

GOD'S LOVE DEFINED

1 John 4:10

Intro: A verse worth memorizing!

The difficulty of defining love. We can use 1 Cor. 13.

Sometimes we must depend upon what is done to express our love, and who the objects are -- whether family or friends or country or whatever it might be.

We know what love it and how to express it and when we feel it, but it is difficult to define it -- even on the human level.

But when we move into the area of divine truth, the problem is multiplied infinitely!

The Word of God comes with verses like this, easy to memorize, and yet impossible to exhaust, in which we see a definition of God's love.

The verse suggests at least 5 questions.

I. WHY SHOULD WE LOVE GOD?

Can you think of any reason why we should not love God?

There are many answers as to why we ought to love God. Let suggest three:

A. Because of Who He is -- GOD, our CREATOR.

Cf. Psa. 100.

B. Because of the kind of a God He is.

Out of all His attributes, let me mention 3:

1. His love -- so great that He will never leave us alone or at the mercy of our circumstances.
2. His wisdom -- so great that He will never make any mistakes, never do anything foolish.
3. His power -- so great that it is impossible for Him to fail. No problem can be too great for Him to solve.

C. Because of His amazing promises -- what He has said that He would do.

Nowhere can you find the promises, valid promises that are found in the Word of God.

The promises that have been fulfilled in Scripture are sufficient to believe that God never made a promise that He will not keep or cannot keep!

A second question . . .

II. WHY SHOULD GOD LOVE US?

Can you honestly find an answer to that question -- especially when Paul reminds us that God loves us even though we are "sinners" and "enemies"?

God gave Moses the right answer. See Deut. 7:7, 8.

The answer is not to be found in us, but in God. There is no end to the reasons as to why we should love God; but there really is not one answer as to why God should love us if you are trying to find the reasons in the human heart.

A third question . . .

III. HOW MUCH DOES GOD LOVE HIS SON -- AND FOR HOW LONG HAS HE LOVED HIM AS HE DOES?

This is one of the most delightful of all truths to be found in the Scriptures.

It is the subject of OT prophecy. See Isa. 42:1 where God speaks of the Messiah, His Son, in these words,
 "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth . . ."

See how this carries over into the Gospels:

- 1) At our Lord's baptism -- Matt. 3:17.
- 2) At our Lord's transfiguration -- Matt. 17:5.

And then notice those statements in John 17 where our Lord was praying, and see how we are brought into this wonderful love: vv. 23, 24, 26.

Putting questions #2 and #3 together (which only God would do), what is the fourth question?

IV. WHAT DID GOD DO TO HIS SON?

Can you hurriedly read over that word, "sent"? Just a little word, but what an amazing message it brings to the heart of man. In John 3:16 it is another very simple word: "gave."

What did it mean for the Son?

- 1) The humiliation of being born as a human being.
- 2) The humiliation of living on earth as a human being.

3) The humiliation of dying on the cross.

And these very facts become our assurance, according to Paul in Rom. 8:32, that, if God would do that, He will not leave anything out that is necessary for our glorification.

The last question . . .

V. WHAT DID GOD'S SON DO FOR US?

This is too good to be true -- and yet it is!!!

Note: "propitiation." It is hard to pronounce, but it is even harder to comprehend. It means that God has completely, completely satisfied God concerning all that God requires for our sins.

There is nothing left for us to do.

He has not saved us because of anything that He saw in us (because all that is there is the utmost of corruption). He died for us because this is what God's love prompted Him to do -- from all eternity!

- Concl: What remains? 1) Worship, praise, from the hearts of those who know the Lord in salvation. Do you praise Him? Do you worship Him? How long has it been?
- 2) Believe -- for those who do not know Him. This is the only, the true, explanation for God's love and the death of God's Son.