

KNOWING GOD LSN 5

GOD IS LOVE

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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
- C. Explanation: God loves every individual supremely but every individual does not experience God's love to the same degree.

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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).

Although Jesus loves with a perfect love, His love does not violate another's will. Those who refuse His love fail to experience it.

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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 reproofs, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights* (Prov. 3:11–12).
- **Notice the presence of double "benefit variables."**

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D. Key Verses

- *Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth"* (Ex. 34:6).
- **"Compassion" is father love (Ps 103:13).**
- **"Lovingkindness" is love expressed in commitment.**

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D. Key Verses

- *Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting* (Psa. 136:1). **His love is a constant!**
- *The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love* (1 John 4:8).
- **1 John 4:8 is not a definition but describes an attribute of God.**
- *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us* (Rom. 5:8).

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E. Clarified

- **God loves without cause in the character or quality of the one loved.**
- *“The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the Lord brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt” (Deut. 7:7-8).*

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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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F. Implications

“When Paul says, ‘the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us’ (Romans 5:5), he means, not love for God, as Augustine thought, but knowledge of God’s love for us” (Packer, p. 106). **The HS has flooded our hearts with the knowledge of God’s love.**
This is surpassing, even overwhelming, knowledge.

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F. Implications

We can be rooted and grounded in this love, meaning our understanding of it has taken hold and provides our foundation.

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, . . . that you, being rooted and grounded in love (Eph. 3:14–19).

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F. Implications

But to plumb its depths is a surpassing challenge, albeit one worth pursuing and praying for!

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, . . . 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” (Eph. 3:14–19).

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

Our ability to see the implications of God’s love will grow with our ability to comprehend the “breadth, length, height, and depth” of God’s love.

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1. Facet 1: God's love is shown to all in the form of goodness.

- **Don't fixate on the goods but the Giver** - *Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17).*
- **For the man whom God loves and who knows he is loved by God, great loss (or gain) of all else is inconsequential.**