

## THE LOVE OF GOD

Today we take a look at the love of God. Even though we have heard over and over that “God is love,” do we really know what this means? We will seek to understand God’s love as well as what may keep us from experiencing this love by addressing two key questions:

What does a loving God look like?

A God who would spare nothing whatsoever to have a relationship with me.

**Romans 8:32 NKJV** He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

A God who wants what is best for me at all times.

**Jeremiah 29:11 NLT** For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

**Romans 8:28 NLT** And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

A God who has chosen me to be His friend!

**John 15:12-16 NKJV** <sup>12</sup> This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. <sup>14</sup> You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. <sup>15</sup> No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

A God who is impacted by my emotional state.

**John 11:33-36 NLT** <sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. <sup>34</sup> “Where have you put him?” he asked them. They told him, “Lord, come and see.” <sup>35</sup> Then Jesus wept. <sup>36</sup> The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!”

**Psalms 56:8 NLT** You keep track of all my sorrows. □ You have collected all my tears in your bottle. □ You have recorded each one in your book.

A God who is so happy with me, that He burst into singing!

**Zephaniah 3:17 NLT** For the Lord your God is living among you. □ He is a mighty savior. □ He will take delight in you with gladness. □ With his love, he will calm all your fears. □ He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.”

What prevents us from experiencing the love of God more fully?

Shame in our heart.

**1 John 4:17-19 NKJV** <sup>17</sup> Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. <sup>19</sup> We love Him because He first loved us.

Shadows from our past.

**Matthew 23:37-38 NLT** <sup>37</sup> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God’s messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn’t let me. <sup>38</sup> And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate.

Shouts from our enemy.

**John 8:43-45 NLT** <sup>43</sup> Why can't you understand what I am saying? It's because you can't even hear me! <sup>44</sup> For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> So when I tell the truth, you just naturally don't believe me!

Shutting out relationships.

**1 John 4:11-12 NLT** <sup>11</sup> Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.