

God Is Love

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Preacher: Jason Webb

[0 : 0 0] 1 John 4, and we'll read verses 7 to the end. Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

This is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

And we have seen and testified that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.

[1 : 1 6] And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in him.

In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment.

The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, I love God, yet hates his brother, he is a liar.

For anyone who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command, whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Turn in your grace. So kids, I want to ask you, do you play Minecraft?

[2 : 3 5] Raise your hand if you do. All right, we got some. We don't have a lot of kids. But half of them do. They play Minecraft. If you don't know what that is, it's a video game where you mine things.

In other words, you go down and you dig out stuff. And then you go and you craft things with things that you mined. So it has a great original title.

It's Minecraft. It's this huge open world where you can run around anywhere, and everything, in every place you go to, you can find something to dig out. And you can put in your backpack, so to speak, and take it home with you.

And in the game, you can dig down, down into the ground. And it's not just like a few blocks, a few feet down.

You can go way down deep into the earth in this game. And, but there does come a place where you can't go any further.

[3 : 42] Way down at the very bottom, you run into this layer of bedrock. And the bedrock is as far as you can go. And you can't collect that.

You can't mine that layer. And you can take your diamond pickaxe, which is the best kind of pickaxe, and you can hit that block all day long. And you can't ever do anything with it.

You'll never be able to put it into your bag and take it home with you. You've gone as deep and as far as you can go. And there it is.

You're stuck there. You can't go any further. And the Bible is a lot like that. It is this big, open world that you can explore. And you can collect things all day long.

You can figure out. And you can come to a greater understanding. You can collect more understanding and more wisdom and more details. But every now and then, the Bible sort of hits the bedrock where you can't go any deeper than that.

[4 : 51] It's sort of where the world bottoms out. And there's truth there. There's truth you can see, but you can't put it in your bag and you can't take it home. You can look at it and you can hit it with your diamond pickaxe all day long.

But still, it's there. Impenetrable. Unconquerable. It's too much to take in.

Too much to master. Well, 1 John chapter 4 is like one of those places where the Bible bottoms out. Where you go as deep as you can.

And so John is talking about some very practical things in this chapter here. And he's talking about how do you know if you're really a Christian or not? That's a very practical question.

And then he's saying, well, if you're a Christian, this is how a Christian should live his or her life. And it's really so simple. So simple to understand anyways.

[5 : 52] So we saw verse 7. Dear friends, let us love one another. That's not hard to understand. That's hard to do.

It's not hard to understand what John is saying. But as he goes on, pretty soon he falls right down into a hole, right down to the bedrock of things, where you can't go any deeper.

And so we were walking up on the surface and the sun was shining and, you know, the cows were munching on the grass. And pretty soon John takes us as deep and as far down as you can go.

And he falls right into this hole. And so look at how he begins and how he goes on. Dear friends, verse 7, And that statement, God is love, is like the bedrock.

You can't go any deeper than that. And it's this unconquerable stone. But its appearance, it's showing up here, it isn't some sort of random glitch in the system or some sort of strange anomaly.

[7 : 23] Because just a little bit later, he says it again. And down in verse 16, And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. God is love. Three letters, then two letters, and then four letters.

They're not big words. And it's not a big sentence, is it? It's just three words long. But just like a black hole that can be very, very, very small, and at the same time, very, very, very heavy.

That's what these three words, these three words have this infinite mass. They weigh an infinite amount. God is love. And that sentence weighs as much as God does.

Because John, in a certain way, not in every possible way, but in a certain way, he is saying all that there is to say about God. And so we started this series last week with Behold.

[8 : 41] We're beholding the love of God. And he says, behold that exotic, that great love, not from around here kind of love of God.

And as John goes on, he ends up saying, well, when you behold that love, you are beholding God.

You're beholding God. You aren't seeing just something about God. You're beholding God. To see God's love is to see Him in a very real way.

And that's not such a strange thought as you might think. Because if you show me a man's love, and what he loves, and how much he loves about certain things, then you can see the man.

You know the man. Show me a man's love, and I'll know the man. So if that man were to bring out all of his love, and all of its proper weights, and proper sizes and measures, so he loves this thing this much, and he loves this thing this much, you bring out all of that love, do that, and I'll know that man.

[9 : 58] I'll know that man. I'll know how that man spends his time. And I'll know how that man is going to act.

And show me a man's love, and I'll tell you how he treats people. Show me a man's love, and I'll tell you how he's even feeling at a given moment. Because when you behold a love, a man's love, you're beholding that man.

And so that's what we're doing. We're going to behold God's love, and in doing so, we are uncovering God's heart, who he is, what moves him, what he's like.

And so in beholding God's love, we're going to be beholding God, because God is love. And that's why these three little words weigh so much.

They're so deep and so profound. Because what we're talking about here is the Trinitarian, the three-in-one, infinite, eternal God, who is love.

[11 : 14] And so tonight, I'm going to divide this sermon just like the Puritans used to divide their sermons. And if you've read the Puritans, they almost always, I almost hesitate to say, they slavishly divide their sermons into two parts.

Doctrine and uses. And that's pretty much a Puritan outline. And that's how, that's the, that's what outline I'm going to use and how I'm going to organize it.

And so we have doctrine first, and then we're going to talk about uses later. So doctrine, what does this, what does this passage teach? What is this passage showing us? Let's unpack it. Let's explain it.

Let's learn from it. And what is it, that's the question we're after. And so what is this passage, God is love? What does that passage teach? And first, we want to look at what it's not saying.

Look at what it's not saying. It doesn't say that God is loving. And if we're going to drill into this, we need to look carefully. It is not saying God is loving. The Bible teaches that.

[12 : 15] And even this passage itself shows us that God is loving. And that's not something that we need to go into great depth, but it's not saying that.

It's saying that God is love. It's not describing something that God does so much as who God is or what God is.

So let me ask you, do you hear the difference? God is merciful. That's the first statement. And God is love.

John is not so much talking about what God does or how God acts. He's talking about the very essence, the bottom of God.

Octavius Winslow, whose book, The Precious Things of God, we looked at in Sunday school not so long ago, said this, what is the truth embodied here?

- [13 : 20] It's this, God is essentially love. Love is not so much an attribute of God as it is his very essence. It's not so much a moral perfection of his being as is his being itself.
- He would not be God were he not love. And so, in other words, to take away God's love, you're not just taking away an attribute of God.
- God, you would be taking away him. You'd be taking away him. So John is going the extra step.
- He isn't just saying that God is a very loving person, although that is true. He's saying God is love. Love has no existence apart from God.
- That's another way to think about it. Love has no existence apart from God. love is not a feature of God that would exist apart from him.
- [14 : 26] Love is not an idea or a concept or a feeling that's distinct from God. And it's easy for us to think about that, or it's easy for us to think that, that love is something that's out there.
- It's this idea, it's this concept, it's something out there that is distinct and then some people have it and some people don't. that's not what this would teach.
- This would teach us that that love out there that we think of is not just some sort of, has some sort of outside existence. It only exists because God exists and God is love.
- Love has no existence apart from God. And so when we love, when we love people, that is God at work within us. That's what this is teaching.
- When we love our brothers, that is saying God lives in us and is at work in us. And so God is not taking some sort of abstract concept called love and putting it into our hearts and that's why we love people.
- [15 : 36] We begin to love people because God by his spirit comes into our hearts and begins living through us and in us because God is love.
- And John particularly has in mind the people of God. But I think we can even broaden it out even further to say that wherever there's real, genuine love, that's where God is.
- God is at work. God is living at least in some way. So we could say the pagan mother mother in Africa who doesn't know the true God and yet loves her baby, really loves the baby.
- That is God at work within in his common grace in her. And so we read verse 12, we love one another when God lives in us, when God's love is made complete in us.
- That's how we see God. And it's interesting, just as an Old Testament example of this, remember when David went looking for a son of Jonathan.
- [16 : 48] He went and found Mephibosheth, the Jew Mephibosheth, good. And the question was, David asked was, who can I show the Lord's love to?
- That's an interesting way of putting it. Who can I show the Lord's love to? Well, whose love is it? Who's going to be loving Mephibosheth? Well, David, first of all, but even before it's David's love for Mephibosheth, he's saying this is God's love.
- And so that's the first point under doctrine. It's not merely saying that God is loving, it's saying that God is love. There's no real love anywhere where God is not at work in some way, where God is not manifesting himself.
- And so when we live in God, we live in love. And when we don't live in God, we don't love. Because God is love.
- Now, second under doctrine, what does this teach? What is this teaching? I mean, that God's love is not like his other attributes. It's not like his other attributes.
- [18 : 03] It does, it never says in the Bible God is mercy, or God is justice, or God is wrath. John is saying that by the very nature, God is love.

His, and so that means that at least in part, what John is saying that the other attributes of God, God's mercy and his faithfulness and his kindness and his gentleness and yes, his anger and his wrath, every attribute that we, that we know is a manifestation of his nature, of his love.

Love is, is the thing. Love is the link that binds his attributes together. together. And so when we're talking about God's great love, we need to understand that in a certain way we are talking about all of God and all of his characteristics and all of his attributes.

So his justice is a justice of love. When God is enacting, giving justice, he's loving people.

He loves righteousness and justice. The earth is full of your unfailing love. When God gives just laws to men and then he wants those just laws obeyed, he is loving people.

[19 : 35] His justice is his love in action. His wisdom is a wisdom of love. Love is the reason that in his wisdom he set about to save, to come up with a wise plan of salvation in his powers, the power of love.

And so what does he use his power for? Well, the first thing that he did was he created. He used his power to create. And I just want you to think, was that powerful creation, creating, was that a loving act?

Was God loving even as he was creating? Well, aren't you glad that you exist? It was a loving thing for God to create you.

It was a loving thing the way God created. The earth is full of his love. On the last day he looked and it was all very good.

His love had made something beautiful. beautiful. That's love at work. Love creates good things.

[20 : 43] So he uses his wisdom and his power to give us life, to feed us, to bless us, to save us. And we can think of his other attributes, his omniscience.

His omniscience, his omniscience of love. His holiness is the purity of his love. And so it's like you can imagine a light coming through a prism.

And then the prism fractures the light and makes it look different colors. Love fractured. Love fractured.

Into its parts. It is what we call justice, faithfulness, goodness, mercy. God's love shines in all of his attributes.

And so we can imagine his attributes without love. So think of his wisdom if he did not love us. How good he would be at destroying us.

[21 : 48] His power would be a power to hurt us. His justice would not be good news ever. It would just be dragging us off to hell. And his truth and his faithfulness would stand as witnesses against us and say away with them, away with them.

There would be no good thing. And so apart from God's love, all of God's attributes would be a nightmare for us, would be turned against us, would not be good news in any way, would not help us to trust him in any way.

It would only be bad for us if there was no love in them. But love ties, God's love ties all of his attributes together. And so not a single one of his attributes is missing love.

If they were devoid of love, they would be devoid of him. If they were missing love, then it wouldn't be his justice, it wouldn't be his wisdom, it wouldn't be his truth, it wouldn't be his faithfulness.

Now, maybe you're thinking, and this is where we do need to be careful, and maybe you're saying, well, isn't that going too far?

[23 : 07] Isn't that falling into the statement like, God is, I just believe in a God who is all love. You know that kind of statement that I'm talking about.

God's just a being that has no wrath, he's no anger, he has no justice, he's just good, and there's nothing to worry about, there's nothing to be safe from, there's no hell, God is a God of love, that kind of statement.

Why isn't what John is saying here, and what I'm trying to say here, why doesn't it fall into that? Maybe that's what you're thinking.

Well, I guess my first answer is, John can't be doing that, because that would contradict everything the Bible teaches, and it really does say God is love.

And so, and then in second, what we call blessing and loving and kindness, those attributes of God, it's not the only attributes that he exercises.

[24 : 12] God is a God of wrath and jealousy and justice, justice, but we can't miss, and this is what I want you to see, is we can't miss that it's love driving those characteristics as well.

And so, when you fracture light and love into its prism, there is justice and faithfulness and kindness and mercy, but there is also wrath and jealousy and justice that will punish the wrongdoer.

And you can say, how is that? How can God's wrath and his justice be a manifestation of his love? Well, this is what my answer would be, is this, that it's a manifestation of his love for himself.

It's a manifestation of his love for his people. God's wrath on his enemies in the Bible is pictured as the way that he saves his people.

it's him loving his children. Or, think within the Trinity, God's justice is the father's love for the son.

[25 : 29] If the father didn't love the son, then he let his son be dishonored and disregarded and say, well, I don't care, it's not me.

And the opposite is true. If the son didn't love the father, then he wouldn't bother judging men and sending them to hell. He'd say, what's that to me?

But they don't love him. Hell, this sounds strange, but hell and judgment are the exercises of God's love for himself as a trinity and his people, his love for his people.

And so to say that God is love is far different than to flatline God's character into, he's just an all accepting, soft, cozy, Santa Claus kind of God with unconditional acceptance.

It's far different than changing the God of the Bible into some sort of being who has no wrath and no anger and no jealousy. The fact is that wrath and anger and jealousy is what love looks like sometimes.

[26 : 51] It's what real love looks like sometimes. Only, you know, sort of in self-esteem meetings where you're holding hands and singing kumbaya is there a love where there's no jealousy or anger but real love, the only kind of love that is really out there, the only kind of love that really is the real thing knows wrath and anger and jealousy.

Why is love like that? Because that's what God is like. And God is love. love. And so when a husband or a wife is jealous and angry about something that's getting in the way of the marriage and there's jealousy there, that's what real love looks like.

Well, why does love, real love look that way? Well, because that's the way God is. And God is love. And to the degree that we live in real love, we end up acting and we end up feeling like God does.

And this passage bears that out. In verse 17, it says, in this way love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment because in this world we are like him.

when God lives in us, we become like him and our love becomes like his love. And so there's all sorts of things out in the world that get called love but aren't the real thing.

[28 : 46] The real thing is like God because God is love. And this is the doctrine. This is God's very nature of self-giving, other blessing, self-committing, self-sacrificing love.

And so in one way or another all of his acts are acts of love. And all of his attributes are manifestations of that love. And so when we are talking about beholding the love of God, what we are doing is studying God himself.

We're not studying a sliver of him. In some way, what John is saying is this is theology. This is the study of God, to study his love.

Now that's the doctrine. Let's go to the uses. How do we use this? How do we need to change? How do we need to grow? What use can we put this to?

And I can understand that a lot of that might have been sort of abstract and I tried my best to simplify it. But here I want to talk practically. Just the idea.

[30 : 05] So think again that God's very nature is the self-giving, other blessing, self-committing, love, love. God's love.

So what use do we need to think about? Or what uses do we need to put this to? And I have four. The first of all, the first is maybe all of us, but maybe particularly you, I don't know, need to repent of whatever hard, harsh, mean thoughts you have of God.

let me repeat that. You need to repent of whatever hard, mean, harsh thoughts you have of God. Maybe that's something we all need to do, but maybe that's what you need to do in particular.

The Greek word for repent is metanoia, and it's a compound word, like phone book is a compound word, two words put together. Meta means change, noia means it's talking about your mind.

Repentance is a change of your mind, it's the change of how you think about something, and then that change of thought changes the way you feel, and how you act. And that's what I'm saying here, is God is love.

[31 : 27] That needs to change the way that we, and maybe you in particular, think about God's character. So let me ask you, what kind of God do you serve?

And I'm not talking about the Sunday school answer, and I'm not talking about the God that is out there so much as the God that as you perceive him, as you think about him, as you understand him to be, is that God selfish?

Is that God small hearted? Is that God hard? Is that God hard? God the servant in Jesus' parable said, I know what kind of man you are.

I know that you are a hard man reaping where you have not sown. Is that your view of God? A hard man looking to take, not willing to give?

Are you a slave and he's your master and that's just the full extent of your relationship? Do you see those hard thoughts? Those mean thoughts that I'm talking about?

[32 : 43] And that's what John, but John here says God is love. God is love. The very currents of God's heart are love.

He's no small, mean, unhappy God grasping and covetous who needs you to serve or he's going to get angry with you.

In some way, he doesn't need you at all to make him happy. He's happy. He's overflowing with love as it is.

He is the happy, the blessed God. And the reason that he is so blessed is he's always loved. he's deeply satisfied.

The Trinity is three persons deeply satisfied with the love of the other persons in the Trinity. Deeply satisfied in the love of Father, Son, and Spirit.

[33 : 47] Always loved. And yet always loving. Do you know the joy of loving someone? That's the joy that's going on in God's heart all the time.

And do you know the joy of being loved? That's the joy that's in God's heart all the time. He's not a singular isolated alone.

He's not the singular isolated alone God of Islam. He is the Trinitarian, ever loving, ever loved God. You know, Islam, the Quran never says that God is love.

Allah is love because it can't. He's just himself. And before there were people, he had no one to love. And so it can never honestly say that God is love.

But the God of the Bible is love. And in love, brother or sister, he's brought you into the embrace of that Trinity.

[34 : 55] he has brought you into the embrace of that mutual love, of ever loving and always loved. And so he's either done that or right now he's inviting you into that embrace.

That's what the gospel call is. It's a call of salvation to come to God and when you come to God, you are welcomed into the arms of this fellowship of love.

And so what do we need to do? We need to repent. We need to turn away from those dark thoughts. Paul in Ephesians says that we were once darkened in our understanding because of the ignorance that was in us.

We have these darkened minds by nature. Dark. And it's all sorts of darkness. But it's especially dark about the character of God.

And that's really essentially what it is. We can know all sorts of things. But the character of God, what God is like before we were darkened, we naturally saw him as sinister, as dangerous, as threatening.

[36 : 12] And that's why the natural religion of man is I need to make this God happy. I need to do something. That's why the natural religion is by works.

I've got to pay enough. I've got to convince him I'm good enough. And that comes from a view of God that says he doesn't have grace. Satan's lies began with insinuations about God's character.

If God was so good, would he keep that tree from you? If God met you well, would he have given you that command? And then what does the world say? Well, if there is a God, he's so much bigger, he doesn't care about us.

But is that how the Bible, is that how God reveals himself? This is God who's so big I don't care about anything? God's God's But that's how they see him.

And that's how we saw him. Nothing to do with my life. He's no help to me. He's no concern. He's either a problem or he has nothing to do with me.

[37 : 28] So turn away from those small thoughts and embrace more and more the God of the Bible, the God who so loved us that he sent his son into the world, that we might live through him.

In love, he gave us life through his son. God is not a tick that stuck on our life, sucking the life out of us. God comes in the person of his son to give us life.

So that's first, we need to turn away from our wrong thoughts about God and believe the Bible's view of God. The second use, we need to learn to read God's providence through this lens. Through this lens.

And this goes hand in hand with what we talked about, what Pastor John's sermon this morning was. So if you're Paul and you're in the dungeon and you've had this promise and you're still in the prison after years and years and this is the providence that God has put you through, how do you read God's providence?

The things that have happened to you? What do you say to yourself when things go wrong? When things are hard? God, and it's so easy I know to say, well, God doesn't love me.

[38 : 41] You might not say it, but to feel it. But again, John says God is love, and he is love especially for his people. His every action towards you from eternity past has been filled with love.

And his every action from here will be love. Goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.

That's God's love towards you in action every day. And then I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. God's love for eternity. His every action towards you has been love from eternity past.

And so God is not cruel to bring hard things in your life to do you harm. He's love, and that's not who he is.

So listen again to Octavius Winslow. It's because we have such shallow views of God's love that we have such defective views of God's dealings.

[39 : 47] We blindly interpret the symbols of his providence because we so imperfectly read the engravings of his heart. We don't understand what's going on in our life, and we read it wrong because we don't know God's heart.

If we knew God's heart, then these things wouldn't be so mysterious to us. We would read his providence better. Romans 8, 28 is true.

All things work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose. And it's true, and it's faithful, and we can count on it precisely because God is love.

In love, he's going to work these things for good. It's not just because I said so that he's going to do it. It's because that's who he is. So he loves you.

And so it's impossible for him to ultimately harm you. It's impossible for him to ultimately destroy you. No doubt he chastises, and no doubt he tries us.

[40 : 56] But behind that frowning providence is a smiling face, and the clouds that roll over our lives, the dark clouds of providence, they don't change God's loving heart towards us.

He can't harm you, finally, child of God. He can't. He can't do you bad child of God, not ultimately, because that's not who he is.

He can't use his wisdom that way for you, child of God, because he set his love upon you. And he can't use his power that way, because he set his love, he set himself on you.

And so if he set his love on you to ultimately harm you, to not work all these things together for good, would not only be breaking that promise, it would be denying himself.

It would be to overturn himself. It would be to act out of complete character of himself. And so look at God's providence through that lens. The God of providence is the God of love.

[42 : 15] God of love. And so in all these things, everything you're facing, he's doing you good. Third use, Christian, let this truth draw you into closer fellowship.

Let this truth draw you into closer fellowship. You know, if you're a child of God, what kind of father do you have?

Is he abusive? Is he harsh? Is he a terrible, cruel person? You know, harsh people are really hard to get close to.

Harsh people are really hard to trust. They're really hard to be around. If you have an abusive father, you probably want to do anything except be with him. You'd always be walking on eggshells around him.

But loving people draw us in, don't they? We want to be around those people who love us and make that love known to us.

[43 : 18] And that's what I'm saying is let this truth draw you into fellowship with God. You aren't dealing with this impersonable unrelatable being.

No, tenderness, kindness, love are not clothes that he puts on occasionally. It's who he is.

They're the very movements of his heart. And so you can unload all your anxiety on him. You can do that because he cares for you. And isn't that what we see the psalmist continually doing?

They're in bad situations. And sometimes even it seems like God has hidden himself. And maybe he has.

And yet, what are they doing? In faith, they're saying, I know you're still there. I know you still care. I know you still will hear me. And they're going to him and they're pouring out their hearts to him.

[44 : 19] They knew that he was open. They knew that he was listening. They knew his heart was love. And so we need to come just like that. Full of our cares, full of our sorrows, full of even, yes, of our sins, and we pour it out to him because God is love and he cares for us.

And so let that rope draw you to him. Don't let it paralyze you. Let it attract you to him. This is the predisposition of his heart.

this is the slant of his heart. It's towards you, child of God, with boundless affection and love.

You aren't walking on eggshells. You're swimming in an ocean of love. Finally, this is the fourth use.

Let this truth take away all your fears of coming to him for salvation. Let this truth that God is love take away any fears that you have to coming to him for salvation.

[45 : 30] You're afraid he'll ruin your life. Has real love ever ruined your life? You're afraid he won't forgive me.

Doesn't real love forgive? forgive. There's no shortage in God's heart to forgive. Because as big as he is, that's how big his willingness to forgive sinners is in Jesus Christ.

You're afraid his laws will crush me. His laws will make me miserable to live the Christian life with all that I have to do. That would just make me miserable.

And I don't want that. I'm afraid of that. But let me ask you, whose laws are they? They're the God of love's laws. It's impossible for him to write a law that would eventually make people miserable.

Because he's a loving God. His laws are for our good. And so can the God of love give miserable crushing laws? Is that even possible?

[46 : 39] You're afraid your sin is too much. But again, can you out-sin God himself? Is your sin bigger than God? So you're standing on the ocean with your bucket of mud.

You're a bucket of sin. And you're wondering, can that ocean swallow? Can that ocean handle my mud? Or you're standing down in the dark valley wondering, will that ocean be able to reach me?

whatever valley you're in, the ocean is greater. And so don't let the greatness of your love, or of your sin, don't let the greatness of your sin, the greatness of your shame, the greatness of your need, stop you.

The God who saves is a God of love. And his love has buried countless buckets of dirt. And his love has filled valleys deeper than yours.

You don't have a need that he can't fill. And you don't have a need he won't fill. And so put your fears behind you.

[47 : 58] When you come to God, you're coming to the God who is love. So you dive into him, and you throw your bucket into him, and you throw all your sin on him, and you watch and love as he buries it all for Jesus sake.

Buries it all because of what Jesus did. That's the kind of God that he is. We're going to look in the next few weeks that this is the one way that he really did show that he is a God of love.

He sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for us, that we who were guilty, that we who were ashamed, that we who were dirty, could be washed and forgiven.

That's how we know that God is a God of love. So that's our God. Let it draw you in fellowship to him. Put away all those fears and come to him.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, our Lord Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, we worship you and we praise you that you are this God of love.

[49 : 14] You see the darkness of our hearts, the darkness of our minds and our understanding. Even the most experienced and oldest Christian here is just beginning to learn to walk in the light of your love.

And I would pray that each one here would walk closer and closer to you. And for some of those, that will mean that you have to bring them out of the grave.

Because they are dead. And your love has nothing, no charm to them, no beauty. And so I would pray that for your own sake that you would save sinners and make them to see your beauty.

That you would honor yourself in their hearts. Honor yourself in every heart here. Lift yourself up in every one of our estimations.

Forgive us for our small thoughts of you. Help us to walk in the goodness and the greatness of the gospel of Jesus Christ who laid down his life and showed the love of God to us.

[50 : 32] Help us to live in that truth. And then help us to love one another because you have loved us. Out of the greatness of your resources and your love, then help us to love each other in the same way.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.