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KNOWING GOD LSN 4

GOD IS LOVE

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WHAT IS TRUST ORDER?

The incommunicable attributes of God, the characteristics that distinguish God from us (like omniscience and omnipotence), would be of little practical benefit if God were indifferent to us.

God's exercise of His other attributes is vitally connected to His perfect regard for our good.

God is NOT indifferent to us, and this makes all His other attributes of profound practical relevance!

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WHAT IS TRUST ORDER?

So we will begin with God's love and grace and radiate out from there.

This arrangement will demonstrate the perfection of God's love.

This, in turn, will become the perfect bolster for trust and antidote for fear.

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GOD'S ATTRIBUTES WORK IN CONCERT

*"Give thanks to the God of heaven, For His lovingkindness is everlasting" (Psalm 136:26).*

"Lovingkindness" is not "love based on covenant" but love which is the source of good, including covenantal good (TWOT).

"Everlasting" is a term which reaches both back and forward in time (TWOT). God's love is a timeless constant because of His eternity and immutability.

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GOD DOES LOVES US!

*"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word."*

*"... 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 17:20, 23).*

**Parallel:** "Love one another just as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

**God loves all who believe in Jesus like He loves His own Son!**

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OVERVIEW

**IX. Love**

- A. Short Definition**
- B. Long Definition**
- C. Explanation**
- D. Key Verses**
- E. Clarified**
- F. Implications**

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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
  - God neither loves inconsistently nor ever ceases to love.
  - Promotion ≠ effect.

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## B. Long Definition

- God loves with a holy love, a love that is pure and wholly good. It is simple and undiluted.
- There is a strong grace / love connection.
- *Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has **loved** us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by **grace** (2 Thess. 2:16). **Grace** connects to love by "and" or "by."*

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## B. Long Definition

- In concert: God's love is based on grace and is expressed in patience.
- Grace and patience can both be considered facets to God's love, but we will consider them separately.

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## C. Explanation

- God's love promotes our best interests.
- *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).*
- The gift is the measure of God's love.
- This is an extraordinary statement describing God's love for every individual in the entire world.
- "Benefit received" is a variable.

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## C. Explanation

- God's love is especially extended, however, to "those who walk uprightly."
- *For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; **No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly**' (Psa. 84:11).*
- If God does not give us something for which we ask, we can be sure that doing so, at the time, would work our harm.

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## C. Explanation

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- *For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; **No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly**' (Psa. 84:11).*
- "Our best interests" are not the same as "what I most want" but "what I most need."

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**C. Explanation**

- God's love is especially extended, however, to "those who walk uprightly."
- *For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; **No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly**' (Psa. 84:11).*
- How would you explain the seeming contradiction between God's love for all and goodness only toward some?

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- *For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; **No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly**' (Psa. 84:11).*
- **Suggestion: Heart condition limits the extent to which someone can experience the beneficial effects of God's love.**

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*Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons **implored Him** to permit them to enter the swine. **And He gave them permission**" (Luke 8:32).*

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*And all the people of the country of the Gerasenes and the surrounding district **asked Him to leave them**, for they were gripped with great fear; and **He got into a boat and returned**. But the man from whom the demons had gone out was **begging Him that he might accompany Him**; but **He sent him away**, saying, "Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him" (Luke 8:37–39).*

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*"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often **I wanted** to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and **you were unwilling**" (Matt. 23:37).*

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**C. Explanation**

- **God is committed to use whatever is needed, including pain and hardship, to impart to us what matters most.**
- *My son, **do not reject** the discipline of the Lord Or **loathe** His reproof, For whom the Lord loves He reproveth, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights (Prov. 3:11–12).*
- **Notice the presence of double "benefit variables."**