

HOW GREAT A LOVE!

I. God's Original Plan.

A. The purpose of Creation.

1. Man was made in God's image, made to fellowship with God.
2. He was given a job during the day, to work all day staying in fellowship with God.
3. He had special communion with God in the cool of the day.
4. God wanted a family.
5. God wants to know you and spend time with you!

B. God's plan is unchangeable.

1. Hebrews 6:17-19 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil.
2. Hebrews 13:8 – Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.
3. James 1:17 – Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.
4. He is always the same and desires the same and acts the same and doesn't change at all.
5. Acts 10:38 – His plan is always doing good and healing all who are oppressed of the devil.

C. God's main purpose for mankind is fellowship.

1. 1 Corinthians 1:3 – Called to fellowship.
2. 1 John 1:3 – We have fellowship with God and His Son.
3. Fellowship:
(koinonia – communion, fellowship, sharing in)
(koinonos – a partaker or partner)
(koinonew - communication)
4. Acts 2:44 – The same word is used of the Church having all things in common. We are one spirit with the Lord.
5. Revelations 3:20 - Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears and listens to and heeds My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will eat with him, and he with Me.

D. John 17:3 – Eternal life is to know God.

Zoe – God's life, quality of life, sharing His life.

II. Jesus came to Show God to Us.

A. Jesus, the expression of God.

1. Hebrews 1:1-3
 - a. Old Testament – Many portions and many ways.
 - b. New Testament – Spoken through the Son, the exact representation of His nature (character).
 - c. Character – essential qualities; an individual's pattern of behavior or personality.
 - d. Matthew 13:35 – Jesus came to show us things about God that had been hidden from the foundation of the world.
2. John 1:14, 16-18 – The Word (Logos – the expression and thoughts of God) became flesh and dwelt among us.

3. Colossians 1:15 – Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God.
4. Matthew 11:27-30 – The Son reveals the Father.
5. Titus 3:4 – The kindness of God and His love for mankind appeared in Jesus.
6. Ephesians 3:7 – The exceeding riches of His grace is shown in His kindness toward us.

B. Jesus demonstrated God in the Gospels.

1. John 10:10 – His purpose in coming – to give us abundant life.
2. 1 John 3:8 – He was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.
3. Acts 10:38 – His ministry summarized. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil.
4. Notice He met needs of all who came. He never turned any away or told them to wait.
5. Notice how many times the word “immediately” is used (Matthew 14:31; Hebrews 2:18)
6. Matthew 14:27 – It is a characteristic of Jesus to constantly encourage us to not be fearful.
7. Some examples:
 - a. John 8 – The woman caught in adultery.
 - b. John 2 – The woman at the well.
 - c. Luke 7:11-15 – The raising of the dead son.
 - d. John 21:25 – So many other things He did that the world couldn't contain the books. But all He did is summarized in Acts 10:38 – He went about doing good and healing all...
 - e. Some glimpses of God as Father.

8. 1 John 3:1 – Behold what a great love He has for us that we should be His own children (Romans 8:15 Ephesians 1:5-6).
9. Matthew 7:7-11 – The Father knows how to give good gifts to us (James 1:16-17).
10. Matthew 6:6-8 – The Father sees in secret. He knows what we need before we ask.
11. He cares and doesn't want us to worry.
 - a. Matthew 6:25-34 – Take no thought for your life; your Father cares for you. He's the giver not the taker
 - b. 1 Peter 5:7 – Cast your cares and worries on Him because of His love; He really cares!
 - c. Philippians 4:6-8 – Makes your requests known to Him and rest, letting your heart bask in His peace.
 - d. Isaiah 26:3 – He keeps you in perfect peace when your mind is stayed on Him.
 - e. 1 John 4:17-18 – Perfect love casts our fear. Push fear and worry out by replacing them with thoughts about His love.
12. Psalms 103:13-14 – Like as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord does to us. He knows us and understands us fully – and yet He still loves us.
13. John 2:24-25 - But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

III. God Loves You and Desires Good for You.

A. God's Opinion of men.

1. Matthew 13:44-46 – God loves us so much that He gave His all.

2. 2 Corinthians 5:19 – God is not counting the trespasses of the world against them. He has reconciled them.
3. Ephesians 2:4-5 – God loves so much that He couldn't help it; He made us alive with Christ when we were dead.
4. John 3:16-17 – God so loved the world that He gave; He gave His very best. He did not condemn and is still not condemning.
5. Romans 5:8-10; 8:31-32 – If He did all of this while we were sinners and didn't belong to Him, how much more now?

B. God wants good for you.

1. Isaiah 30:18 – The longs to be gracious to you. He waits on high to have compassion on you.
2. 3 John 2 – He desires above all your health, well-being and prosperity.
3. Psalms 35:27 – He delights in the prosperity (well-being, things to be well for) of His servants.
4. John 10:10 – Jesus desires that we live abundantly.
5. Luke 12:32 w/Romans 14:17 – The Father's good pleasure – that we enjoy His kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy.
6. Zephaniah 3:17 – He will exult over you. He will rejoice with shouts of joy over you.
7. Ephesians 1:11, 18 (Living) – Moreover, because of what Christ has done we have become gifts to God that He delights in... I want you to realize that God has been made rich because we who are Christ's have been given Him!
8. Ephesians 1:19 – Paul prayed for us to know the greatness of His power on our behalf!

C. God is good.

1. James 1:12-18 – God is the Author of good gifts. He is always like this without change or variation.
2. It is often said about God, "For the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever."

Good – having the proper qualities; suitable to a purpose; fresh; unspoiled; honorable; worthy; dependable; reliable; morally sound or excellent; virtuous; kind benevolent.

Is God's idea of good less or different than ours? No! If anything, it is higher and better! Don't look at God as doing something you would think of as evil or even not quite good in a man.

Mercy – the outward manifestation of pity; it assumes need of the part of him who receives it and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it; to feel sympathy with the misery of another and express it through action.

D. God is love (1 John 4:4).

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 – The qualities here describe God. Replace the word "love" with the word "God."

NKJV - Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Living - Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. Love will last forever...

E. If God is really like this, why don't we see more manifestation?

We don't expect Him to be what He says He is. We don't quite feel like He really likes us or that we are good enough to receive His highest blessings. But He does love us and has made us His and worthy of His very best. and He longs to meet our needs.

Faith in His mercy! Faith in His love! Faith that really expects Him to do and to be what the Word shows! **THIS IS THE KEY TO RECEIVING FROM GOD!**

Get to know Him. Come to know and believe the love He has for you.