

The Love of God

What Is Love?

- The Primary Biblical Words
 - Hebrew: *ahab* – verb; *ahabah* – noun
 - Greek: *agapao* – verb; *agape* – noun

What Is Love?

- LXX for *ahab*
- A reasoned love
- Not based on emotion; but not void of emotion
- Loves irrespective of worth or response
- Self-sacrificial, self-giving
- "It is the unselfish, self-sacrificing desire to meet the needs of the cherished person, regardless of their worthiness of it or response to it."

What is Love?

- Definitions of the Divine Attribute
 - Berkhof: "that perfection of God by which He is eternally moved to self communication."
 - Grudem: "God eternally gives of himself to others."
 - Jack Cottrell: "his self-giving affection for his image-bearing creatures and his unselfish concern for their well-being, that leads him to act on their behalf and for their happiness and welfare."

The Character of Love

- **Sovereign** (Deut. 7:7-8)
- **Infinite**
 - Eph. 2:4 – God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us
 - John 3:16 – "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son."

The Character of Love

- **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."
 - Rom. 8:38-39 – "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."
 - Eph. 1:4-5 – 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.
- **Unselfish** (1 Cor. 13:4-7)

The Character of Love

- Sovereign
- Infinite
- Eternal
- Unselfish

Illustrations of God's Love

- Hosea
- Ezek. 16
- Solomon (2 Sam. 12:24)

The Objects of God's Love

- The Persons of the Trinity
- Every Human Being Universally
 - Matt. 5:43-48
 - Mark 10:21
 - John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.
 - John 4:42 - this One is indeed the Savior of the world.
 - 1 Tim. 4:10 - we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.
 - Tit. 3:4 - when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared
 - 1 John 4:14 - We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

The Objects of God's Love

- The Persons of the Trinity
 - Matt. 3:17 - a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."
 - Matt. 17:5 - While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased: listen to Him!"
 - John 3:35 - "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.
 - John 5:20 - "the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

The Objects of God's Love

- The Persons of the Trinity
 - John 10:17 - "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.
 - John 14:31 - but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.
 - John 15:9-10 - "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love: just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.
 - John 17:24, 26 - "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. ... 26 and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."
 - Col. 1:13 - He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son

How Should We Respond?

- Study, meditate, and pray to understand his love more deeply (Eph. 3:14-19).
 - Why is it so important?
 - Luke 7:36-47
 - 1 John 4:18

The Objects of God's Love

- Those He Has Chosen
 - 1 John 3:1 – See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God.
 - John 13:1 - Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.
 - John 16:27 - the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.

The Objects of God's Love

- Those He Has Chosen
 - John 17:23 - 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.
 - 2 Th. 2:16 - 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,
 - 1 John 4:16 - We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

What are the Expressions of God's Love?

- To All Men
 - Common Grace
 - Compassion or mercy (Ps. 145:9)
 - Warnings about coming judgment (Luke 13:3, 5)
 - Universal, free offer of salvation (Is. 45:22; 55:1, 7; Matt. 11:28-30; John 5:39-40)

What are the Expressions of God's Love?

- To His Own
 - The substitutionary sacrifice of Christ
 - Rom. 5:8 - God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
 - Gal. 2:20 - I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 - Eph. 5:2 - walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us.
 - Eph. 5:25 - Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,
 - Rev. 1:5 - To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood

What are the Expressions of God's Love?

- To His Own
 - Election
 - Rom. 9:11-13 - though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to *His* choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, 12 it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER." 13 Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED"
 - Cf. Eph. 1:4-5 – He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons.

What are the Expressions of God's Love?

- To His Own
 - Salvation
 - Eph. 2:4-5 - God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved.)
 - Adoption
 - 1 John 3:1 - See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
 - Chastening
 - Heb. 12:6 - Those whom the lord loves he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives."
 - Rev. 3:19 - "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

How Should We Respond?

- Love God with every fiber of your being (1 John 4:19; cf. Matt. 22:37).
- Love others.
 - All people (Matt. 5:43-48; 22:37-39)
 - Other believers (John 13:34-35; Heb. 10:24; 1 John 3:16-17; 4:9-12)
- Keep God's commands (1 John 2:5; 5:3).
- Stop loving the world (1 John 2:14-15).

How Should We Respond?

- Learn that spiritual blessings are the primary expression of the divine love.
- Husbands, imitate God's love for you, toward your wife (Eph. 5:25).
- Let the knowledge of God's love strengthen your assurance (Rom. 8:30-39).
- Pray that others will receive and come to understand God's love (2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 3:14-19; 6:23; 2 Th. 2:16; 3:5).