

## John, Part 11 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ – God’s Great Love

**Before we look at John 3:14-17, we should consider God’s essential characteristic and fact that God is love.**

**1 John 4:8 NKJV** He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

**1 John 4:16 NKJV** And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Both of these references bluntly tell us, “God is love.” When we consider the person and character of God, His primary characteristic is love. We can filter all of God’s actions throughout time through this one thing. Everything He created and sustains by the word of His power is a product of His love. Since we know and rely of the love God has for us and the essential nature of God’s character, consider John 3:14-17.

**John 3:14–17 NKJV** <sup>14</sup>And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

**These verses tell us how Jesus revealed God’s great love.**

- We will discover that God so loved (v.16).
- We will see the evidence that God gave (v.16).
- The purpose of His gift and love is to save (v.16).
- We will see the proof of God’s love: He sent His Son (v.17).
- Then we will see the method of God’s love: through Jesus Christ (v.17).

**John 3:16 NKJV** 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.

God so loved. Many of us have heard this all of our lives. Some people struggle at the concept of God, much less a God of love. For them, the love of God is hard to grasp. We need to see the application of God’s love.

**What does the word ‘love’ mean?**

Love has a broad and diverse meaning. Everyone has a personal definition of love. It is described as an intense feeling of deep affection to mere fondness. Love is tenderness, warmth, intimacy, and attachment. People call it love when they have romantic or sexual passion, lust and desire. The word love is used when something is enjoyed or desired. “I love that ice cream.” Love describes compassion, care, concern, friendship, kindness, charity, goodwill, sympathy, and benevolence. People are referred to as “my love” when they consider their significant other or partner.

I am sure you can see the difficulty in defining love. God’s love is greater than a warm emotional feeling. God’s love is an unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of others. God’s love is not measured by trivial gifts or temporary warm feelings. God’s love is demonstrated by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The scripture says: ‘God so loved the world.’ God loved the whole world. That describes the width and depth and the all inclusive nature of God’s love. God loves the whole world.

Jesus presents us with the idea that God loves the whole world. This was a new concept for many people. The Jews believed that God loved the religious (the true Jew) and hated the non-religious (the Gentiles). In every generation of humanity, we find the same belief. Many people think God only loves the good and righteous and hates the sinner and unbeliever. This statement that God loves the whole world is a challenge. Several Biblical texts indicate God’s hatred of evil.

**Psalms 11:5 NKJV** The Lord tests the righteous, But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

**Psalms 11:7 NKJV** For the Lord is righteous, He loves righteousness; His countenance

beholds the upright.

**Psalms 37:28 NKJV** For the Lord loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.

**Proverbs 15:9 NKJV** The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, But He loves him who follows righteousness.

The fact that God truly loves the world is shocking. How could a holy God possibly love the vile person? How could He love the murderer and abuser? How could a righteous God love the immoral person? How could the undefiled God love the defiled and unclean? How could the owner of all things love the thief? How could the God who lives in the glory of heaven love the outcast, despised, and dejected of this world? How could He love the oppressor and the enslaver? How could He love the bitter or vengeful person?

We need to probe the fact that God loves everyone! He loves everyone, not just the religious and the good. He loves people who love Him and those who do not love Him. He loves everyone, even the unlovely and the unloving. He loves the unbelieving and the obstinate. He loves the selfish and the greedy. He loves the spiteful and the vengeful.

**This is hard to take in. God loves the world.**

**John 10:16 NKJV** And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

These “other sheep” are people who will be saved later. John 11:52 tells us, “Jesus would die for the nation, and not that nation only, but He would gather together in one the children of God who are scattered.”

**2 Peter 3:9 NKJV** The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

### **Why does God love?**

God loves for a different reason than most people. Most people love as a result or in response to something good, lovely, or kind. We see something that is attractive and desirable, we like it and develop a love for it.

### **Love is the nature of God. God is love.**

Look at the facets of God’s nature. God is equally holy, true and good as He is love. His love is equal to His power, knowledge, and life. We cannot isolate one facet of God’s nature from the others. Every facet of God’s nature radiates through His whole being. His love is eternal, pure, holy, true, patient, wise, just, good, all powerful...

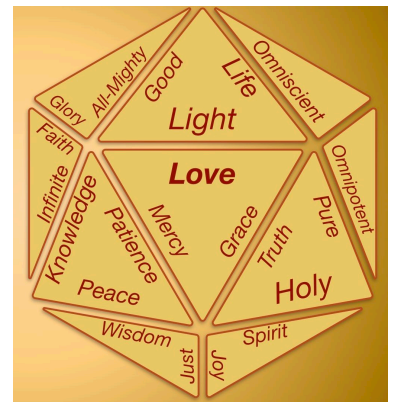
### **John is magnifying the nature of God’s love.**

**1 John 4:8; 16 NKJV** <sup>8</sup>He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>16</sup>And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Actions of love are normal and natural for God. He loves because He is love. He acts, demonstrates, and shows His true nature, LOVE. When we see or know Him, we see or know love.

**Romans 5:8 NKJV** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

When God’s love takes action, we have a demonstration of grace, mercy and peace. Love ceases to exist if it is not expressed. Love does not sit still doing nothing. Love is not dormant, complacent, and inactive. If love actually exists, it must act and express itself. Love must do something good. Love is lovingkindness and tender mercies. Love always demonstrates its nature to others.



Therefore, God's love takes action and reveals Him to be the personification or embodiment of love. God wants us to know His love. He wants everyone in the world to know His love.

**1 John 3:16 KJV** Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

**God so loved. This is a past, proven fact of how God loves.**

**John 3:16 NKJV** 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.

There is the evidence of God's love. God **gave** His only begotten Son. It is impossible to measure the magnitude of that love.

God demonstrated His love in the most perfect way possible. He gave His only begotten Son to the world, for the world. He held nothing back. He fully gave His Son.

**God is perfect in all of His being. That means His love is perfect.**

Therefore, God not only loves, but He so loves. He loves to perfection, to the ultimate degree. He loves to the extent that it cannot be improved on. Whatever the ultimate degree of love is, that is His love. Whatever the perfect act of love is, that is His love. Whatever the expression of love is, it is His love.

**John 3:16 NKJV** 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.

**Notice the evidence that God gave. God shows His love.**

**John 15:13 NKJV** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

The greatest act of love is the sacrifice of one's own life. God intentionally sacrificed the life of His own Son to save us.

The word "GAVE" expresses the depth of God's love. God GAVE His Son to the world, and He GAVE His Son to die for the world. The idea of sacrifice and great cost is in the gift.

It cost dearly for God to give His Son up to the world and up to the cross. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him. He allowed Jesus to leave His presence and condescend to the level of a servant. He allowed Jesus to leave the majesty, glory, worship and honor of heaven. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him, allowing Jesus to come to earth.

**Christ came into a world of darkness.** The word "world" describes more than the globe. The "world" refers to the condition of evil and fallen mankind. This involves every wickedness, vice and immorality. Christ came down to a world full of hostility, anger, and hatred. He came to a world of degenerate and immoral people. The world was filled with wrath, hostility, and greed. Jesus came down to a world of murder, war, and death.

The purpose of His gift and love is to save us from sin (v.16). God the Father gave up His Son to be separated from Him, allowing Jesus to die for the sins of men.

**Isaiah 53:5-6 NKJV** But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

**2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV** For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

**1 Peter 2:24 NKJV** Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness— by whose stripes you were healed.

God's love took the initiative to save man. Man did not seek to save himself. God looked for a way to save man.

**Luke 19:10 AMP** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. God intentionally gave His Son so that we might be forgiven and saved. God is the

seeking Savior. God is not angry and full of hate toward humanity. God is not unloving and vengeful. God does not have to be persuaded to love men. God does not have to be convinced to forgive men.

**Jeremiah 31:3 NIV** The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."

**Ephesians 2:4-5 NKJV** But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)

In love, God gave His only begotten Son. This is the most remarkable proof of God's love. This magnifies and demonstrates God's great love. God gave His only Son to save the world. You can take that personally. God gave His only Son to save you.

From before creation, God planned to give His Son. When Adam sinned, God announced His plan of redemption.

**Ephesians 1:4 NKJV** He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

God gave His Son to keep us from perishing and give us eternal life. He gave His Son so that everyone who believes in Him may be saved. That is the only limit on His saving grace and love.

**John 3:17 NKJV** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

God actually sent His Son into the world to redeem us from our sins. Christ was not sent to condemn or to judge the world. The world was condemned already. We are so guilty that we merit judgment.

**Romans 3:23 NKJV** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

We were guilty and convicted. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, (Luke 19:10).

In love, God gave Jesus Christ so that we may have a Mediator. He is the one and only way of our salvation.

**1 Timothy 2:5 NKJV** For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

Whatever we need, we can come to God through Christ Jesus! If we are guilty, He will accept and forgive us. If we are stained and unclean, He will cleanse us by His blood. If we need help from the Father, Jesus Christ will stand with us before the Father.

**Ephesians 2:13 NKJV** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Watch the depth of the love of God. He saw us in our low estate and sinfulness and came to us.

**1 John 3:2 NKJV** Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Read Ephesians 1 and you will see how God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing when He chose and adopted us as His own children.