

The Love of God

We will look at different types of God's love. To maintain a biblical view of the love of God, we must understand that we cannot separate one type of love from the others. Each works together in harmony and unison.

1. The intra-trinitarian love of God

[22] The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, [23] I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even **as you loved me**. [24] Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see **my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world**.

(John 17:22-24)

The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.

(John 3:35)

but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

(John 14:31)

2. God's love for all that he has created

[8] The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

[9] **The LORD is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made.**

(Psalm 145:8-9)

[44] But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, [45] so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. **For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.**

(Matthew 5:44-45)

But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, **for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.**

(Luke 6:35)

Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, **I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live;** turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

(Ezekiel 33:11)

[16] **“For God so loved the world,** that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. [17] For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)

How does God's wrath against sinful mankind co-exist with God's love for sinful mankind?

God's wrath is not an implacable, blind rage. It is a reasonable and willed response to offenses against his holiness. God is wrathful to BOTH the sin and the sinner because of his holiness. But his perfect love is part of his perfect character, so he loves out of his goodness and not because those that receive his love are worthy or lovable. **We see God's greatest display of wrath at the cross. We see God's greatest display of love at the cross.**

How does the sovereignty and transcendence of God co-exist with the perfect love of God?

First thing to note – we cannot separate God's sovereignty apart from God's love and vice versa. God is neither impassible and emotionless in his sovereignty nor swayed by his love and emotions. Both sovereignty and love are compatible in working in all situations. The biblical portrayal of this compatibility occurs over and over.

3. God's particular selective love toward his elect

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

(1 John 3:1)

but **God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us.

(Romans 5:8)

for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.

(John 16:27)

In this is love, not that we have loved God but **that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

(1 John 4:10)

[6] "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. **The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession**, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. [7] It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, [8] but **it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers**, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

(Deuteronomy 7:6-8)

God elects some to salvation not because any one person deserves to be saved but only out of his grace and mercy. His love for his children is a special type of love because in the believer God is able to manifest himself and communicate himself in the fullest sense.

4. God's conditional love towards those who obey him

keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

(Jude 1:21)

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

(John 14:21)

[9]As the Father has loved me, so have I 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. [11] These things I have spoken to you, **that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.**

(John 15:9-11)

[5] And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reproved by him.

[6] **For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.”**

[7] It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? [8] If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

(Hebrews 12:5-8 ESV)

How does the immutable love of God for his children co-exist with the conditional love he places on his children?

God's true children certainly cannot lose their salvation, but they are still responsible to remain in God's love. As a weak example, we can liken this conditional sort of love to a parent-child relationship. The parent, in an ideal situation, should never stop loving their child, but the child experiences greater love and blessing when he obeys. If he disobeys, the parent executes wrath and discipline.

5. How are we to respond to the doctrine of the love of God?

We should be humbled that God called us out of darkness and compassionate and loving towards others because we were first shown love. **The full love of God revealed to us in Jesus at the cross gives us both the motivation to love and the example of how to love.**

[7] Beloved, **let us love one another, for love is from God**, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. [8] **Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.** [9] In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. [10] In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [11] Beloved, **if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**

(1 John 4:7-11)

We love because he first loved us.

(1 John 4:19)

I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that **the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”**

(John 17:26)