God Is Love

Intro: There are three areas of God’s character that are given special emphasis in the Scriptures: Spirit, Light, Love. God is Spirit; John 4:23-24 “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 23God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” God is Light; 1 John 1:5 “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” God is Love; 1 John 4:8, 16 “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love....16And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

In these three ideas other aspects of His character are taken into consideration. God being Spirit embraces His eternality. God being Light embraces His holiness and righteousness (or justness). God’s Love embraces His mercy and grace.

Let us consider God’s love and notice that His love expresses itself in different ways.

I. GOD’S LOVE IS UNIVERSAL.

A. John 3:16-17 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

1. No one can get to the point where God does not love him.
   a. Even when we reach the depths of sin, God loves us.
   b. We sometimes get the erroneous idea that no one loves us.

   (1) Napoleon when exiled to St. Helena Island for his crimes wrote, “I wonder if there is anyone in all the world that truly loves me.”
   (2) We are loved by God.

II. GOD’S LOVE IS ALTRUISTIC.

A. Altruistic means:

1. Putting the interest of others before one’s own interest: unselfish: it is not influenced by others.
2. One who loves altruistically loves because he is within himself desirous of giving love, must give love, and does not give it on the basis on someone warranting it (doing something for it) and not for which he will receive in return.

B. Rom. 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

1. We did not warrant his love.
2. We were sinners thus enemies of God.

   a. Isa. 59:1-2 “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

   b. Rom. 5:8-10 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

3. Who loves his enemy?
4. God’s love is not affected by man or circumstances.

C. Mat. 5:45 “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

D. 1 John 4:19 “We love him, because he first loved us.”
III. GOD’S LOVE IS SACRIFICIAL.
   A. God gave; John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
   B. Rom. 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
   C. The Father sacrificed himself in giving His Son to die on the cross, and the Son giving Himself to die for our sins.

IV. GOD’S LOVE IS PERSONAL.
   A. It may be given to the world in general and altruistically; but it is also personal.
      1. “Loved me and gave himself for me;” Gal. 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”
      2. Heb. 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”
      3. If I was the only person alive on the earth, Jesus still would have died on the cross for me.
   B. God takes a personal interest in you and me.
   C. John 10:3, 14-15 “To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.... 14I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

V. GOD’S LOVE IS SPECIAL—FOR HIS CHILDREN.
   A. This does not take away from His love for all mankind.
   B. God loves His family separate and apart from all mankind.
   C. John 14:23, 15 “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.... 15If ye love me, keep my commandments.”
   D. Mat. 28:20 “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
   E. We are God’s dwelling place.
      1. 1 Cor. 3:
      2. 1 Cor. 6:
      3. 2 Cor. 6:
   F. 1 John 3:1 “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” Behold means to be amazed at or shocked at or marveled at.

VI. GOD’S LOVE IS UNENDING.
   A. Jer. 31:3 “The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”
   B. 1 Cor. 13:8, 13 “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.... 13And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”
VII. GOD IS HOLY.

A. God cannot be associated with sin, look upon it.

B. That holiness demands God be just.
   1. Justness demands that God punish eternally in hell all that do not free themselves of sin.
   2. Man has no ability to take away sin.

C. Here is where God’s love comes in to all men, in Jesus dying upon the cross to save sinner man.

D. Thus, you can become a child of God by faith by being baptized into Christ.
   1. Gal. 3:26-27 “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
   2. By the new birth, John 3:1-7 “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”
   3. By obedience to the truth, 1 Pet. 1:22-25 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. 24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: 25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

Conclusion: Do not shun God’s love. Accept His offer of salvation from your sins today and love Him by being obedient to His Will; John 14:15 “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”