



# In Love With Jesus

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## ❖ God is in love with man.

**John 3:16** (Amplified Bible) **16**For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life.

**Ephesians 2:4** (King James Version) **4**But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.

**Ephesians 3:19** (New Living Translation) **19** May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

**Romans 5:8** (New Living Translation) **8**But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

**1 John 3:16** (King James Version) **16**Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

**1 John 4:9** (King James Version) **9**In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

**Ephesians 2:7** (New Living Translation) **7** So God can point to

*us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us.*

➤ **God's love is not natural human love; it is supernatural.**

Note: The term *supernatural* (Latin: *super, supra* "above") pertains to being above or beyond what is natural, unexplainable by natural law.

***Ephesians 3:19*** (King James Version ) **19** *And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

➤ **Anytime you talk about love, you have to mention God in the same sentence.**

- If God had a weakness it would be you. Oh! How much He loves you!

➤ **God is Love, so to love is His nature.**

- Love never fails or grows cold.
- The more you know God, the more you can walk in God's love effortlessly.

***1 John 4:7** (King James Version) **7** Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

***1 John 4:8** (King James Version) **8** He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

**Example:** You do not have to consciously think about breathing, you just do.

- ◆ In the same way God's love flows to you, it should flow out of you.

- You cannot give what you do not possess. If you do not love others, it is because you do not have a revelation of God's love for you.

**1 John 4:19** (New International Version) **19** *We love because he first loved us.*

**1 John 4:8** (King James Version) **8** *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

- God's love is not limited or one-dimensional.

**Ephesians 3** (New International Version) **17** *so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **18** may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, **19** and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

- God wants you to understand the extent of His unlimited and multi-dimensional love.
  - Do you want just a small measure, or a greater measure?
  - It is not just deep; but long, high and wide.

- It is not superficial... but supernatural.
- It is not based on meeting conditions.... but on unconditional love.
- ◆ No person or problem can stop His love from reaching you.

***Romans 8:35 (King James Version) 35*** *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

- Only you can reject it and separate yourself from it.
- ◆ God's love is not moved by attitudes or feelings.
- It is a forever love, sealed in the blood of Jesus that transcends time.

***Romans 8:39 (King James Version) 39*** *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

➤ **God's love sets the example for you to follow.**

- Jesus was going to Samaria and the disciples definitely did not want to go.

- The Jews did not like the Samaritans.

**John 4:4** *It was necessary for Him to go through Samaria. 5 And in doing so, He arrived at a Samaritan town called Sychar, near the tract of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 And Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, tired as He was from His journey, sat down [to rest] by the well. It was then about the sixth hour (about noon). 7 Presently, when a woman of Samaria came along to draw water, Jesus said to her, Give Me a drink. 8 For His disciples had gone off into the town to buy food. 9 The Samaritan woman said to Him, How is it that you, being a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan [and a] woman, for a drink? For the Jews have nothing to do with the Samaritans (Amplified Translation).*

- Jesus went to the Samaritans (John 4:4) after His message about how much God so loved the world (John 3:16), and then He stayed two days among them to prove it.
- Jesus was even called a Samaritan by the Jews, which to the Jews had a very negative connotation.

**John 8:48** *Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?*

- Later, at His Ascension, Jesus told all His followers to make sure they made a stop off in Samaria.

- He did not tell them to go anywhere that He was not willing to go himself.

*Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

- When you love God like Jesus did, you are willing to go anywhere He sends you.

**➤ God always loves you the same; but your love for Him can change.**

*Malachi 3:6 (King James Version) 6 For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

*Hebrews 13:8 (Contemporary English Version) 8 Jesus Christ never changes! He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*



**Jeremiah 31:3** (King James Version) **3**The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.

- You must not let your love for God grow cold.

**2 Timothy 3:4** (King James Version) **4**Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.

**Matthew 24:12** (King James Version) **12**And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

**Joshua 23:11** (King James Version) **11**Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.

- Your love for God is proven by your actions.

- Your love for God is not full-grown; you must develop it.

**Mark 12:30** (New Living Translation) **30** And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.

- Sin will cause you to love Him less.

**Matthew 24:12** (New American Standard Bible)

**12** "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.

**Revelation 2:4** (King James Version) **4** Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

- God's love is unconditional, but His promises are conditional. If you love Him, then you will meet the conditions for His promises.

- You cannot earn His love, but you can receive His love and love Him in return.

**2 Corinthians 8:8** (King James Version) **8b** you must prove the sincerity of your love (*italics mine*).

- You need to prove your love for Him daily.
  - ◆ It is up to you to make it your priority and set your love upon the Lord every day.
  - ◆ It is hard to receive what He wants to give you if you are not close to Him.

**John 14:21** (King James Version) **21** *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

- ◆ Obedience to Him is proof of your love.
- Seeing God manifest in your life is the result of obedience.
- There is one thing that God wants from you. You do not need to keep the whole law. Instead, keep the love commandment of the New Testament. This commandment is what the law and prophets hang on.
- The commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, strength and soul and the second is like unto it, love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:30). It is the commandment with a promise attached.

**Romans 13:10** (King James Version) **10** *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

Example: Moses (who represents the law) and Elijah (who represents the prophets) appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter wanted to build three tabernacles to show the equality between the law, the prophets, and Jesus. God spoke and said, “no” because Jesus is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets.

**Luke 9** (King James Version) **33**And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.**34**While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud **35**And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

**Matthew 22** (Amplified Bible) **36**Teacher, which kind of commandment is great and important (the principal kind) in the Law? [Some commandments are light--which are heavy?] **37**And He replied to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (intellect) **38**This is the great (most important, principal) and first commandment.**39**And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as [you do] yourself. **40**These two commandments sum up and upon them depend all the Law and the Prophets.

- When you keep the *great* commandment, which is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, then you meet the conditions for the promises of God.

**Romans 8:28** (King James Version) **28**And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

**1 Corinthians 2:9** (King James Version) **9**But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

**Psalms 91:14** (King James Version) **14**Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

**Psalms 145:20** (King James Version) **20**The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

**Proverbs 8:21** (King James Version) **21**That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

**Nehemiah 1:5** (King James Version) **5**And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:

- ◆ It is not hard to love someone who is extremely generous with you.

Example: If someone gave you a luxury car they would be easy to love.

- ◆ Jesus did much more than give you a luxury car; He redeemed you from an eternity in hell and gave you the choice to love Him.
- It is easy to love Him in return when you realize what He ransomed you from.
- All God asks you to do is to love Him, not to never make a mistake.
- Mary could have used cheap, ordinary perfume to anoint Jesus but she did not. Mary anointed Jesus with very costly, rare perfume because of all He had done for her. She did not pour out a few drops on Jesus, she poured out the whole bottle! To her, Jesus was worth it all! Do you see Jesus' worth the way Mary did?
- It was easy for Mary to extravagantly worship Jesus with her whole heart because of gratitude for His forgiveness and unconditional love.
- He, who has been forgiven the most, loves the most.

**Luke 7:37** (Contemporary English Version) **37**When a sinful woman in that town found out that Jesus was there; she bought an expensive bottle of perfume. **38**Then she came and stood behind Jesus. She cried and started washing his feet with her tears and drying them with her hair. The woman kissed his feet and poured the perfume on them.

Note: God loves you. He knows you better and is closer to you than any other person on the planet can ever be. He loves you more that any one else is capable of loving. It is you who has to acknowledge Him in all your ways and all your days, even the days you do not feel like it. He is good to you all the time but you have to keep yourself stirred up on your most holy faith so that you stay aware of His presence within you. You do that through talking to Him, praising Him, worship, meditating His Word, and realizing that He is enough for any situation you face. It is easy to get caught up in the cares of life and move away from the really important thing of being still and knowing that He is God. No one satisfies the hungry, weary soul like He does. It feels good to be loved by Him and love Him in return. Let Him love you, restore you, and empower you for a life of intimacy and purpose.

- If you love Him, then you want to do things for Him like go to church, read your bible, tithe, fast, witness and love other people.

- You are not doing these things to get his love because you already have it; rather you do them out of your love for Him and the desire for fellowship with Him.

➤ **God so loves the world, not just the church.**

***John 3:16** (The Message) 16-18 "This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who refuses to trust him has long since been under the death sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person's failure to believe in the one-of-a-kind Son of God when introduced to him.*



- This love is unconditional and extended to all, but the only way to receive the promise of salvation is by meeting the conditions of salvation.
- The sinner must believe and receive the love God has for him in order to be born again.
- Some people resist God's love.
- It hurts the heart of God to have so much love to give, only to be rejected.
- God loves not only the poor, but the wealthy also. In these last days He will separate the rich man from his money in order to make it easier for him to get saved.

***Luke 18** (King James Version) **18**And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? **19**And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. **20**Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. **21**And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.*

*22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. 23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.*

**Matthew 19:23** (King James Version) **23** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Note: The bible says that it is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. In the last days God will make it easier by taking the rich man's money away and giving it to the just. This way it will be much easier for him to put his love and faith in the Lord.

**Proverbs 13:22** (King James Version) **22b** the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

**1 Timothy 6:10** (New King James Version) **10** For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

- You should receive His great love daily.
- At times, Christians resist His love because they feel unlovable or condemned.

Example: Try hugging someone who is running from you.

***Romans 5 (Contemporary English Version)*** **8**But God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful. **9**But there is more! Now that God has accepted us because Christ sacrificed his life's blood, we will also be kept safe from God's anger.

- You are either resisting God or receiving from Him.
  - ◆ You should resist the devil!
  - ◆ You should receive from God continually.

➤ **Jonah was mad at God because of how much God loved the people of Nineveh.**

- Jonah wanted them to be destroyed so he fled from God's plan to restore the Ninevites.

***Jonah 4:2 (Contemporary English Version)*** *2So he prayed: Our LORD, I knew from the very beginning that you wouldn't destroy Nineveh. That's why I left my own country and headed for Spain. You are a kind and merciful God, and you are very patient. You always show love, and you don't like to punish anyone, not even foreigners.*

- God told Jonah not to be angry with the people, but at the sin destroying them.

***Jonah 4 (Contemporary English Version)*** *5Jonah then left through the east gate of the city and made a shelter to protect himself from the sun. He sat under the shelter, waiting to see what would happen to Nineveh. 6The LORD made a vine grow up to shade Jonah's head and protect him from the sun. Jonah was very happy to have the vine, 7but early the next morning the LORD sent a worm to chew on the vine, and the vine dried up.*

*8During the day the LORD sent a scorching wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head, making him feel faint. Jonah was ready to die, and he shouted, "I wish I were dead!" 9But the LORD asked, "Jonah, do you have the right to be angry about the vine? "Yes, I do," he answered, "and I'm angry enough to die."10But the LORD said: You are concerned about a vine that you did not plant or take care of, a vine that grew up in one night and died the next. 11In that city of Nineveh there are more than a hundred twenty thousand people who cannot tell right from wrong, and many cattle are also there. Don't you think I should be concerned about that big city?*

- Sin is like that worm that is corrupting people. Be angry at the sin but show compassion on the person by sharing the gospel.

➤ **Like Jonah, who finally learned to love, you are expected to love those who are lost and perishing.**

- You should not be isolated from sinners, but you should be insulated from their lifestyle.
- It is the goodness of God that leads people to repentance.
- You are a bearer of the good news that God loves people and is not holding their sin against them.

**2 Corinthians 5:19** *(Amplified Bible) 19It was God [personally present] in Christ, reconciling and restoring the world to favor with Himself, not counting up and holding against [men] their trespasses [but cancelling them], and committing to us the message of reconciliation (of the restoration to favor).*

- You also have to love Christians.

**1 John 2** *(New International Version) 9Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. 10Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. 11But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.*

- Even when Christians treat you worse than those in the world, you still owe them.

**Matthew 18** (*Amplified Bible*) <sup>15</sup>*If your brother wrongs you, go and show him his fault, between you and him privately. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. 16But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two others, so that every word may be confirmed and upheld by the testimony of two or three witnesses. 17If he pays no attention to them [refusing to listen and obey], tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector.*

- ◆ You treat a heathen person and a tax collector like you owe them.
  - How many tax collectors do you know that owe you?
  - Someone gave you the opportunity to be saved and you owe other people that same opportunity.
    - Treat that person that has wronged you like you owe them an opportunity to be forgiven and be reconciled to God.

- Treat him as if you owe him, not that he owes you.
- Then take it one step further and love him.

***Romans 13:8 (King James Version)*** *8Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

***Romans 13:8 (Contemporary English Version)*** *8Let love be your only debt! If you love others, you have done all that the Law demands.*

➤ God loves all of mankind, not just some people! That means you, and me, and everybody!!!!

- You must reciprocate that love.

***1 Corinthians 16:22 (Amplified Bible)*** *22If anyone does not love the Lord [does not have a friendly affection for Him and is not kindly disposed toward Him], he shall be accursed! Our Lord will come! (Maranatha!)*

- Even when you do not feel loveable, you are loved!



- Declare your love for God everyday!
  - ◆ Jesus, I love you!
  - ◆ You tell those whom you love, that you love them.
  - ◆ When they tell you they love you, you receive it!

Example: If I never told my wife I loved her and she never told me, our relationship would grow cold and be unsatisfactory.

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## ❖ True love does not deny Jesus.

**Matthew 26:34** (King James Version) *34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.*

**2 Timothy 1:7** (King James Version) *7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

**1 John 4:18** (Amplified Bible) *18 There is no fear in love [dread does not exist], but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! For fear brings with it the thought of punishment, and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection].*

- Peter had a love problem. He denied Jesus because of a lack of love.

**John 21** (Young's Literal Translation) *15 When, therefore, they dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, 'Simon, [son] of Jonas, dost thou love me more than these?' he saith to him, 'Yes, Lord; thou hast known that I dearly love thee;' he saith to him, 'Feed my lambs.' 16 He saith to him again, a second time, 'Simon, [son] of Jonas, dost thou love me?' he saith to him, 'Yes, Lord; thou hast known that I dearly love thee;' he saith to him, 'Tend my sheep.'*

*17He saith to him the third time, 'Simon, [son] of Jonas, dost thou dearly love me?' Peter was grieved that he said to him the third time, 'Dost thou dearly love me?' and he said to him, 'Lord, thou hast known all things; thou dost know that I dearly love thee.' Jesus saith to him, 'Feed my sheep;*

- If you love someone, you will not deny him or her.

Example: What if my wife walked into the room and I said to the others present, “who is that woman?”

- If you refuse to recognize someone it means you do not want to identify or associate with them.
  - Love recognizes, validates and cares for others. Love connects you to people.
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- Peter could not love others without loving Jesus first.

**1 John 4:21** (King James Version) 21 *And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*

**1 John 3:16** (Amplified Bible) 16 *By this we come to know (progressively to recognize, to perceive, to understand) the [essential] love: that He laid down His [own] life for us; and we ought to lay [our] lives down for [those who are our] brothers [in Him].*

- You cannot feed sheep (people) with human love.
  - ◆ You will eventually beat (mistreat) them instead of lead them.
  - ◆ Human love can take you only so far because it is natural love.
    - God's love can take you deeper and farther because it is supernatural love.
    - People will test what kind of love you operate in. Make sure it is the God-kind!
- Jesus told Peter what would happen to him when he was older.

**John 21** (Young's Literal Translation) 18 *verily, verily, I say to thee, When thou wast younger, thou wast girding thyself and wast walking whither thou didst will, but when thou mayest be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another will gird thee, and shall carry [thee] whither thou dost not will;*  
19 *and this he said, signifying by what death he shall glorify God; and having said this, he saith to him, 'Be following me.'*

- When love is full grown, it will cause you to go and do things that you would not naturally want to do, things that cause God to be glorified in your life.
- Walking in the God-kind of love is denying self to follow His leading.
- ◆ How much and how well you love is a gauge of your spiritual maturity.
  - Peter's love for Christ was not perfected (mature).
    - He had a way to go!
    - He lacked the boldness to speak up for Jesus.
    - He was held back by fear.

**1 John 4:17** (King James Version) *17Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.*

- Love will carry you and lead you to do things you would not have planned.
- It is easy to sacrifice your desires when you walk in the love of God.
  - ◆ Sacrifice is giving up what you love, for what you love more.
- This was the death that Peter would die; death to his own desires and will.
  - ◆ The only death that glorifies God is death to your selfish desires.
    - Remember death is an enemy, so it cannot be a physical death on this earth that brings glory to God.
    - When we deny self, love can work (minister) through us freely and completely.

## ➤ True love always recognizes Jesus.

- John knew it was Jesus on the shore when all the other disciples did not.

**John 21:7** (Young's Literal Translation) *That disciple, therefore, whom Jesus was loving saith to Peter, 'The Lord it is!' Simon Peter, therefore, having heard that it is the Lord, did gird on the outer coat, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea;*

- John was known as the Apostle of love.
- ◆ Love will always see Jesus' heart in the matter.
- ◆ If you do not walk in love, you may “miss” something.
- ◆ If you do not walk in love, you only see the bad in people and situations.



- Love covers people and is not looking to expose faults and weaknesses.

**1 Peter 4:8** (New International Version)

**8** Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

## ➤ If you are stuck, realize love can move you forward.

**Mark 1:41** (King James Version) *41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.*

- Jesus was moved by love and you can be also.
- Love is the greatest gift inside you, let it out and let it do what it does best.

➤ **You cannot follow Jesus if you are not in love with Him.**

- He may lead you somewhere that you do not want to follow, but if you love Him you will.
- My wife has followed me all over the world and I am sure at times she would like to stay in one place and live a normal life, but she loves me, so she follows me.
- The rich young ruler in the bible loved money more than God.

**Luke 18** (New International Version) 18A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 19"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. 20You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother. 21"All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said. 22When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

- ◆ This ruler did not recognize Jesus as God to start with, so he did not know he was talking to Love Himself (God is Love).
- ◆ He loved money more than God.
- ◆ He could not follow the command to sell his possessions and follow Jesus because of a lack of love.
- ◆ Jesus probably would have made him a disciple and He might have become Judas' replacement.
- Instead, the ruler's name is unknown today.

➤ **Jesus is looking for those who love Him so much that they will come and follow Him.**

***Luke 9** (New Living Translation) 57 As they were walking along, someone said to Jesus, "I will follow you wherever you go." 58 But Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head." 59 He said to another person, "Come, follow me." The man agreed, but he said, "Lord, first let me return home and bury my father."*

*60 But Jesus told him, "Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead!!" Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God." 61 Another said, "Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family." 62 But Jesus told him, "Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."*

- Jesus gave three individuals a “love” test (Luke 9:57 – Luke 10:1).
  - The first one loved comfort more than following Jesus (Luke 9:58).
    - ◆ Jesus said some times I might not know where I will lay my head.
  - The second one loved his inheritance more than Jesus (Luke 9:59,60).
    - ◆ In that Day, the eldest son had to complete his duties by burying his father before he could get his inheritance.
    - ◆ Let the dead bury the dead (to be carnally minded is death, so those that mind the natural things, let them bury the dead).

Jesus had another inheritance in mind for the son.

- The third one loved his family more than Jesus (Luke 9:61).
  - ◆ Your family will try to talk you out of, or delay your following Jesus.
  - ◆ If a farmer puts his hand on the plow but then turns back it is because he loves something else more than farming (Luke 9:62).
    - If you are turning back and not following Jesus it is because you have a love deficiency.

Example; A calcium or iron deficiency makes you not fit.

- A lack of loving God will make you not fit for following Him.
- If God chooses you it is because you are fit for service.
- Many are called but few are chosen.

- The reason few are chosen is because of a lack of love, which prevents you from following God fully.

Example; Personnel chosen to Special Forces in today's military have one similarity; they love the military! They eat, drink, train and talk about it all day long. This is essential to being chosen.

- ◆ After Jesus weeded out those who were not ready to follow Him, He chose those who would represent Him in the next villages.

***Luke 10:1 (Amplified Bible) 1NOW AFTER this the Lord chose and appointed seventy others and sent them out ahead of Him, two by two, into every town and place where He Himself was about to come (visit).***

- **It was those who truly loved Him that would follow Him wherever He said.**

Example: I will go where He leads me and swallow what He feeds me.

- **Many Christians love their traditions more than Jesus.**

*Mark 7:8 (King James Version) 8For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.*

- Some love appearing godly more than being godly.

**Mark 12** *(King James Version) 38And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces.*

**39***And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: 40Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.*

**2 Timothy 3:5** *(King James Version) 5Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

- The difference between the tares and the wheat is the fruit inside.

**Matthew 13** *(Amplified Bible) 24Another parable He set forth before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25But while he was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed also darnel (weeds resembling wheat) among the wheat, and went on his way. 26So when the plants sprouted and formed grain, the darnel (weeds) appeared also. 27And the servants of the owner came to him and said, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then how does it have darnel shoots in it? 28He replied to them, An enemy has done this. The servants said to him, Then do you want us to go and weed them out? 29But he said, No, lest in gathering the wild wheat (weeds resembling wheat), you root up the [true] wheat along with it. 30Let them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will say to the reapers, Gather the darnel first and bind it in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my granary.*



- Tares (darnel or cheat) look the same as wheat to the casual observer, but the inside of the head is hollow and has no fruit.
- ◆ Tares are stiff and do not bow or sway with the wind.
- ◆ Tares have no substance.

***Matthew 23:27** (King James Version) 27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.*

- ◆ Wheat stalks bow and sway as the wind blows. The head is heavy with ripened grain (fruit).
- ◆ Religion many times is like a tare that has no nourishing fruit inside and does not bow or move with the wind of the Holy Spirit.
- Religion looks like it produces good fruit but it is lifeless.
- Some have let religion become their love, instead of a relationship with the God of love.

◆ Religious people persecuted Jesus while He was on the earth.

➤ One of the ways to break that spirit is by walking in love.

- It was Stephen's example of forgiveness and love that planted the seed of salvation in Paul.

**Acts 7** (Contemporary English Version) 54When the council members heard Stephen's speech, they were angry and furious. 55But Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. He looked toward heaven, where he saw our glorious God and Jesus standing at his right side. 56Then Stephen said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right side of God!" 57The council members shouted and covered their ears. At once they all attacked Stephen 58and dragged him out of the city. Then they started throwing stones at him. The men who had brought charges against him put their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59As Stephen was being stoned to death, he called out, "Lord Jesus, please welcome me!" 60He knelt down and shouted, "Lord, don't blame them for what they have done." Then he died.

- Paul was very religious yet he was blinded by Love and forever changed on the road to Damascus.

**Acts 9:8** (New International Version) 8Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.

- ◆ The spirit of religion is stronger than the spirit of perversion.
- Capernaum was a very religious city in its day. Jesus said that if He would have done in Sodom what He had ministered in Capernaum, then Sodom would still be here.

***Matthew 11:23 (King James Version) 23*** And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

- The reason religion is stronger than perversion is because perversion knows it is wrong, while religion thinks it is right.
  - Religion for the most part is about man's attempt to keep the law and earn God's love.
  - The Pharisees and Sadducees knew all about the law but nothing about love.
    - Do you pray law prayers or love prayers?

Definition of religion: religious worship, that which consists of external ceremonies.

- Religion tends to celebrate a form of godliness.

Example: When a couple plans a wedding, the ceremony is just the beginning. The importance and significance lie in the marriage, love and commitment that follows.

- We must follow Jesus not a “form” of Jesus.

**2 Timothy 3:5** (King James Version) *5Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

**Mark 12** (Contemporary English Version) *38As Jesus was teaching, he said: Guard against the teachers of the Law of Moses! They love to walk around in long robes and be greeted in the market. 39They like the front seats in the meeting places and the best seats at banquets. 40But they cheat widows out of their homes and pray long prayers just to show off. They will be punished most of all.*

**Matthew 12** (New American Standard Bible) 1At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples became hungry and began to (pick the heads of grain and eat.2But when the Pharisees saw this, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples do what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath."3But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he became hungry, he and his companions, 4how he entered the house of God, and they ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for him to eat nor for those with him, but for the priests alone?" Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and are innocent? 6"But I say to you that something greater than the temple is here.

Example: What if you loved the statue or image of someone more than the actual person?

- Religious denominations can provide an effective framework for organizing members around common goals but the believers must not love the framework more than Jesus Himself.
- Denominations love to keep the past in the present.

- Jesus is not stuck in the past, but is giving new inspiration and new life daily to His church.
- You need to love Jesus more than any religious form or tradition.

**Mark 7** (New International Version) *1The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and 2saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were "unclean," that is, unwashed. 3(The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. 4When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles. 5So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?" 6He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 7They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men. 8You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men." 9And he said to them: "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!*

- Denominations should serve the believer not the other way around.

- Not all religious traditions are bad if they are relevant and serve a purpose that glorifies Christ.

➤ **If you walk in love you will have boldness in the Day of Judgment.**

**1 John 4:17** (King James Version) *17* Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

**1 John 2:28** (Contemporary English Version) *28* Children, stay one in your hearts with Christ. Then when he returns, we will have confidence and won't have to hide in shame.

**1 John 2:6** (King James Version) *6* He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

**Notes:**

Notes:



## ❖ Love is not an automatic thing.

➤ Love is planted in you as a seed at the New Birth.

- All the fruits of the Spirit are planted in seed form.

***Galatians 5** (Young's Literal Translation) 22And the fruit of the Spirit is: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, 23meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

- Just like a melon is inside a seed, so the fruit of the Spirit is in seed form.

- The Kingdom of God operates as a man sowing seed. The seed should not stay a seed, the nature of a seed is to grow and develop mature fruit. So it is with seeds planted in the human heart.

**Mark 4:26** (King James Version) 26And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground. 30And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? 31It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

- Belief is the positive connection (fertilization) that manifests (begins to grow) the seed.
- Acting on the Word further develops the seed into mature fruit.

**Matthew 13:23** (Darby Translation) 23But he that is sown upon the good ground -- this is he who hears and understands the word, who bears fruit also, and produces, one a hundred, one sixty, and one thirty.

- ◆ If you love only when you feel like it, then the seed of love will stay small.

- ◆ If you love by faith, and because God's Word says to (obedience), your love will grow.

**1 John 2:5** (*Young's Literal Translation*) *5and whoever may keep his word, truly in him the love of God hath been perfected; in this we know that in him we are.*

- You may not always feel like walking in love, but all things are possible to him that believes. Keep believing you can. (Mark 9:23)
- If faith is as a seed then joy, peace, patience, love and the other fruits of the Spirit are also.

**Luke 17:6** (*King James Version*) *6And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.*

- ◆ Faith as a seed, when it is planted and grown, moves obstacles out of your life.
  - Faith in seed form needs time to grow so it can reach its potential.
- ◆ God has dealt to everyman (believers) the measure of faith.

- He has dealt to everyman (believers) the measure of love also.

***Romans 12:3 (King James Version)*** *3For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

- ◆ Faith is developed by hearing, and hearing by Word of God.

***Romans 10:17 (New International Version)*** *17Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

- Love is developed by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God also.

- ◆ If faith is what pleases God, then love also pleases God.

***Hebrews 11:6 (King James Version)*** *6But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

- ◆ Your joy is made full by hearing the Word of God.
- ◆ Your love is made full by hearing the Word of God too.

**John 15:11** (King James Version) 11 *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

- ◆ Hearing what Jesus says develops peace.
- Hearing what Jesus says also develops love.

**John 16:33** (King James Version) 33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

- ◆ Faith without works is dead.

**James 2:26** (King James Version) 26 *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

- Love without works is dead also.

- ◆ If faith and patience inherit the promises, then faith and love does also.

**Hebrews 6:12** (New International Version) *12We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.*

- ◆ All the fruit of the Spirit should grow; just like natural fruit trees grow.
- ◆ Your love grows just like your faith grows.
- ◆ The growing fruit of love for others is evidence that you are a new creation in Christ Jesus.

**2 Thessalonians 1:3** (Amplified Bible) *3We ought and indeed are obligated [as those in debt] to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, as is fitting, because your faith is growing exceedingly and the love of every one of you each toward the others is increasing and abounds.*

**Ephesians 2:10** (King James Version) *10For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

- ◆ If what is not of faith is sin; then what is not of love is sin also.

**Romans 14:23** (King James Version) *23And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

- ◆ If faith works by love then love works by faith. Faith also works by joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, meekness and temperance.

**Galatians 5:6** (New American Standard Bible) *6For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.*

- It takes faith to love those that are not easy to love.
- You must practice the fruit of the Spirit by yielding to love.
  - When you do not practice walking in the fruit of the Spirit daily, the fruit stops growing.
  - Some Christians have the fruit in them, but they are not ripe.
    - Signs follow believers.
    - You must abound in the fruit to be fruitful.

**2 Peter 1:8** (King James Version) *8For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- Fruit comes to maturity in those who put the fruit to work.

**James 3:18** (Amplified Bible) *18And the harvest of righteousness (of conformity to God's will in thought and deed) is [the fruit of the seed] sown in peace by those who work for and make peace [in themselves and in others, that peace which means concord, agreement, and harmony between individuals, with undisturbedness, in a peaceful mind free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts].*

- ♦ All the fruit of the Spirit works this way, not just peace.
- You have the fruit in you at the point of salvation. However, they can lie dormant if you are blind to the fact that you must water them.

**2 Peter 1:9** (King James Version) *9But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

**Hebrews 6** (King James Version) *7For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon*



*it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.9But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.*

- A farmer serves the seed in the ground, but after it is full grown, it serves the farmer.
- The love of God will abound and overflow if you keep practicing (watering) it daily.
- The Holy Spirit will help you water the seed in your hearts so love will grow.

***Jude 1*** (King James Version) *20But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

***Ephesians 3*** (King James Version) *19And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled*

*with all the fulness of God.20Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.*

***Romans 5:5 (King James Version)*** *5And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.*

Notes:

❖ God expresses love through favor.

➤ **God is looking for those to give special favor to.**

***Deuteronomy 7:6** (King James Version) 6For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*

***Acts 10** (Worldwide English 34Then Peter began to speak, 'I really understand now. God does not love some people more than others.35But he takes anyone who obeys him. He takes anyone who does what is right. It does not matter to what nation they belong.*

***1 Timothy 4:10** (King James Version) 10For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.*

- God wants you to find Him.
  - You must seek Him to find Him.

**Deuteronomy 4:29** (King James Version) *29 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.*

- God is not lost, but He wants to be pursued.
- ◆ To the degree you seek Him, is the degree to which He reveals Himself to you.

**James 4:8** (Contemporary English Version) *8 Come near to God, and he will come near to you. Clean up your lives, you sinners. Purify your hearts, you people who can't make up your mind.*

- ◆ God rewards those who diligently seek Him.

**Hebrews 11:6** (Contemporary English Version) *6 But without faith (and also love) no one can please God. We must believe that God is real and that he rewards everyone who searches for him (italics mine).*

- ◆ Favor is a reward God gives to the earnest seeker.
  - Definition of Favor: To be regarded highly; good will towards; approval; unfair partiality; favoritism; to be partial to; to endorse; to help; to give special advantages.

- God is no respecter of people but He is a respecter of those who yield to His love.

**Acts 10:34** *(Amplified Bible)* 34And Peter opened his mouth and said: Most certainly and thoroughly I now perceive and understand that God shows no partiality and is no respecter of persons, 35But in every nation he who venerates and has a reverential fear for God, treating Him with worshipful obedience and living uprightly, is acceptable to Him and sure of being received and welcomed [by Him].

- ◆ Jesus increased in God's favor because He was always seeking and yielding to God.

**Luke 2:52** *(New American Standard Bible)* 52And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

- Favor can grow in your life too.
- You grow in favor by seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these rewards will be added unto you.

**Matthew 6:33** *(New Century Version)* 33 Seek first God's kingdom and what God wants. Then all your other needs will be met as well.

## ➤ God wants to favor you.

- Expect to possess the benefits of favor because you love God.

**Deuteronomy 33:23** (American Standard Version) 23 And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, And full with the blessing of Jehovah, Possess thou the west and the south.

**Psalms 84:11** (Amplified Bible) 11 For the Lord God is a Sun and Shield; the Lord bestows [present] grace and favor and [future] glory (honor, splendor, and heavenly bliss)! No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

- All God asks is that you love Him with all of your heart.

**1 John 4:8** (Amplified Bible) 8 He who does not love has not become acquainted with God [does not and never did know Him], for God is love.

**1 Corinthians 8:3** (King James Version) 3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

- Expect God to promote you because you love Him.

**Psalm 91:14** (American Standard Version) *14Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.*

**Genesis 39:21** (American Standard Version) *21 But Jehovah was with Joseph, and showed kindness unto him, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*

- Expect God to show your enemies no favor.

**Joshua 11:20** (King James Version) *20For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.*

**Psalm 41:11** (King James Version) *11By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.*

- Expect God to have others recognize you.

**Isaiah 60:10** (Amplified Bible) *10Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in My wrath I smote you, but in My favor, pleasure, and goodwill I have had mercy, love, and pity for you.*

- Confess you have favor in the eyes of others.

Example: Julie noticed me when I was in college and I attribute that to God's favor.

**Proverbs 18:22** *(New International Version)* 22 He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD.

Example: Christ For The Nations Institute (CFNI) has asked me to preach many times. This is God's favor.

**1 Samuel 16:22** *(King James Version)* 22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight.

- Expect to be exalted over others not claiming favor.

Example: Matthew, my eldest son, won all the awards (with scholarships attached) at his high school athletic banquet honoring seniors. This was the first time one senior was given every single award available.



***Esther 8:5*** (King James Version) *5And said, If it please the king, and if I have favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces:*

***Exodus 3:21*** (King James Version) *21And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty.*

***Exodus 11:3*** (King James Version) *3And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.*

- Mary found favor in God's sight.

***Luke 1:30*** (Amplified Bible) *30And the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found grace (free, spontaneous, absolute favor and loving-kindness) with God.*

- ♦ Mary was highly favored above others.

- Expect God to intervene and do things for you with His might.

***Psalm 44:3 (Amplified Bible) 3***For they got not the land [of Canaan] in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Your right hand and Your arm and the light of Your countenance [did it], because You were favorable toward and did delight in them.

- Because Jesus Christ has made the way to the Father God, every year can be your year of favor.

***Luke 4:19 (Amplified Bible) 19***To proclaim the accepted and acceptable year of the Lord [the day when salvation and the free favors of God profusely abound.

***Luke 4:19 (New International Version) 19***to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Conclusion: God loves you! He loves you very much and it should be easy for you to love Him back! When you love Him, there is nothing sweeter or more satisfying than the intimacy that can develop between you. He has blessings and plans for you, but a lack of love on your part can withhold those. Yes, there is the gift of His grace, but if you turn away from God you are not in position to receive the benefits of His goodness and favor. Understanding His ways and following after Him prepares you to experience God's presence and power. Make room for Him in your life and pursue Him passionately. Keep love for God ablaze in your heart. Now abides the fruit of the Spirit, yet the greatest fruit to abide in and develop is love, for love is God!

**1 Corinthians 12:31** (Young's Literal Translation) *31and desire earnestly the better gifts; and yet a far excelling way do I shew to you (the love way). Parenthesis mine*

**John 1:12** (King James Version) *12But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

**John 15:4, 7** (King James Version) *4Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 7If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

**Joshua 1:9** (King James Version) *9Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*



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