

## KNOWING GOD LSN 6

## GOD IS LOVE

## OVERVIEW

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## IX. Love

- A. Short Definition: God is committed to our best.
- B. Long Definition: God's delight to consistently and continually promote the best interests of the whole of creation and every individual member of it

## OVERVIEW

64-67

## IX. Love

- A. Short Definition
- B. Long Definition
- C. Explanation
- D. Key Verses
- E. Clarified
- F. Implications – it depends
  1. God's love is shown to all in the form of goodness.
  2. God loves we who are in Christ.

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- F. Implications: God is a God of love. So what?

The answers to this “so what” question will vary profoundly depending on the extent to which someone knows the love of God. The love of God is a constant, but one's knowledge of the love of God is a variable.

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**Typo alert:** Find ways to and no bullet  
**God permits all whom He loves to make their own decisions about whether to return His love. This decision profoundly alters the experience and enjoyment of God's love.**

The Bible, therefore, speaks of God's goodness and lovingkindness as the distinct privilege of some in a way that does not pertain to all.

*Showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments* (Deut. 5:10). Note the variables!

**Divine wrath is something men choose!**

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- “Scripture does not allow us to suppose that because God is love we may look to Him to confer happiness on people **who will not seek holiness**” (Packer, p. 110).
- “God's wrath in the Bible is never the capricious, self-indulgent, irritable, morally ignoble thing that human anger so often is. It is, instead, **a right and necessary reaction to objective moral evil**. God is only angry where anger is called for” (Packer, p. 136).

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- “God’s wrath in the Bible is something which men choose for themselves. Before hell is an experience inflicted by God, it is a state for which **man himself opts** by retreating from the light which God shines in his heart to lead him to Himself. The decisive act of judgment upon the lost is the judgment which they **pass upon themselves** by rejecting the light that comes to them in and through Jesus Christ. In the last analysis, all that God does **subsequently** in judicial action towards the unbeliever, whether in this life or beyond, is to show him, and lead him into, the full implications of the choice he has made” (Packer, p. 138).

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1. **Facet 2: God loves we who are in Christ.**
  - **In some sense that is reserved exclusively to those who are in Christ, we are the recipients of the “full strength” love of God.**
  - **Nothing can separate us from this love of God that is in Christ (Rom. 8:35-39).**
  - **This is “the great counterbalance” that puts the rejection of men in proper perspective.**
  - **Naturally, rejectors of God’s love will reject those who love God!**

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**Who will separate us from the love of Christ?**

*Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, “For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” 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** (Rom. 8:35–39).*

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1. **Facet 2: God loves we who are in Christ.**

- **Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35-39) - We experience God’s love with “zero resistance” and no light switch.**
- *“I 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).*
- **Oneness in Christ makes the fact that we are loved by God, loved liked His son(!), obvious even to the world!**

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- **Everything saints encounter is divine love driven.**

*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28). **Are those who love God the same as those loved by God?***

In the next verse those who love God are identified as those “whom He foreknew.” This rare word (5x’s NT) can denote “prior knowledge” (Acts 26:5) but is also the opposite of rejection (Rom. 11:2).

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- **Everything saints encounter is divine love driven.**

Ephesians speaks to the same concept: *He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. **In love**, He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will (Ephesians 1:4–5).*

Conceptual link: Those who are “called according to His purpose” and “foreknown” by God are those whom God loves.

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- **Everything saints encounter is divine love driven.**

Every situation is ordered by God's love (guidance = positive / discipline = negative) to serve my best interest. **Welcome every trial** – it represents God's means to accomplish what I most desire (hopefully) and what I most need (most definitely).

*"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent" (Rev. 3:19).*

**Everything I experience, including word and action discipline, is produced by love.**

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**If you are in Christ, absolutely everything you encounter is divine love driven!**

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- **Those shown God's love in Christ can show it.**

*But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him (1 John 2:5).*

"Love of God" can be either subjective or **objective** genitive. But according to John 14:21-23, being loved by God and love for God are two sides of the same coin.

**Evidence vector 1:** "Keeping His Word" – those who are loved by / love God, demonstrate it by word keeping.

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- **Those shown God's love in Christ can show it.**

*Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (1 John 4:11).*

**Evidence vector 2:** "Loving others" – those who have received God's love are thereby empowered to love others accordingly.

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- **Those shown God's love in Christ can show it.**

**This is an act of "right angle grace." Having received the love of God (vertical grace), we can and ought to impart the same to others (horizontal grace).**

*As each one has received a special gift (**charisma**), employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace (**charis**) of God" (1 Pet. 4:10).*

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- **God's love makes beautiful.**

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that (**hina = purpose clause**) He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that (**hina = purpose clause**) He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless (Eph. 5:25–27).*

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- **God's love makes beautiful.**

Christ did not love the church because she **was** beautiful but in order to **make** her beautiful.

**His love makes us better. This is profoundly liberating and freeing – He does not love me because I am worthy of His love.**

**He loves me for the express purpose of making me “worthy” of His love, that is, to be holy and blameless (and thereby capable of fully experiencing His love).**

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- **Love has always defined the relationship between Father and Son.**

*“Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for **You loved Me** before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24).*

**This is what make the crucifixion so remarkable. Take all of the “wrath” sown by humanity throughout all of time and give Jesus the full brunt of that experience. He did this in the name of love for us!**