

The Love of the Father

1 John 3

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Shadrach Means

Key Words: Love

*"Love can be known only from the actions it prompts."
God's love is seen in the gift of His Son*

"One day a single friend asked a father of four, "Why do you love your kids?" The father thought for a minute, but the only answer he could come up with was "Because they're mine."

The children had no need to do anything to prove themselves to this father. He took them just as they were. So it is with God's love for us. He loves us as we are, and it is his love that motivates us to trust and obey him in return."

¹ Michael P. Green. (2000). *1500 illustrations for biblical preaching* (p. 169). Baker Books.

"On the whole, God's love for us is a much safer subject to think about than our love for Him" (C. S. Lewis)

¹ Michael P. Green. (2000). *1500 illustrations for biblical preaching* (p. 170). Baker Books.

The Love of the Father

1 John 3:1 "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us..."

- **1 John 3:1** "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" NIV
 - 1 John 3:1 may be translated, **"Behold, what peculiar, out-of-this-world kind of love the Father has bestowed on us." While we were His enemies God loved us and sent His Son to die for us!**
- **What manner –**
 - **"Here the phrase "how great" (literally, "behold, of what country") implies great astonishment, as if the love of God is so unparalleled in human experience that John cannot even tell from what country it comes. It is beyond explanation."**¹ Boice, J. M. (2004). *The Epistles of John: an expositional commentary* (p. 79). Baker Books.

- *“Had you lived in the first century in a Greek seaport town, you might one day be about your business, and suddenly there would be a rustle among the people down on the docks, and word would spread through the town that a ship was coming. People would move down toward the docks and look out on the horizon at the approaching ship. By the sail configuration they could tell whether the ship was from their own country or a foreign nation. You would hear people asking in Greek, “Potapēn?” which literally means, “Of what country?” “What new people are coming to visit us? What new things are we going to learn?” This is the word translated “what kind of” in 3:1. This is a very unusual word that only occurs six times in the whole New Testament, and it bristles with surprise, astonishment, urgency, and excitement. “... what kind of love the Father has given to us ...” This is the word the astonished disciples uttered when Jesus calmed the sea: “What manner of man is this? Where is he from that even the wind and the sea obey him?”*
- **Manner of love –**
 - **1 John 4:8** “...God is love.”
 - It’s peculiar and out of this world because human love is limited by conditions.
 - Human love often must be earned or kept with good behavior.
 - *God’s love isn’t earned or kept!*
 - God’s love is entirely different!
 - You cannot EARN His love!
 - You cannot KEEP His love!
 - You cannot LOSE His love!
 - **God’s love for us was displayed at the cross!**
 - **John 15:13** “**Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.**”
 - **Romans 5:8** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - What is God’s love toward us based on?
 - Our merits? Our goodness? Our righteousness?
 - **Luke 18:19** “So Jesus said to him, “**Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.**”
 - **Romans 3:10** “*There is none righteous, no, not one...there is none who seeks after God...there is none who does good, no, not one.*”

- ***Do you think you can earn God's love by keeping the 10 commandments?***
 - **Romans 3:19-20** ^{“19} Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.”
 - **Galatians 3:24** “Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”
- ***God's love for us is in Christ!***
 - **Romans 8:38-39** ^{“38} For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
 - **1 John 3:16** “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us.”

His Love for His Children

1 John 3:1-2 ^{“1}...that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² 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. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

- *His love is displayed to us in...*

- ***What we are.***

- *We are 'Children of God'*

- *“This is a term that describes origin, birth, family relationship, family likeness, and family characteristics. We are the children of God.”*

¹ Allen, D. L. (2013). *1–3 John: Fellowship in God's Family* (R. K. Hughes, Ed.; pp. 135–136). Crossway.

- **John 1:12-13** ^{“12} But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the **will of the flesh**, nor of the **will of man**, but of God.”

- ***As children of God we are heirs with Christ.***

- **Romans 8:15-17** “¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father. ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.”
 - **Ephesians 1:3-6** “³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”
- Once we are born into the family of God, **God will never abort us!**
 - **Ephesians 1:13-14** “¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”
- ***The story of the prodigal son.***
 - **Luke 15:17-24** “¹⁷ “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’” ’ ²⁰ “And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’” ²² “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. ²³ And bring the fatted calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.”
 - ***What we will be (like Him).***
 - **Romans 8:21-23** “²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”

- **1 Corinthians 13:12** “For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.”

His Children’s love for one another

1 John 3:16-23 ¹⁶ By this *we know love, because He laid down His life for us.* And *we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* ¹⁷ But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸ My little children, ***let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*** ¹⁹ And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. ²⁰ For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. ²² And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³ And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.”

1 John 4:11 “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

- *“Because He laid down His life for us...we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”*
- ***We do that by imitating Him.***
 - **Ephesians 5:1-2** ¹ Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself...”
- *Imitate Him by loving others!*
 - *Love MUST be others centered*
 - **‘Self-Centered’**
 - I want things my way
 - I want more and different
 - I want others to change for me
 - I want my will to be done
 - I want things done in my timing
 - **‘Others-Centered’**
 - The proof that someone loves Jesus will come out in how they treat others.
 - John says, *‘We KNOW that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.’*
- ***Love MUST be lived out***
 - We must then define what the word “LOVE” means, if it is so central to our being children of God.
 - **Phileō** is a companionable love or brotherly love.

- Phileō is a love that responds to kindness, appreciation, or love. It involves giving as well as receiving; but when it is greatly strained, it can collapse in a crisis.
 - **John 21:15-17** ¹⁵ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (Agape) Me more than these?**” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love (Phileo) You.” He said to him, “**Feed My lambs.**” ¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, “**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (Agape) Me?**” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love (Phileo) You.” He said to him, “**Tend My sheep.**” ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, “**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (Agape) Me?**” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “**Do you love Me?**” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love (Phileo) You.” Jesus said to him, “**Feed My sheep.**”
- **Storgē** is a natural affection or natural obligation
 - Family love
- **Eros** is a love of passion, an overmastering passion that seizes and
 - It is a love that is an emotional involvement based on body chemistry
- **Agapē** is not kindled by the merit or worth of its object, but it originates in its own God-given nature. God is love.
 - Agapē desires only the good of the one loved. It is a consuming passion for the well-being of others.
- Now comes the HOW.
 - Christ displayed love on the cross
- **We MUST die to ourselves in order to love others**
 - How do we love others? Not by saying it!!! But by **DOING** it!!!
 - What is first IN us will eventually be lived out.
 - If I hate in my heart, it will come out in the way I treat people.
 - If I have love in my heart, it will come out in the way I treat people.
- As God has set forth the example, let us live according to His word!
 - As He has loved sacrificially, so let us...
 - **John 13:34-35** ³⁴ **A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.** ³⁵ **By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**

- **John 15:9-17** ⁹ "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹ ***These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.*** ¹² This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. ¹⁷ ***These things I command you, that you love one another.***"
- **Galatians 5:13-15** ¹³ For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!"
- **Ephesians 4:1-3** ¹ "...walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³ endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
- **Hebrews 10:24-25** ²⁴ ***Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.*** ²⁵ And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." NLT
 - How can we motivate one another?
 - What are some ways that we can encourage one another to love the Lord?

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

How to become a child of God

1. You must be born-again!

a. **John 3:5-6** “⁵ Jesus answered, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**”

i. In 25 words Jesus communicates the Father's heart, His plan, and His will.

1. *His heart* – He loved the world.

2. *His plan* – He gave His only begotten Son.

3. *His will* – Whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

2. Become born-again by...

a. Admitting

i. *You are a sinner.*

1. **Romans 3:23** “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

ii. *Repent from your sin.*

1. **Acts 2:38** “**Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

b. Believe

i. *That Jesus is God, died on the cross and rose from the dead.*

1. **John 3:18** “**He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**”

c. Confess

i. *With your mouth what you believe.* (Romans 10:9)

1. **Romans 10:9-11** “⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”