categories of love.

**The feeling aspect (eros)**

**The family aspect (storge)**

**The friendship aspect (philos)**

**The foundational aspect (agape)**

### **God's actions demonstrate it.**

*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 3:16*

*We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us. 1 John 3:16-18*

### **The Holy Spirit confirms it.**

The Holy Spirit saturates the heart with God's love.

*The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Rom 5:5*

The Holy Spirit empowers us to maintain a relationship with Jesus and come to a deeper understanding of Christ love leading to complete saturation with God's fullness part of which is love.

*I (Paul) pray that God would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:16-19*

The Holy Spirit testifies as to our connection to the family of God.

*The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. Romans 8:16-17*

- **God's love in us**

*I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." John 17:26*

*The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Rom 5:5*

This passage could be interpreted two ways.

1. An understanding of God's love is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.
2. God's love is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

I think the Holy Spirit does both.

Note the what, where and who in this verse.

God pours His love

God pours His love in our hearts

God pours His love in our heart by the Holy Spirit.

The verb employed along with its particular tense stands out. The word translated "poured out" indicates a flooding or permeation; to spill over. Paul used a perfect tense verb indicating a specific action bringing about ongoing results. In this passage Paul meant us to understand that at conversion God flooded our hearts with His love by a work of the Holy Spirit and it is still flooded to overflowing.

*Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. John 7:37-39*

Don't say you aren't loved. Don't say you can't love others. If the Holy Spirit lives there, there is an overflow of love there.

*For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but (God has given a capacity for power and love and discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7*

God imbeds His love in us in sufficient measure to heal our own hearts and overflow to others.

## • God's love through us

God intended to complete the cycle of love by allowing His love to flow through us to others.

Love for God and others is the summary of the entire Bible.

*And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' "This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." Matthew 22:37-40*

It is God's love for us and in us that enables us to demonstrate God's love through us. The only way we can love God or others is because God loved us first and imbedded His love in our hearts. God teaches us by precept and example to love.

*Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; 1 Thessalonians 4:9*

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk (live) in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. Ephesians 5:1-2*

Love is the first evidence of one directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Gal 5:22

We are told to speak truth in the context of loving relationships Eph 4:15

Not so much confronting sin with "tough love", but speaking upbuilding truth to one another.  
*but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper*

*working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. Eph 4:15-16*

Paul instructed husbands to love their wives like Christ loves the church. Just because there is no direct command to wives to “agape” their husbands, God does command all of us to “agape” one another. The older women are instructed to teach the younger women to “phileo” their husbands.

God’s sacrificial love for us motivates our love for others.

*We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. 1 John 3:16-18*

*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. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. John 4:7-21*

Today I don’t want you to just know God’s love. I want you to believe it and feel it. His love casts out all fear. His love heals the hurts from past rejection. This love never changes. His love does not depend on my merit. God chooses to continually love us. He knows everything about us and still chooses to love us. He is all powerful so nothing can prevent Him from loving us. He is everywhere present so His love is always available. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

*But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:37-39*

**Agape love begins with a DESIRE to meaningfully connect with people that stimulates a DECISION to pursue connection and results in DEEDS that promote and maintain connection.**

God has a passion to meaningfully connect with His creatures.

God passionately pursues such a connection with His creatures.

God demonstrates that passion and pursuit with unconditional acts of love.

Paul told the Romans in chapter 12 to love unhypocritically and as an expression of gratitude for God’s abundant mercies shown to us. I am not sure what hypocritical love looks like.

Perhaps it is going through the motions without a passion to really pursue a meaningful relationship. He does describe what unhypocritical love looks like through the rest of the chapters.

Abhorring what is evil, cling to what is good.

Being devoted to one another in brotherly love (phileo)

Not lagging behind in diligence but fervently serving the Lord

Rejoicing in hope

Persevering in tribulation  
Being devoted to prayer  
Contributing to the needs of fellow believers  
Practicing hospitality  
Blessing and cursing those who persecute us

If you have not fully embraced this incomprehensible love for you, you will never fully express it to others.

*The LORD your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy. Zephaniah 3:17*

Don't let the enemy convince you otherwise. Know it and believe it. We sang the song "Think about His love" last week. I don't want you to just think about it but know it and believe it. The Scriptures declare it.  
The Lord unmistakably demonstrates it.  
The Holy Spirit confirms it.

We have declared the Scriptures. We have pondered the demonstrations. Now listen to the Spirit's confirmation. Right now I want you to feel His love.

Respond to and celebrate the Father's love.  
*"Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so"*

*Verse 1*

*Lord I come to You let my heart be changed renewed flowing from the grace that I found in You  
And Lord I've come to know the weaknesses I see in me will be stripped away by the pow'r of Your love  
Hold me close let Your love surround me bring me near Draw me to Your side  
And as I wait I'll rise up like the eagle and I will soar with You  
Your Spirit leads me on in the pow'r of Your love*

*Verse 2*

*Lord unveil my eyes let me see You face to face the knowledge of Your love as You live in me  
Lord renew my mind as Your will unfolds in my life in living ev'ry day by the pow'r of Your love*

*Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted,  
be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace  
will be with you.*

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.  
2 Corinthians 13:11-14*