

# The God of love

August 3, 2014

## I. Love's foundation:

2 Co 13:11 ... be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

### **God is love**

1 Jn 4:8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 Jn 4:16)

### **Love is from God**

1 Jn 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; ..

### **We find love when we find Jesus**

1 Tim 1:14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus (2 Tim 1:13).

### **The love of God is manifested in us through Jesus.**

1 Jn 4:9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

### **Love is a (the) fruit of the Holy Spirit.**

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

### **We love because He first loved us.**

1 Jn 4:19 We love, because He first loved us.

### **God has given to us a spirit of love.**

2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

### **God's love controls me.**

2 Cor 5:14 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;

## II. God Is

There are 19 statements in the Scriptures declaring that God is:

### **1. God is love**

1 Jn 4:8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 Jn 4:16)

### **Thoughts from the experts:**

The translation should read, "God as to His nature is love." That is, God is a loving God. It is His nature to be loving. (from Wuest's word studies)

John does not say that love is God, but only that God is love. The two terms are not interchangeable. (from Robertson's Word Pictures)

God is love. God is light (1Jn 1:5), and the truth (1Jn 1:6); God is spirit (Jn 4:24) Spirit and light are expressions of God's essential nature. Love is the expression of His personality corresponding to His nature. Truth and love stand related to each other. Loving is the condition of knowing. (from Vincent's Word Studies)

It means that he loves, not because he finds objects worthy of his love, but because it is his nature to love. His love for us depends not on what we are, but on what he is. He loves us because he is that kind of God, because he is love. This kind of love is not found everywhere, or indeed anywhere

as a human achievement. We know it only because God showed it when he sent his one and only Son into the world. His purpose in doing this was to give us life. Life in the full sense comes to us through him alone. (from the New Bible Commentary)

This is the third of three expressions in John's writings that help us understand the nature of God: "God is spirit" (Jn 4:24); "God is light" (1Jn 1:5); and "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8). None of these is a complete revelation of God, of course, and it is wrong to separate them.

God is spirit as to His essence;

He is not flesh and blood. To be sure, Jesus Christ now has a glorified body in heaven, and one day we shall have bodies like His body. But being by nature spirit, God is not limited by time and space the way His creatures are.

God is light.

This refers to His holy nature. In the Bible, light is a symbol of holiness and darkness is a symbol of sin (Jn 3:18-21; 1 Jn 1:5-10). God cannot sin because He is holy. Because we have been born into His family, we have received His holy nature (1 Pt 1:14-16; 2 Pt 1:4).

God is love.

This does not mean that "love is God." And the fact that two people "love each other" does not mean that their love is necessarily holy.

It has accurately been said that "love does not define God, but God defines love." God is love and God is light; therefore, His love is a holy love, and His holiness is expressed in love. All that God does expresses all that God is. Even His judgments are measured out in love and mercy (Lam 3:22-23) (from the Bible Exposition Commentary).

## **2. God is true**

John 3:33 "He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true.

## **3. God is spirit**

John 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

## **4. God is for me (us).**

Rom 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (Ps 56:9)

## **5. God is with us**

Isa 8:10 For God is with us.

## **6. God is (the one who) justifies**

Rom 8:33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;

## **7. God is faithful**

1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, ... (1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 1:18)

## **8. God is holy**

1 Cor 3:17 ... for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are. (Ps 77:13)

## **9. God is a consuming fire**

Heb 12:29 for our God is a consuming fire. (Dt 4:24)

## **10. God is light**

1 John 1:5 ... God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

## **11. God is one**

Gal 3:20 Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one. (Mk 12:29)

## **12. God is a warrior (fighting for you)**

Zeph 3:17 The LORD your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. (Ex 14:14; Nu 21:34; Dt 1:30; 3:22; 20:4; Jos 10:42; 2 Chr 13:12; 20:17, 29; Ps 44:3)

### **13. God is giving to us:**

**The land** - Dt 2:29 the land which the LORD our God is giving to us.  
(Ex 20:12; Deut 4:1, 21, 40; 5:16; 9:6; 25:15; Josh 1:11-15)

**An inheritance** - Dt 4:21... the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

### **14. God is compassionate**

Ps 116:5 God is compassionate. (Dt 4:31; 2 Chr 30:9)

### **15. God is mighty**

Job 36:5 Behold, God is mighty but does not despise any;

### **16. God is judge**

Ps 75:7 But God is the Judge; He puts down one and exalts another. (Ps 7:11)

### **17. God is King**

Ps 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth; (Dan 5:21)

### **18. God is my stronghold**

Ps 59:9, 17 For God is my stronghold.

### **19. God is a refuge**

Ps 62:8 God is a refuge for us.

## **III. Kinds of love**

### **Hebrew (Old Testament) words translated for love:**

1. âhab; definition = to have affection, love; is used 73 X (NSDHGW)
2. ahâbâh; definition = affection, love; is used 34 X (NSDHGW)
3. dôwd; definition = beloved, friend; uncle, relative; is used 7X (NSDHGW)
4. châshaq; definition = to join; to love, delight; is used 3 X (NSDHGW)
5. egeb; definition = amative words, words of love; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)
6. âgâbâh; definition = love, amorousness; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)
7. râcham; definition = to be compassionate; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)
8. ra'yâh; definition = female associate; is used 9 X (NSDHGW)
9. châbab; definition = to cherish; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)
10. machmâd; definition = object of affection is used 1 X (NSDHGW)

### **Greek (New Testament) words translated for love:**

1. agapaō; definition = to love; is used 70 X (NSDHGW)
2. agapē; definition = love; love-feast; is used 85 X (NSDHGW)

denotes the highest, most perfect kind of love (ISBE)

Selfless or spiritual love as revealed in Christ, especially as distinguished from eros, or carnal love (NNCD)

The word agapao (and its cognate agape) is rarely used in extrabiblical Greek. It was used by believers to denote the special unconditional love of God. (HIBD)

By far the most frequent word is agapē, generally assumed to mean moral goodwill which proceeds from esteem, principle, or duty, rather than attraction or charm. Agapē means to love the undeserving, despite disappointment and rejection; (BEB)

3. philadēphía; definition = fraternal affection; is used 4 X (NSDHGW)  
the love between those of the same blood (ISBE)

philadelphia (brotherly love) (BEB)

4. philadēphōs definition = fraternal; is used 1 X  
"humanely, kindly," (ISBE)

5. philandrōs; definition = affectionate as a wife to her husband; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)

6. philanthrōpia; definition = benevolence; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)

7. philarguria; definition = avarice, greedy love of possessions; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)

8. philēō; definition = to be a friend, have affection; is used 10 X (NSDHGW)

which means the natural human affection, with its strong feeling, or sentiment (ISBE)

The word phileo (and its cognates) refers to tender affection, such as toward a friend or family member. It is very common in the NT and extrabiblical literature. (HIBD)

phileō, spontaneous natural affection, with more feeling than reason, (BEB)

9. philōtēknōs; definition = loving one's child(ren); is used 1 X (NSDHGW)

10. philōxēnōs; definition = hospitable; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)

11. thēlō; definition = to will; to desire; to choose; is used 1 X (NSDHGW)

12. storgē - (appears occasionally in compounds)  
natural affection between kinfolk (BEB)

13. Eros -

referring to erotic or sexual love This word is not used in the NT or in the Septuagint. It was commonly used in Greek literature of the time. (HIBD)

eros (sexual love) does not occur in the NT; (BEB)

## IV. God's love is:

### A. Eternal

Jer 31:3 The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness." (Ps 103:17; Isa 49:15-16; 54:8, 10)

### B. A covenantal love

Dt 7:9 "He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation ... (Ex 20:6; Dt 5:10 7:12; 1 Ki 8:23; 2 Chr 6:14 Ps 106:45; Dan 9:4)

### **C. Lavish**

Ps 103:8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. (Ex 34:6-7; Ne 9:17; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; 1 Jn 3:1)

### **D. Peaceful**

Zep 3:17 "The LORD your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.

## **V. Nature of God's love for people:**

### **God loves you**

Dt 23:5 ... the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because the LORD your God loves you.

### **Because He loves you, He keeps His covenant with you**

Dt 7:12-13 ...the LORD your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers. He will love you and bless you and multiply you; ...

### **Because He loves you, You are precious in His sight**

Isa 43:4 Since you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you,

### **He loves you with an everlasting love**

Jer 31:3 ... I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.

### **Because He loves you, He calls you His own**

Ro 9:25 As He says also in Hosea, "I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED , 'BELOVED .'"

### **Because He loves you, He removes the yoke from your life**

Hos 11:4 I led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love, And I became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their jaws;

### **He promises to love you freely**

Hos 14:4 I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely,

### **Because He loves you, He redeems you**

Isa 63:9 In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them,

### **Because He loves you, He disciplines and corrects you**

Pr 3:12 For whom the LORD loves He reprove,

Heb 12:6 FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,

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

## **VI. Our response to God's love -**

### **Make love your aim**

1 Co 14:1 Pursue love , yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, ...

1 Co 16:14 Let all that you do be done in love.

### **Pursue love**

1 Ti 6:11 flee ... and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, ... (2 Ti 2:22)

**Walk in love, as Christ loved us**

Eph 5:2 and walk in love , just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us,

**Stir up one another's love**

Heb 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

**Put on love, the bond of unity**

Col 3:14 Beyond all these things put on love , which is the perfect bond of unity.

**Be an example of love**

1 Ti 4:12 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love , faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

Tit 2:2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, ...

**Pray that your love may abound**

Phil 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more ...

**Keep yourselves in the love of God**

Jude 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, ...

**The following References were used in this study:**

Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible  
Barnes Notes  
The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words = NSDHGW  
International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia = ISBE  
Nelson's New Christian Dictionary = NNCD  
Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary = HIBD  
Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible = BEB  
Tyndale Bible Dictionary = TBD  
Wuest's word studies  
Robertson's Word Pictures  
Vincent's Word Studies  
The New Bible Commentary  
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