

He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1. It has been said, when someone feels loved, the world glows with light, and when someone feels unloved, the world grows dark.
2. Harvard conducted a 75 yr study on what makes us happy, secure, fulfilled.
 - a. The answer was not money, or status or career success or popularity...
 - b. the answer was life long loving relationships.
 - c. Which makes sense when you consider that God created us for the most important relationship of all—our relationship with Him!
3. John Gives One of the most sublime truths revealed about—God is Love

This single incredible truth unlocks many mysteries & answers many questions... (1 John 4:7-12)

I. GOD IS LOVE

The Love of God Unlocks These 5 Mysteries...

A. UNLOCKS THE MYSTERY OF CREATION

1. WE WONDER—WHY DID GOD CREATE THE COSMOS?
 - a) Why did God Create Life?
 - b) Why Did God Create Humanity Unique Among All Creation?
 - c) Since God is Love—Then He Desired to Share His Love
2. WE SEE GOD'S LOVE IN HIS COMPASSION FOR HIS CREATION
 - a) Notice Jesus' Compassion for Humanity (Matthew 9:35-36)
 - b) These were common ordinary people

Abraham Lincoln: "God must love common people because He made so many of them."

3. JESUS WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION FOR OTHERS (Luke 7:11-16)

- a) Jesus broke up every funeral He ever attended because of His love

B. UNLOCKS THE MYSTERY OF FREE-WILL

1. WHY DID GOD CREATE US WITH FREE-WILL?
 - a) Especially Considering All the Problems Man Has Caused in the World.
 - b) All the Pain and Suffering Man Has Caused...
2. BUT LOVE REQUIRES FREE-WILL — OR IT IS NOT LOVE
 - a) Without Free-Will There is No Love—Because Love Requires a Choice
 - b) But Free-Will Choice is a Double-Edged Sword...
 - c) The Free Choice to Love also allows the free Choice NOT to love
3. IF GOD ONLY VALUED LAW—He Could've Created Us with No More Choice than a Machine or an Animal...
 - a) No Free-will—No Problems Right?! > But No Relationship—No Love
 - b) It Grieved God when Man Became So Corrupted with Evil
 - c) Was it Worth It to Give us Free-Will? —Were You Worth It?
— The Long Suffering of God Says Yes! You Were Worth IT!

C. UNLOCKS THE MYSTERY OF REDEMPTION

1. BECAUSE OF FREE-WILL WE HAVE ALL SINNED

- a) And the Penalty of Sin is Death—Physical, Spiritual, Judicial, Eternal, Death
- b) But God Made a Way, a Plan (**Eph. 2:4-5**)

2. Did You Know There is a Difference between Mercy and Grace?

a) EX: Imagine You committed a crime punishable by death

- (1) Justice Demands the Death Penalty...
- (2) Mercy would be if the judge gives anything less than death penalty...
- (3) Instead of Death, Let's Say You Received 30 yrs, 20 yrs or Set Free!

b) But GRACE is Much More...

- (1) Grace is if the judge said, I want you to have a new clean start...
- (2) So he adopts the criminal as his own son
- (3) Gives him a new life, a new name and new inheritance...
- (4) The Judge pays the price to buy you back
- (5) Then He takes the judgement and penalty upon Himself!

c) Jesus Paid YOUR Debt in Full by His Blood at the Cross!

3. THE GOSPEL IS THE GOOD NEWS OF GRACE BECAUSE OF GOD'S LOVE!

a) We Deserved Death, God's Righteous Judgement Demands It...

- (1) So The Cross is Where the JUSTICE OF GOD on One Hand
- (2) And the LOVE OF GOD on the other Hand Met

b) Both His Justice and Mercy Were Satisfied at the Cross by Jesus

- (1) We Were Set Free From the Bondage of Sin By His Blood (1 Jn 4:9-10)

D. UNLOCKS THE MYSTERY OF PROVIDENCE

1. GOD PROVIDES—HIS PROVIDENTIAL CARE IS OVER ALL HE HAS MADE

Psalm 145:8-9 ESV "The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that he has made."

2. GOD PROVIDES FOR ALL HUMANITY

- a) God Makes the Sun Shine & Rain Fall on the Just and Unjust
- b) God Provides Good for All the Human Race (**Acts 14:15-17**)

3. GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS CHILDREN (Roman 8:28, 32**)**

E. UNLOCKS THE MYSTERY OF ETERNAL LIFE

1. GOD REVEALS THE ANSWERS TO OUR DEEPEST QUESTIONS

- a) Where am I From? Why Am I Here? Where Am I Going?
- b) The Love of God Unlocks the Mystery of Eternal Life! (**John 3:16-17**)

2. YOU WERE UNIQUELY CREATED BY GOD—IN THE IMAGE OF GOD!

- a) with a Spirit that Lives Forever—Long after this body is gone...
- b) C.S. Lewis: "You don't have a soul, you ARE a Soul, you have a Body"
- c) **WORD: Cemetery— ceme / terra — terra:Clay / ceme: Half —clay-half**
- d) "Your not a human being having a spiritual experience, you are a spiritual being having a human experience." (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin)

**3. YOU WERE UNIQUELY CREATED BY GOD
TO BE WITH GOD FOR ETERNITY! (1 Jn 3:1-3)**

II. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR US

A. WITHOUT LOVE—WE CANNOT KNOW GOD (1 John 4:7-8)

He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1. Love is a divine attribute of God's character—just as Holiness is...
2. Without Love we cannot know God (1 John 4:8)
3. Without Holiness no one can see God (Hebrews 12:14)

B. LOVE IS AN ACTION—NOT JUST A FEELING OR JUST WORDS...

1. I heard about a husband who never said I Love You to his wife...
 - a) When she mentioned it to him he said, "I told you I loved you the day we married and if anything changes I'll let you know."
 - b) Everyone has a different definition of what love is—but Agape Love is not just a feeling or words—but an action...
2. God Showed His Love Toward Us in So Many Ways...
 - a) He Provides for our needs...
 - b) He Has Loving Concern for us...
 - c) His Patience with us...
 - d) His Mercy—God Forgives...
3. But God's love is seen especially in offering His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins so that we can be made Holy. (1 John 4:10)

**C. AGAPE LOVE GIVES WHAT IS BEST FOR THAT PERSON
AND GOD GAVE US WHAT IS BEST FOR US...**

1. If Knowledge was our greatest need—Jesus would've had a 30 yr ministry, not a 3 yr ministry
2. If Physical Healing was our greatest need—Jesus would've spent His ministry healed everyone, not just some...
3. Our Greatest Need was not Knowledge or Physical Health...
But to be saved from an eternal and Judicial separation from God
4. God Gave What We Needed Most—He Gave the Greatest Gift of Heaven—
He Gave Jesus to be our Sacrifice for Sin
5. Agape Love Calls Us to Give Our Best to God

D. THE LOVE OF GOD TRANSFORMS US

1. I knew a man who had fallen away from the Lord for years...

- a) His wife was faithful to the Lord and on Sunday after church she would bring home a little girl from church to spend the day having fun
- b) and one day the little girl crawled into his lap and said:
“Uncle Dave, It makes God sad when you don’t go to church.”
- c) It took the innocence of a child to melt his heart and receive the truth
- d) He went back to church that day and started serving the Lord again!

2. The Love of God Changed the Apostle John...

From a son of thunder—to the apostle of love!

3. It Changed Peter from denying the Lord—to laying down His life for Him

**4. It Changed Paul—from an arrogant pharisee who chased down christians
—to realize he was the chiefest of sinners!**

- a) Paul wanted to know the love of God—
and realized it’s beyond knowledge! **(Ephesians 3:17–19)**

5. It is the love of God that transforms our hearts to become more like Christ

6. It is the Love of God that makes us More Than Conquers **(Romans 8:35-39)**

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Don’t leave your first love -**
- 2. We didn’t love God first—God loved us first **(1 John 4:10–11)****
- 3. And Now We are To Love God and Love One Another **(1 John 4:12)****