

Welcome to  
Who is God  
and  
Why Does it Matter to Us?

The Love of God



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# Three types of love

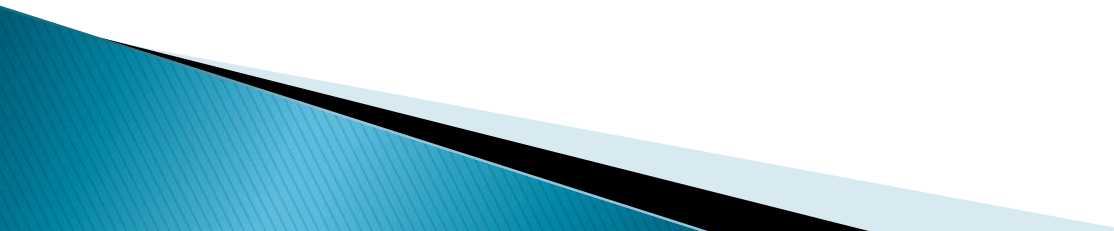
## **“I love you if...”**

This love is conditional on what the other person does.

- I love you if you love me back.
- I love you if you cook me meals, do my laundry, and clean the house.
- I love you if you make a lot of money and make my life comfortable.

## **“I love you because...”**

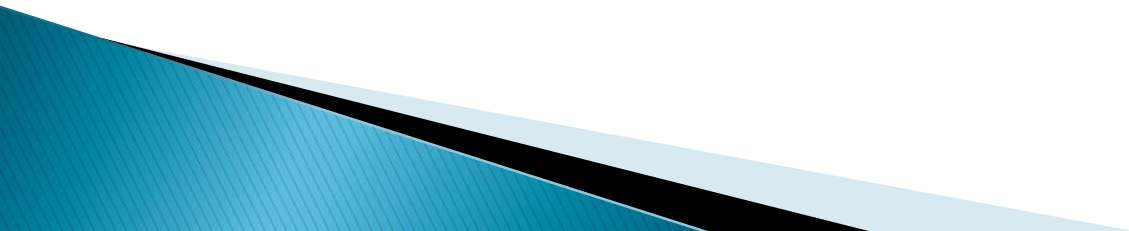
This love is conditional on what the other person is or has.

- I love you because you are attractive.
  - I love you because you are smart.
  - I love you because you are funny.
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# **“I love you no matter what”**

This love is unconditional. It does not depend on anything regarding the object but only on the source. God is the source and so as long as God is love we will be loved.

God loves us now, regardless of what we will become, regardless of what we are, and regardless of what we were.



# The Gospel in John 3:16

For God	the greatest lover
so loved	the greatest degree
the world	the greatest number
that He gave	the greatest act
His only begotten Son	the greatest gift
that whosoever	the greatest invitation
believes	the greatest simplicity
in Him	the greatest person
shall not perish	the greatest deliverance
but	the greatest difference
have	the greatest certainty
everlasting life	the greatest time
life	the greatest possession

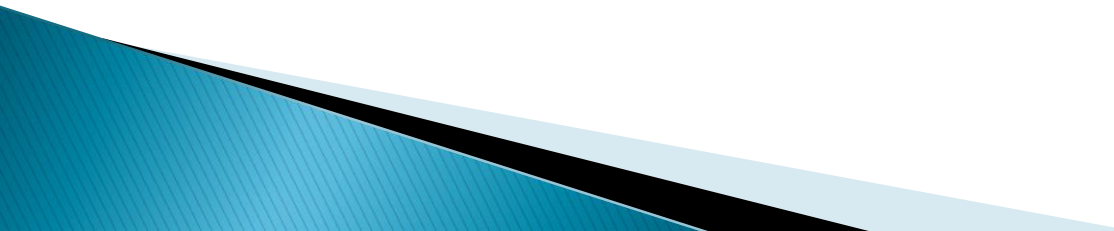
# Four Greek words for love

Storge (στοργή *storgē*) Affection

It is natural affection, like that felt by parents for offspring. It is mostly used in the context of relationships within the family. It is considered the most natural because it is the result of familiarity rather than coercion.

Philia (φιλία *philía*) Friendship

This is a dispassionate virtuous love. It includes loyalty to friends, family, and community, and requires virtue, equality and familiarity. It usually develops between people who share common interests or activities.



## Éros (ἔρως *érōs*) Romance

This is a passionate love, with sensual desire and longing; however, *eros* does not have to be sexual in nature. *Eros* can be interpreted as a love for someone whom you love more than the *philia*, love of friendship. It can also apply to dating relationships as well as marriage. It has a sense of emotional intimacy.

## Agápe (ἀγάπη *agápē*) True, Unconditional Love

Agape is the highest form of love there is. This is an unconditional love for others in spite of their character flaws and weaknesses. It is a difficult love to obtain simply because we are usually concerned more with ourselves and how the world and people around us affect us. *Agape* is used in 1 Corinthians 13 and is described there and throughout the New Testament as sacrificial love. In the New Testament it describes, amongst other things, the relationship between Jesus and the beloved disciple. Its meaning and usage is illustrated by self-sacrificing, giving love to all--both friend and enemy. It is used in Matthew 22:39, "Love your neighbour as yourself," and in John 15:12, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you," and in 1 John 4:8, "God is love."

# All of God's attributes affirm His love

- ▶ Because God is **eternal** and so simultaneously exists in all of time He loves us now as much as He loved us when Jesus was dying on the cross for our sins and as much as He loved us in eternally past and will love us in eternity future. There has never been a point in time when God first began to love us.
- ▶ Because God is **omniscient** and has always known everything about us there is nothing that we can say or do that will surprise Him and cause Him to pull away from us.
- ▶ Because God is **immutable** He will never change and become bitter or resentful towards us because we are so sinful and foolish.
- ▶ Because God is **holy** His love is pure.
- ▶ Because God is **just** His love disciplines.
- ▶ Because God is **omnipresent** His love is always with us.
- ▶ Because God is **omnipotent** His love is inseparable from us.
- ▶ Because God is **infinite** His love is limitless.

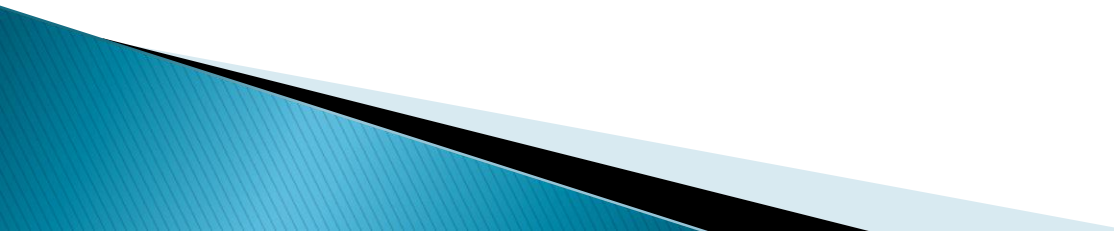


# The cause of salvation

God saves people simply because He wants to. The gratification that God gets from saving someone is deeper and more complex than the benefits that even we receive. What we sometimes see merely as a fact, “I’m saved,” God cherishes.

Song of Solomon 4:9

You have made my heart beat faster, my sister,  
my bride; You have made my heart beat faster  
with a single glance of your eyes.



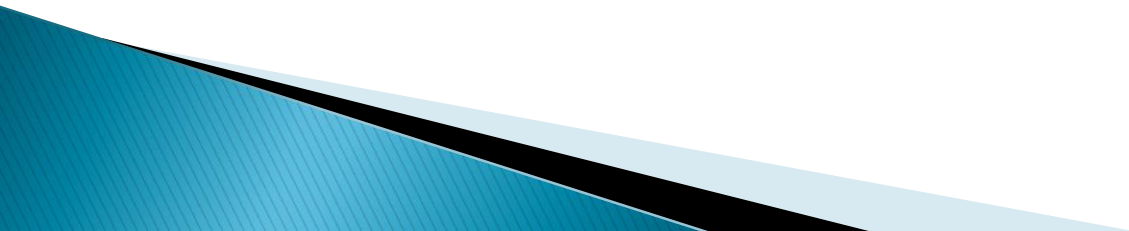
To be without sin is to be pure.

To be pure while having a deep hatred towards sin is to be holy.

To be holy and yet to die in order to pay for another's sins towards you is to love.

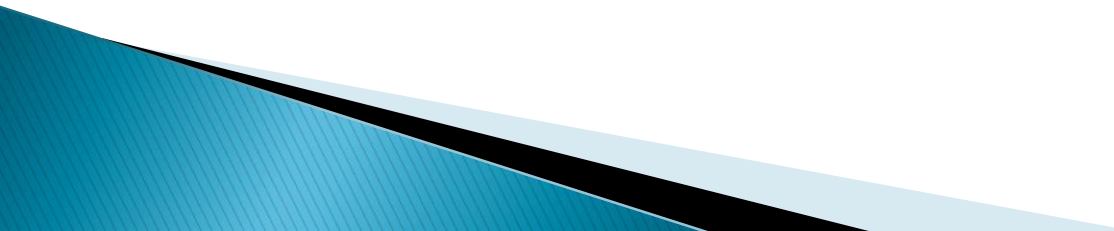
John 15:13

Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.



## Ephesians 2:4-7

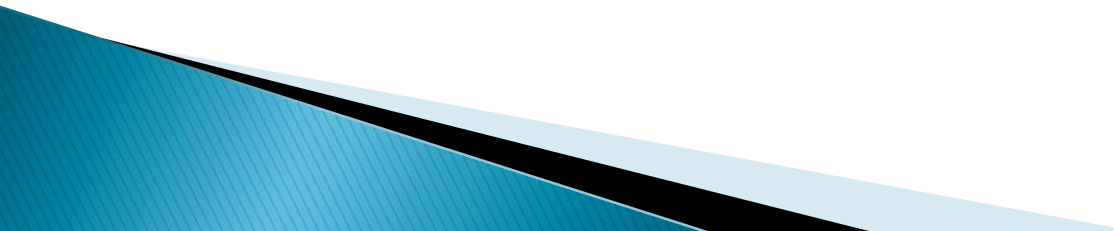
<sup>4</sup>But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,  
<sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),  
<sup>6</sup>and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>7</sup>so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

- ▶ We were dead in our sins -> His love made us alive
  - ▶ We were alone -> His love brought us to Christ
  - ▶ We were low -> His love raised us up
  - ▶ We were struggling on the Earth -> His love seated us in Heaven
  - ▶ Our destiny was eternal torment in Hell -> His love will show us the surpassing riches of His grace
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# God's unwavering love

Romans 8:32

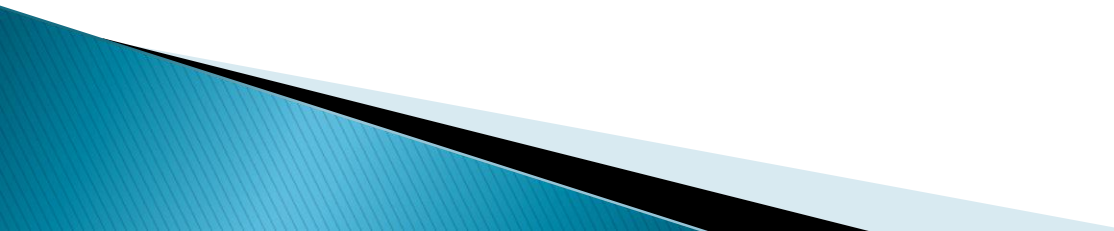
He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?



# God's giving

Ephesians 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

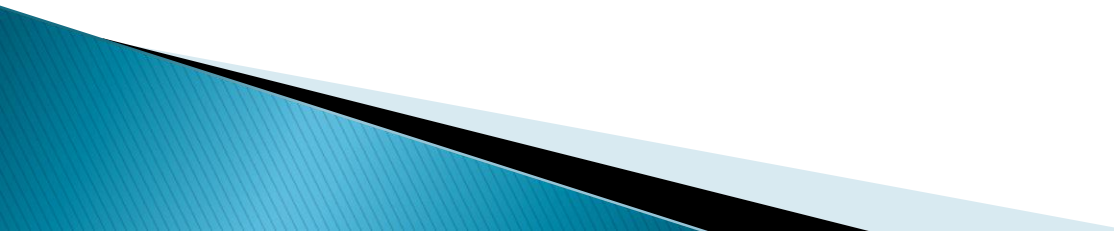


## Psalm 81:9–11

<sup>9</sup>"Let there be no strange god among you;  
Nor shall you worship any foreign god.

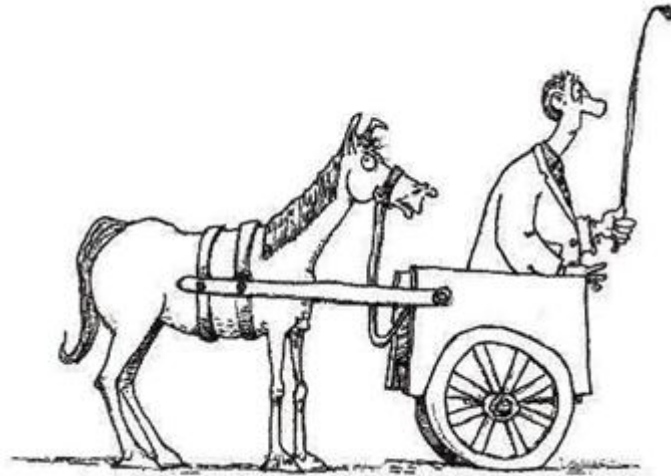
<sup>10</sup>"I, the LORD, am your God,  
Who brought you up from the land of Egypt;  
Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

<sup>11</sup>"But My people did not listen to My voice,  
And Israel did not obey Me.



# The cause of our obedience

We do not obey to get God to love and accept us.  
That is like putting the cart before the horse.



Because God already loves and accepts us, we should obey.



Psalms 116:12

What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me?



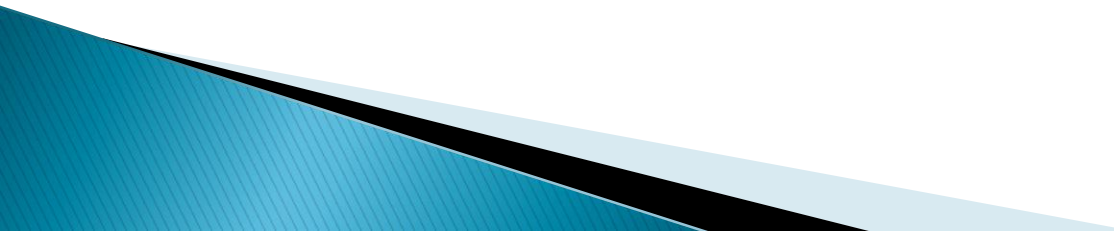
## Colossians 2:6

Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.

## 2 Corinthians 5:14–15

<sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;

<sup>15</sup>and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.



# What does God's love mean to us?

## Personalize God's love

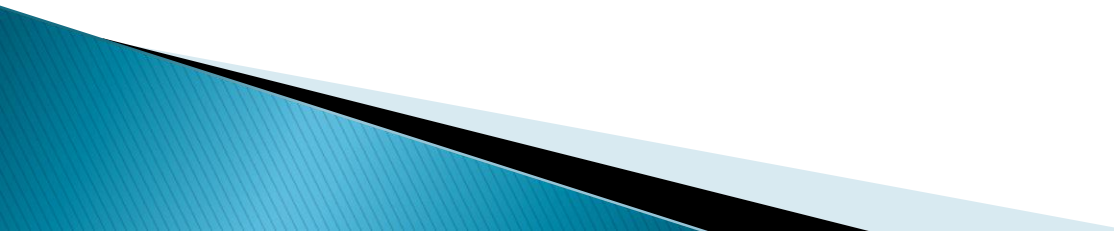
“For God so loved **me** that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16)

“Because the love of God has been poured out within **my** heart through the Holy Spirit who was given to **me**” (Romans 5:5)

“But God demonstrates His own love toward **me**, in that while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for **me**” (Romans 5:8)



# Discussion Questions


- 1) In addition to the ones discussed above, what are some other assurances that God's love mean to us?
  - 2) If God is so loving then why do so many people live in poverty or terrible suffering?
  - 3) If God's love is unconditional then why do we have to confess our sins?
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4) What does the fact that God unconditionally loves you mean to you?

5) Give some practical examples of God's love in action in your own life.

6) Give some practical examples of how you can love others with God's love.

7) Why do not trials and miserable circumstances prove that maybe God does not love us right at this moment?



8) Why is it important to personalize God's love for us? I.e., why is not it good enough to only claim that God's loves everyone?

9) Why do we sometimes doubt God's love for us?

10) Are there times when God does not love us? Why or why not?



# Situation

Amy has a terrible problem with feeling like she has no value or worth. She hates her appearance and thinks that everyone looks down on her. She was picked on while growing up both in school and by her parents. As a result, she struggles in her Christian walk since she does not think that she can do anything that anyone or even God will find useful. What are some things that you can say to encourage her and give her a new and victorious outlook on herself all the while emphasizing God's love?

