

**FOUNDATION OF FAITH!**  
**GOD THE FATHER**  
**PART 4**

This morning we are in part four in our series on God the Father, as we continue looking at our Foundation of Faith. We have already looked at the natural attributes of God and last time we were focusing on the moral attributes of God and we only looked at one of them, and that was the holiness of God. As I have said, if you miss that point, that God is holy, that there is no darkness in Him at all; it is going to mess up how you live out your faith. Again, some of you might not agree with me on that, but once again, I believe this is an important subject for us to understand and apply to our lives!

Listen to this recent USA Today on-line article called, Americans' views of God shape attitudes on key issues by Cathy Lynn Grossman. And as you listen take note to what the unsaved are saying in regards to what affects the way we live out our faith here in America, that it is our view of God. She wrote,

Surveys say about nine out of 10 Americans believe in God, but the way we picture that God reveals our attitudes on economics, justice, social morality, war, natural disasters, science, politics, love and more, say Paul Froese and Christopher Bader, sociologists at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. Their new book, *America's Four Gods: What We Say About God — And What That Says About Us*, examines our diverse visions of the Almighty and why they matter. . . .

Froese points out: “You can’t really ask people directly about their moral and philosophical worldview. But if you know their image of God, it could give you insight into why they get upset when you break the rules, or you stand up for a certain politician. Or, how they will react when bad things happen or whether they see personal morality or foreign policy in stark right-or-wrong terms.”

- Cathy Lynnn Grossman, USA Today,  
Americans’ views of God shape attitudes on  
key issues

This is why we are taking our time going through the attributes of God, looking at God the Father because what we believe about God the Father will impact the way we live out our Christian faith. Let me share with you one more point and then we will look at the moral attributes of God the Father this morning. This is from A. W. Tozer in his book, *The Knowledge of the Holy*. He wrote,

True religion confronts earth with heaven and brings eternity to bear upon time. The messenger of Christ, though he speaks from God, must also, as the Quakers used to say, “speak to the condition” of his hearers; otherwise he will speak a language known only to himself. His message must be not only timeless but timely. He must speak to his own generation.

The message of this book does not grow out of these times but it is appropriate to them. It is called forth by a condition which has existed in the Church for some years and is steadily growing worse. I refer to the loss of the concept of majesty from the popular religious mind. The Church has surrendered her once loft concept of God and has substituted for it one so low, so ignoble, as to be utterly unworthy of thinking, worshipping men. This she has done not deliberately, but little by little and without her knowledge, and her very unawareness only makes her situation all the more tragic.

The low view of God entertained almost universally among Christians is the cause of a hundred lesser evils everywhere among us. A whole new philosophy of the Christian life has resulted from this one basic error in our religious thinking.

With our loss of the sense of majesty has come the further loss of religious awe and consciousness of the divine Presence. We have lost our spirit of worship and our ability to withdraw inwardly to meet God in adoring silence. Modern Christianity is simply not producing the kind of Christian who can appreciate or experience life in the Spirit. The words, "Be still, and know that I am God," mean next to nothing to the self-confident, bustling worshiper in this middle period of the twentieth century. [We are now in the beginning of the twenty first century and it is even worse!]

This loss of the concept of majesty has come just when the forces of religion are making dramatic gains and the churches are more prosperous than at any time within the past several hundred years. But the alarming thing is that our gains are mostly external and our losses wholly internal; and since it is the *quality* of our religion that is affected by internal conditions, it may be that our supposed gains are but losses spread over a wider field.

The only way to recoup our spiritual losses is to go back to the cause of them and make such corrections as the truth warrants. The decline of the knowledge of the holy has brought on our troubles. A rediscovery of the majesty of God will go a long way toward curing them. It is impossible to keep our moral practices sound and our inward attitudes right while our idea of God is erroneous or inadequate. If we would bring back spiritual power to our lives, we must begin to think of God more nearly as He is.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, pp. vii-viii

Keep in mind that Tozer wrote this book back in 1961 and look at where we are today, some 50 years later in regards to our view of the holiness, the majesty of God! And, as Tozer said, it has affected every part of our life, how we live out our faith! Many have lost the knowledge of the holy and that is very tragic. Thus, as I have said, this is a great place for us to start our series dealing with our Foundation of Faith as we look at God the Father and we look at His attributes, what flows from Him! So let's continue looking at the moral attributes of God. We have already looked at His holiness and we will continue on from there this morning.

## **2. MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD**

### **B. JUSTICE**

When we think of justice we think of someone who has been appointed by the people to represent them. In other words, the people are not formed for him but he or his position for them. Thus, he will administer justice for the people based on a set of standards or laws and he has been entrusted to execute this justice or the law of the land. Which, as we know, can change from time-to-time.

The problem with that idea of justice, when you apply it to God, is wrong. He is not formed for us to represent us, but we are formed by Him to represent Him! And God has not made standards for man, they are His standards and thus, since He is the creator of the heavens and earth, He has the right to put forth His justice.

And if you think about it, righteousness is just an expression of God's holiness. If He were not holy then He would be unjust. That is just the reality. And it truly just makes sense. If God were unholy, if there were darkness in Him, if evil could flow from Him, then there would be times He would act justly or righteous and there would be times He would be unjust in His actions, or unrighteous. And please understand that the words "righteous" and "just" are the same word in the Hebrew and Greek. Then why are they translated into these two English words, why not just "righteous" or "just"? It is translated differently based on the context of what is written, but again, they are saying the same thing!

Let me share with you a couple of Bible Dictionary definitions of this word, "righteous." The first comes from Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary and this is what it says about the Justice of God:

“That perfection of his nature whereby he is infinitely righteous in himself and in all he does, the righteousness of the divine nature exercised in his moral government. At first God imposes righteous laws on his creatures and executes them righteously. Justice is not an optional product of his will, but an unchangeable principle of his very nature. His legislative justice is his requiring of his rational creatures conformity in all respects to the moral law. His rectoral [pertaining to a rector or governor] or distributive justice is his dealing with his accountable creatures according to the requirements of the law in rewarding or punishing them (Ps. 89:14). In remunerative [or paid] justice he distributes rewards (James 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:8); in vindictive or punitive justice he inflicts punishment on account of transgression (2 Thess. 1:6). He cannot, as being infinitely righteous, do otherwise than regard and hate sin as intrinsically hateful and deserving of punishment. ‘He cannot deny himself’ (2 Tim. 2:13). His essential and eternal righteousness immutably determines him to visit every sin as such with merited punishment.”

You see, if we miss this point, then when we look at the things that happen in this world, when we look at the things that happen in our own life, we may come to the wrong conclusion that God is not righteous in His dealings with man, His dealings with me! But that is wrong as we just read and will see as we look at some Scriptures verses in a few minutes.

In regards to God's justice, His righteousness, A. W. Tozer wrote, "Justice, when used of God, is a name we give to the way God is, nothing more; and when God acts justly He is not doing so to conform to an independent criterion, but simply acting like Himself in a given situation. As Gold is an element in itself and can never change nor compromise but is gold wherever it is found, so God is God, always, only, fully God, and can never be other than He is. Everything in the universe is good to the degree it conforms to the nature of God and evil as it fails to do so. God is His own self-existent principle of moral equity, and when he sentences evil men or rewards the righteous, He simply acts like Himself from within, uninfluenced by anything that is not Himself." (A. W. Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy*, pp. 87-88). May we not forget that and even if you don't agree, it doesn't change God; you are the one who has to change!

Now the other end of the spectrum is that some want to do away with this idea that God is a righteous judge and they just want to focus on His love, and that too is wrong. You see, if God's love causes Him to act in an unrighteous manner, then He would not only be unrighteous, but He would be unholy, and we know that is not true. Yes, God's love is rich, it is deep, but it all flows from His holiness. You can't pick and choose what attribute of God you like and which ones you don't like. These are His attributes, like it or not and He will not change, He can't!

The Bible is clear on this, God is just, He is righteous and it flows from His character or His nature, and again, that is unchanging! It is not like God has to conform to some outside criteria, although many today feel that way or teach that heresy! God is God and that is that! And think about it, if we know that God is just, He is righteous, and He is unchanging, then if we obey His Word we will not have to wonder if we have been accepted or not by Him. In a sense He brings moral equity or fairness to everyone!

Thus, if there are evil acts that are done by someone, justice demands that there is a penalty for that act. And since God is perfect and there is no darkness in Him at all, we are all found guilty; all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Now this is not the study we are going to deal with the salvation issue, but we must at least mention it here because apart from it, justice demands eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire!

Again, God is good, there is no darkness, no evil in Him at all, He is perfect and has never done evil and will never do evil, but because of His great love for us and the judgment that was due us for our sins, God paid the penalty for our evil deeds by going to the cross Himself. You see, His justice needed to be satisfied, and He took care of all of it for us, for those who believe Jesus is Lord and Savior! Let me illustrate it with this story. We are told,



The story has been told of a man who was caught and taken to court because he had stolen a loaf of bread. When the judge investigated, he found out that the man had no job, and his family was hungry. He had tried unsuccessfully to get work and finally, to feed his family, he had stolen a loaf of bread. Although recognizing the extenuating circumstances, the judge said, "I'm sorry, but the law can make no exceptions. You stole, and therefore I have to punish you. I order you to pay a fine of ten dollars." He then continued, "But I want to pay the fine myself." He reached into his pocket, pulled out a ten-dollar bill, and handed it to the man. As soon as the man took the money, the judge said, "Now I also want to remit the fine." That is, the man could keep the money. "Furthermore, I am going to instruct the bailiff to pass around a hat to everyone in this courtroom, and I am fining everyone in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a city where a man has to steal in order to have bread to eat." The money was collected and given to the defendant. This is an excellent example of JUSTICE being meted out in full and paid in full - while mercy and grace were also enacted in full measure.

- M. P. Green, Illustrations for Biblical Preaching

You see, God can't ignore our sin but He did what justice called Him to do, execute it but instead of the guilty paying for the crime, the innocent, Jesus was crucified for us as the sins of the world were placed on Him and the penalty for sin was paid in full for us and not only that. We received the blessings of God, all the grace and mercy of God because He loved us that much and yet, He could not ignore our sin, so He paid the penalty in full for us!

And lastly, here is one more definition of God's justice, His righteousness and this is from New Unger's Bible Dictionary. He says:

“The justice of God is both an essential and a relative attribute of the divine existence. It is a necessary outflow from the holiness of God. It is that in positive form that is negatively described as holiness, or separateness from evil. And, further, it is the holiness of God as manifested and applied in moral government.”

- New Unger's Bible Dictionary

So with that said, let's look at some Bible verses that deal with God's righteousness, His justice so that we can clearly see what the Bible has to say about this attribute of God and not what man has to say, for man has changed this attribute of God to fit his lifestyle, the things he wants to do and sorry, you can't do that!

In Isaiah 45:21 we are told, **“Tell and bring forth your case; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, A just God and a Savior; There is none besides Me.”** In other words, God is God, there is no one who compares to Him, I don't care how good you think you are for the Bible tells us that there are none who are good! When it says that God is just, again, there is no one who can compare to Him, it is what naturally flows from His life. Man, on the other hand, likes vindication. If someone does something to us, we will do something worse to them, we will get back at them. That is not our God. He does not get back, He just executes judgment, righteousness because He is just, He is righteous!

In Zephaniah 3:5-7 we are told, **“The Lord is righteous in her midst, He will do no unrighteousness. Every morning He brings His justice to light; He never fails, But the unjust knows no shame. ‘I have cut off nations, Their fortresses are devastated; I have made their streets desolate, With none passing by. Their cities are destroyed; There is no one, no inhabitant. I said, “Surely you will fear Me, You will receive instruction” — So that her dwelling would not be cut off, Despite everything for which I punished her. But they rose early and corrupted all their deeds.”**”

Keep in mind that Zephaniah was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom of Judah and he was like a hammer of judgment upon the nation, coming down upon the people for their sin, striking them hard. And in these verses we see God trying to correct them, to reprove their actions but they refused to listen and obey.

In fact, they were proud of the way they were living. They showed no shame for their actions, their idolatry. And folk’s, a society is in trouble when they are proud of their sin, flaunting it! Yes, the people may be unfaithful, but the Lord isn’t. Morning by morning He is there trying to correct them. God is faithful!

And as God kept trying to get their attention they were still bent on doing evil, rising up early in the morning, eager to get started. You would think that after God punished them through a series of judgments that they would repent and get right with God, but not so. Man’s heart is very evil and only the love of God can change that, He can give us a new heart! It is as Paul says, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”**

II Corinthians 5:17.

Now here's the thing. God brought His justice to the nations around Judah, and it should have warned Judah what would happen if they rejected God. Instead of learning from the surrounding nations, they dedicated themselves to ungodliness all the more. You see, God does not play favorites, His judgments are righteous, they are just and He can't ignore sin, He won't!

And if you still don't think this is important, then look at Psalm 89:14, which says, "**Righteousness (truth) and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.**" As you read this verse you can clearly see that the Psalmist is saying that the throne of God is founded on justice and right judgment. This is the supporting structure. His administration, you might say, is maintained because of His actions, that He is righteous and He is just. Again, think about this for a minute. Can an all-powerful God, an omnipotent God maintain a throne, a government you might say, that is built upon injustice, unrighteousness? Of course not and the reason being is that sooner or later they will destroy itself! Thus, whatever God is doing, whatever He has done, whatever He will do in the future will be right, all of his actions will be just and they will never be reversed!

And I just want to share a couple of more Scriptures with you before we move on and these Scriptures are in regards to how God treats His Creation or how He treats man. In Genesis 18:25, remember what Abraham said about God as the Lord was preparing to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for their sin. He said, “**Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**”

Abraham is saying that God is just and whatever He does is right; He always acts in a way that is consistent to His character and according to His Law.

You see, God will reward those who have been faithful to Him and He will judge evil. In Psalm 11:7 we are told, “**For the Lord is righteous, He loves righteousness; His countenance beholds the upright.**” And Paul tells us in II Timothy 4:8 that the righteous Lord will reward us. He wrote, “**Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.**”

And, on the other end of the spectrum, those that reject the Lord, they too will be repaid for their evil as we are told in Revelation 16:4-7, **“Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying: ‘You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.’ And I heard another from the altar saying, ‘Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.’”** You see, people may not like the judgments of God, but they are righteous, they are just and God is not going to change because what He does is perfect!

Again, many don’t like to speak of this judgment of God, but it will come to pass. A. W. Tozer wrote these words regarding God’s righteous judgment. “But God’s justice stands forever against the sinner in utter severity. The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions. It hushes their fears and allows them to practice all pleasant forms of iniquity while death draws every day nearer and the command to repent goes unregarded. As responsible moral beings we dare not so trifle with our eternal future.” (A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 89).

And so, as we conclude this section on God's justice, His righteousness let's review what we have learned. First of all God's righteousness or justice is an attribute that leads Him to do only those things which are right. Secondly, because God is righteous he must judge evil. And lastly, God's justice allows Him to reward those who have been faithful to Him. That, as best as we can, sums it up for us. **THE JUSTICE OR RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD!**

### **C. LOVE**

Love is another attribute of God; it is part of His nature. But we need to keep things in proper perspective because some have taken this to the wrong conclusion. Again, listen to what A. W. Tozer wrote regarding this attribute of God, His love.

The apostle John, by the Spirit, wrote, "God is Love," and some have taken his words to be a definitive statement concerning the essential nature of God. This is a great error. John was by those words stating a fact, but he was not offering a definition.

Equating love with God is a major mistake which has produced much unsound religious philosophy and has brought forth a spate [or wave] of vaporous poetry completely out of accord with the Holy Scriptures and altogether of another climate from that of historic Christianity.

Had the apostle declared that love is what God is, we would be forced to infer that God is what love is. If literally God is love, then literally love is God, and we are in all duty bound to worship love as the only God there is. If love is equal to God then God is only equal to love, and God and love are identical. Thus we destroy the concept of personality in God and deny outright all His attributes saved, one, and that one we substitute for God. The God we have left is not the God of Israel; He is not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; He is not the God of the prophets and the apostles; He is not the God of the saints and reformers and martyrs, nor yet the God of the theologians and hymnists of the church.

For our soul's sake we must learn to understand the Scriptures. We must escape the slavery of words and give loyal adherence to meanings instead. Words should express ideas, not originate them. We say that God is love; we say that God is light; we say that Christ is truth; and we mean the words to be understood in much the same way that words are understood when we say of a man, "He is kindness itself." By so saying we are not stating that kindness and the man are identical, and no one understands our words in that sense.

The words "God is love" mean that love is an essential attribute of God. Love is something true of God but it is not God. It expresses the way God is in His unitary being, as do the words holiness, justice, faithfulness and truth. Because God is immutable He always acts like Himself and because He is a unity He never suspends one of His attributes in order to exercise another.



From God's other known attributes we may learn much about His love. We can know, for instance, that because God is self-existent, His love had not beginning; because He is eternal, His love can have no end; because He is infinite, it has not limit; because He is holy, it is the quintessence of all spotless purity; because He is immense, His love is an incomprehensibly vast, bottomless, shoreless sea before which we kneel in joyful silence and from which the loftiest eloquence retreats confused and abashed.

Yet if we would know God and for other's sake tell what we know, we must try to speak of His love. All Christians have tried but none has ever done it very well. I can no more do justice to that awesome and wonder-filled theme than a child can grasp a star. Still, by reaching toward the star the child may call attention to it and even indicate the direction one must look to see it. So, as I stretch my heard toward the high, shining love of God, someone who has not before known about it may be encouraged to look up and have hope.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, pp. 97-98

I think it is important to understand that love is an attribute of God and it is not God! Now, let's look at some Scriptures that speak of the love of God, what that is all about. First of all look at Jeremiah 31:3, which tells us, "**The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: 'Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.'**" God's love for us is everlasting or it does not end.

Think about that for a minute. Does God love me because of me, because I am so special? That truly is how others love us, it is based upon what we do, how we look, what we can give them. Not God! In Deuteronomy 7:7-8 we are told, “**The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.**” You can’t influence God to love you more or love you less, His love is unconditional and it is eternal. If it was based upon us, then we can take credit for God loving us based upon what we have done. But this love is one of His attributes that flow from Him. And think about it. Can you make a tree more of a tree? Can you make the sky more sky? Can you make a rock more of a rock? Of course not and thus, you can’t affect the love of God, it flows from Him and is everlasting and not based upon us, but upon Him! We can’t make God more love, in a sense! He is the personification of perfect love or the perfect representation of love. If we want to know what love is about, we just need to study God the Father!

Also, in Hosea 14:4 we are told, **“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from him.”** Did you notice that God’s love is given to us *FREELY!* We see this also in the New Testament, in John 3:16-17 as we are told, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”** Now, did the world deserve God’s love? Absolutely not! But God freely gave His Son so that we would live, that we might be saved through Him. If it were based upon our goodness or our deserving of this love, we would never have received it in the first place; God would have never sent His Son!

One of the best illustrations I have read regarding the love of God and how it fits here in John 3:16 goes like this:

A certain medieval monk announced he would be preaching next Sunday evening on “The Love of God.” As the shadows fell and the light ceased to come in through the cathedral windows, the congregation gathered. In the darkness of the altar, the monk lighted a candle and carried it to the crucifix. First of all, he illumined the crown of thorns, next, the two wounded hands, then the marks of the spear wound. In the hush that fell, he blew out the candle and left the chancel. There was nothing else to say.

- Source Unknown

God's love is not only everlasting, unconditional, free and sacrificial but it will also endure to the end. God is not going to get up one morning, which He doesn't do for God never slumbers or sleeps, but if He did, He is not going to say, "I have had it with Joe, I don't love him anymore!" People may do that, but God never does! In John 13:1 we are told, "**Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.**" I am thankful for that. As I have said, people may change their minds about me, but God will never do that, He will love me to the end!

In this passage here we see Jesus speaking of loving His men, and in reality all of us, to the end. Some translations say, "**He loved them to the uttermost.**" I like that because even when the disciples blew it, He loved them. Even when they denied Him, He loved them. Even when they locked themselves in a room because they were afraid, He loved them and He loves us! Now in saying that, does that mean He doesn't love the unsaved? Not at all, He loves us all for as Paul said in Romans 5:8, "**But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**" The difference is we love Him back, we respond to His love towards us while the unsaved don't. Remember what we read in Jeremiah 31:3, which says, "**The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: 'Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.'**" God's love is everlasting. God's love is to the uttermost!

And lastly, look at I John 4:7-11, which says, **“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”**

Do you see where this love comes from? John tells us that this love comes from God into our lives and then that love flows to others through us. Thus, this AGAPE love stems from a regenerate nature and fellowship with God. Paul put it this way in Romans 5:5, **“Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”** The love of God flows into our lives and thus, it should then flow through our lives or as Jesus said in John 13:34-35, **“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”** If God is love, and He is, that is one of His attributes that flow from His life naturally, then being a child of God that love should be seen in us also!

Now when God says that He loves us they are not just empty words. How do I know that? Because God shows us He loves us by His actions. If you doubt God’s love for you, then look to the cross for in that we see God’s love for us.

Paul, in Ephesians 3:14-19 tells us of this love, **“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”**

It is a love that in it's width opens His arms to all of mankind. It is a love that in it's length never ends. It is a love that has a depth that can reach to the most wicked sinner and pull him out of that mire he is in. It is a love that has a height that reaches up into the heavens, where we will be gathered up one day! That is God's love for us!

Spurgeon put it like this, “If there was to be reconciliation between God and man, man ought to have sent to God; the offender ought to be the first to apply for forgiveness; the weaker should apply to the greater for help; the poor man should ask of him who distributes alms; but ‘Herein is love’ that God ‘sent.’ He was the first to send an embassy of peace.” The Father sent His only begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins; He took our place on that cross of Calvary and endured the wrath of God that was due us as the sins of the world were placed upon Him. That is *LOVE* – it is seen in His actions, His work towards us!

And is it really such a great thing that we love God? Not at all, look at all He has done for us. You see, we love Him because He first loved us! And that folks is the amazing thing, that God loves us, miserable sinners and was willing to die for our sins and did and then adopted us into the family of God!

As John finishes up showing us the AGAPE love of God towards us, he then says, **“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”** I John 4:11. Okay, God has done this for you; now you go and do the same to others, love them as God loves you. That is the pattern, receiving from God and then giving to others. It is as Jesus said in John 13:14, **“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.”**

I know, for some it is hard to show this kind of love, but think about it. It would be like having a drainpipe that is clogged. The water goes down but it has no place to go, it can't flow through the pipe. Thus, there is a problem and it needs to be fixed. The same is true for the Christian who says he can't love others, there is a problem and it needs to be fixed. You are not to have the love of God just flow into your life, but you are to let the love of God flow through you and touch the lives of others. God pours His love into our lives not just for us but so that it might flow through us!

Let me close this section with these words from A. W. Tozer, who wrote,

The love of God is one of the great realities of the universe, a pillar upon which the hope of the world rests. But it is a personal, intimate thing, too. God does not love populations, He loves people. He loves not masses, but men. He loves us all with a mighty love that has no beginning and can have no end.

In Christian experience there is a highly satisfying love content that distinguishes it from all other religions and elevates it to heights far beyond even the purest and noblest philosophy. This love content is more than a thing; it is God Himself in the midst of His Church singing over His people. True Christian joy is the heart's harmonious response to the Lord's song of love.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 102

As we look at God's love we must understand that He is not equivalent to love. Love is an attribute of God and one that is very obvious, but it is still an attribute of God. We can rightly say that God is love but we cannot say that love is God for that would make God impersonal! **THE LOVE OF GOD!**

Next time we will continue looking at the moral attributes of God and I pray that you are getting a better understanding of who God is, what flows from Him, what His attributes are because as you do, it will manifest itself in the way you live out your faith!