God’s Love for Us  
Ephesians 3:14-19

If we could but grasp how greatly God loves us, it would __________ our lives. No one loves you like the Lord Jesus. From start to finish, the Bible is God’s supreme _________ of love and redemption. The more we read the Bible, the more we can understand the _________ of God who created us and sustains our very existence. Though mankind can be _________ to love, God has never faltered in wanting to _________ those who seek His face and draw near. James 1:17 says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

God hasn’t hidden His love for us; God has displayed it beyond dispute in the _________ of Jesus Christ upon the cross. Read what the Bible says in Romans 5:6-8. We were weak, ungodly, and sinners; but Christ was still ____________ to die for our sins, to wash us clean by His blood. Such love is truly abundant and beyond comprehension.

Jesus bore the cross to ___________ us of our sins and then to open a door for us to have a loving relationship with our Father in Heaven. The Lord loved us when we were _________ and couldn’t save ourselves. He helped us when we were ungodly and had little _________ of Him. He died for us while we were ____________ who had offended Him. Christ loved our _________ when we didn’t deserve it, when we didn’t understand it, or even appreciate it. Such amazing love!

Our reading today comes from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians 3:14-19.

The Old Testament uses a rich and amazing word to ____________ the love that God has for His people. The Bible says that God is ______________ in this kind of love. Some versions call it “steadfast love,” some “lovingkindness,” and some simply just “mercy.”

Read Psalm 103:8-14.

“Steadfast” love is the deepest and best love; it’s the kind of _________ love that doesn’t let go and doesn’t fail. It’s loyal, faithful, kind, and good. It’s compassionate and merciful. This type of love is _________ upon a voluntary covenant, an everlasting commitment to those who are in His favor. Psalm 86:15 says, “But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” Because the God of Heaven is kind and good, He’s ____________ to pardon and forgive our sins if we remain ____________ to Him.

When you consider all that Jesus gave up in bearing the cross to save us from sin, you cannot __________ His love. If anything, the magnificent love of Jesus was stubborn, unfailing, and utterly unselfish. Jesus didn’t merely give up something; He sacrificed Himself ___________. On the cross the ____________ Lord Jesus sacrificed everything. He kept silent and did nothing while men slandered Him, falsely accused Him, condemned Him, scourged Him, mocked Him, and crucified Him. Read what 1 Peter 2:22-24 says.
Jesus bore the punishment and death for our ________, and it’s the punishment that we should have borne. He bore it personally in his own ________. The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). His suffering was __________ and ____________. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew _____ sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Everything that Jesus did, He did out of an undeniable and pure ________ for us. Can you imagine what it must have been like for Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane to know that he would __________ scourging and crucifixion? According to Matthew 26:38, Jesus was greatly troubled and sorrowful, even to the point of death. Luke 22:44 says, “And being in agony He __________ more earnestly; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

They didn’t simply bind Jesus; they __________ His hands and feet to a rugged cross and suspended Him in the most agonizing position. As they crucified Him, He prayed that the Father would __________ them. They mocked Him, insulted Him, and did their very ________ to Him. Through all of His suffering, Jesus remained ________; He uttered no threats. He didn’t even revile them in return. He didn’t call for the twelve legions of angels to wipe them out. No! The Lord’s stubborn love lasted for ________ long hours on the cross. No matter how ugly men were to Jesus, Jesus’ steadfast love held Him to the cross. He loved us to the end!

First Timothy 2:3-4 says, “This is good, and it’s pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires _______ people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Second Peter 3:9 says, “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his ____________ as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that _______ should perish, but that ______ should reach repentance.” God doesn’t want anybody to be lost, but our heavenly Father grants us the ________ to choose Him or to choose sin. You can’t make someone love you by ________. God wants us to know Him, and to know the truth, and to love Him freely for Who He is. This means we must be free to __________ Him or ________ Him. God loves everyone, but His blessing and grace are ____________ for those who choose to love Him. We must freely and lovingly choose to ____________ in Him, to ____________ of our sins, and to ____________ Him.

Occasionally people speak of God’s “unconditional love.” Yes, I know Jesus said in Matthew 5:45 that God “makes his ________ rise on the evil and on the good, and sends ________ on the just and on the unjust.” God is certainly ________ to all! Jesus didn’t bear the cross for us because we were so good and deserved it. No, Jesus died for us because we were sinful and ________ saving. In that sense, He unconditionally took the initiative’ but we cannot for that reason assume that to remain in God’s love we can do whatever we ________. We can’t assume God’s love for us will ____________ to bless us if we turn from Him.

The Lord’s steadfast love, His covenant love of promise, has ____________. Read what the Lord Jesus said in John 14:23-24. God promises His love and He promises His abiding presence to those who love Him and ________ His words. A person who doesn’t love God won’t ________ about keeping God’s words.
It’s a fantasy to think that we can sin all we wish and still count on the _________ of God. It’s fantasy to think that we can _________ against God and still be right with Him. It’s fantasy to think that we can remake God in our own image and still _________ Him. It’s fantasy to think that we can rewrite His commandments, ignore His holiness, corrupt His character, and forget His justice but still _________ on His love.

Read what Hebrews 10:26-31 says. Oh friend, we must never take the love and grace of God for ___________. It’s too ______________ to squander.

You might be thinking at this point, “Phil don’t you remember that the Bible says, ‘God is ______.’” Yes, I know 1 John 4:8. But picking a passage out of the Bible and ignoring other verses that are just as inspired isn’t accurately ____________ the Word of God. We shouldn’t understand 1 John 4:8, “God is love,” without also consulting 1 John 1:5-7. Read 1 John 1:5-7.

As J. I. Packer said in his book, Knowing God, “the God who is love is first and foremost ___________, and sentimental ideas of his love as an indulgent, benevolent ___________, divorced from moral standards and concerns, must therefore be ruled out from the start. God’s love is _________ love. The God whom Jesus made known is not a God who is indifferent to _________ distinctions, but a God who loves righteously and righteousness and He _________ iniquity, a God whose ideal for his children is that they should ‘be perfect. . . as your heavenly Father is perfect’ (Matthew 5:48). He will not take into his _________ any person, however orthodox in mind, who will not follow after holiness of life.”

Hebrews 12:14 says, “Strive for peace with everyone, and for the _________ without which no one will see the Lord.” Some might wonder if God loves us, why would He _________ on our living holy lives? Some think that if God loved us, He wouldn’t _________ that we live by all those rules. But let’s stop here and think. Is God trivial? Are His laws petty? No! God insists His people live holy lives so as to _________ us and give us peace. We should consider the righteous way of life that Jesus commands as a precious _________, not as a burden or something petty or trivial. God isn’t being _________ when He asks us to treat others kindly or to refrain from evil. Everyone _________ when we live good lives. God’s goodness is one of the ways that He shows His love.

When we sin against God by breaking His commandments, He _________ us with love. Godly discipline is not abuse; it’s _________ given for our good. Proverbs 3:11-12 says, “My son, do not despise the LORD’s discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the L ORD reproves him whom he _________, as a father the son in whom he delights.” The book of Hebrews explains in Hebrews 12 verses 10 and 11 that God “disciplines us for our _________, that we may _________ his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems _________ rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been _________ by it.” God disciplines our sins that we may _________ in His holiness and _________ with Him. He acts for the long-term good, not simply for the _________.
Our society __________ discipline, thinking love leaves people alone to do anything they want. They believe that __________ against any behavior is mean-spirited and judgmental. But God speaks against sin out of love, not meanness. Remaining _________ about sinful behaviors that ruin lives is far more cruel than simply _________ someone. God speaks out against sin because He ________, and He wants to ________ us.

Why is this important? Because the Lord created you for ________ than what takes place in this life. God loves you and is interested in your life here on __________ and in the hereafter. He wants you to live with Him forever in __________. Along with Paul, we pray “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through _______; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses ___________, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.”

The Lord Jesus touched _______ throughout His ministry. He healed the sick, the lepers, the blind, and the deaf. He raised the dead, walked on water, stilled the storm, and fed the multitudes. When men did their worst to Him, He __________, “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do.” Peter described Jesus in Acts 10:38 as One who “went about doing _______ and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.” The Lord Jesus is _______ doing good in the lives of men and women. He leads them out of _______________ to sin to become _______________ of God. He leads them out of _______________ into hope, out of _______________ into faith, and out of _______________ into love.

We need the love of God in our _________ every day! The more we grasp how much He loves us, the more we'll determine to ____________ that same kind of lasting, committed love. Knowing the love of God will _________ better fathers and husbands, better mothers and wives, better citizens, better children, and better friends. God’s love ____________ us patience and kindness, compassion and forgiveness, and forbearance and loyalty. Love ____________ us to be holy and faithful. It teaches us how to love the _________ and to live with integrity and virtue. We need God’s love to become _________ people.

The love of God should make you want to become a better Christian. When you become a Christian by placing your trust in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, when you are turning away from sin, when you’re confessing Christ before others, and when you’re baptized into Christ, you become a Christian. When you’re baptized, the Lord washes away your sins; He adds you to His family, the church. And nothing you will do today is more important than becoming a Christian, and professing Your love for God. Won’t you become one today?

Get involved with a church of Christ in your area. They’re the reason that we don’t ask for money. If you’re looking for a church home, a Biblical church home, we’ll be happy to help you find one. Churches of Christ love and they want guests to come and worship with them and if you go and worship there, you’ll be glad that you did.