

08 01 23

Love Pt 1 Introduction and God is love

This is our first study on the word “love” in the scriptures. There are 443 occurrences of the different forms of the word “love”– in scripture. First we establish a brief meaning of the word in the scriptures, then we establish three points– (i) God is love, (ii) God loves Israel, (iii) God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

Definition of love

When we love we speak kindly

“And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel” (Gen.34: 3).

To love is to do (something)

“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. Example of making a coat:” (1 Jn.3:18). See example of giving – Gen 37:4; God gives to the stranger –Deut 10:18

Two souls are knit together in love

“And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam.18: 1).

Here is love: that God loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins
“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn.4: 10).

THIS is love– that we walk after his commandments – this is the commandment– that ye heard from the beginning (love your brother)

“And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it” (2 Jn.1: 6).

There are links between–

i) Faith and love

Love is with faith

“Peace [be] to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph.6: 23)

Christ dwells in our heart by faith that we may be rooted and grounded in love

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love” (Eph 3:17)

ii) Mercy and love

God is rich in mercy – for his great love where he loved us even when we were dead in sins– has quicken us together with Christ

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us” (Eph.2: 4).

iii) Kindness and love

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared” (Tit 3:4)

It is from our search of the scriptures that we establish our points–

1. God is love – he that dwells in love– dwells in God and God in him

“And 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” (1 Jn.4: 16)

2. God loved Israel

“And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt” (Deut.4: 37)

The Lord had a delight in Israel to love them

“Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day” (Deut.10: 15).

3. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son

“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” (Jn.3: 16).

The Father loved the Son and gave all things into his hand

“The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand” (Jn.3: 35)

Illustration

Krishna says–

“To love without condition, to talk without intention, to give without reason, care without expectation, that's the spirit of true love.”

Buddhist say–

“In the Buddhist teaching, it's clear that to love oneself is the foundation of the love of other people. Love is a practice. Love is truly a practice.”

The Sikh says–

“Pyare means Love for the Lord and His creation. This is one of five virtues that is vigorously promoted by the Sikh Gurus. The other four qualities in the arsenal are: Truth (Sat), Contentment (Santokh), Compassion (Daya) and Humility (Nimrata).”

Questions of the scriptures

- i) If God is love and love is of God then surely all who love are of God?
- ii) What is the problem with the doctrine of “God is love”?

Answers from the scriptures

i) One problem – only those who are in the body of Christ have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, and therefore only those in Christ know what it means to love– how God the Father loves – because they know that the love of God is in Christ Jesus our Lord – “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” (Rom 8:39).

Therein is the love of God– that God sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins! “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn.4: 10).

So next time a man from a worldly religion talks about the common theme of love – may you remember that not all “love” is equal. Only those who know the love of God in Christ will know the one true God (who created the world), and knows His love!

ii) For those who do not believe God has preserved His words but rather He has preserved His message of scripture– they are often accepting of evils that scripture is clear on– as being an abomination. The sin of sodomy is a good example where some “liberal” Christians accept “everyone – because God is love and that is His preserved message to mankind. But such are blind in their knowledge of the love of God according to scripture which link love with truth (1Jn.3: 16 & 1Pet.1: 22). Next week we will look at how having a knowledge of God's love affects how we love our how brethren. Amen!!