

To Know and Rely on the Love God Has For Us

God is Love

1 John 4:12-17- 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 testify 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. **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.

Here we see the central theme of Christianity explained in very clear terms. For one we see the object of our Worship, who is God, the trinity being very clearly portrayed in the verses. But more than that we see *the central attribute* of the character of our God, who we worship, and that is Love. And it is expressed in a manner where we live in a relationship of love with our God and He with us, and then that love is to overflow into our human relationships as well. *This is what Christianity is all about.* Our God is Love, and if He is the One that we exalt and so highly esteem, it is only natural that His love should permeate our lives.

Let us focus on a specific verse now from this text, and hopefully come to better understanding of the love that God has for us. The verse is:

1 John 4:16 - 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.

Here the Lord gives us two very important facts about our relationship to Him.

1. We know the love God has for us
2. We rely on the love God has for us

Let us look at these two important facts in detail. I would say that this verse could be one of the simplest yet most profound statements that the Bible makes concerning our Faith. It explains the central elements of Christianity, which are our God and our relationship to Him.

We know the love that God has for us

In speaking of God's love for us, let us notice three things about His love for us, which are;

1. His Grace
2. His Mercy
3. His care for us

Grace-

The true biblical meaning of the word grace is "unmerited favor". Which means that God gives us favor with Him that we did not merit.

Grace - Favor or kindness shown without regard to the worth or merit of the one who receives it and in spite of what that same person deserves. Grace is one of the key attributes of God. The Lord God is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth" <Ex. 34:6>. Therefore, grace is almost always associated with mercy, love, compassion, and patience as the source of help and with deliverance from distress. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)(Copyright (C) 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

So we have favor with God, not because of anything we have done but because of His grace which He freely gives. He, God the Son, is the One who has merited our favor with Him. We stand before God in the righteousness that comes from Him, through faith in

Christ alone. We have right standing with Him because of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which He offers freely to all who believe.

Romans 3:20-24- Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. But now **a righteousness from God**, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This **righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe**. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified **freely by his grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8- For it is **by grace you have been saved**, through faith-- and this **not from yourselves**, it is the **gift of God-- not by works**, so that no one can boast.

2 Tim 1:8-10- But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life-- **not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace**. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

So we see that God's loving acceptance of us is based on His grace, not on our merit. He loves us because it is His nature to love, not because we stack up. God accepts you. God loves you. ***God will accept and receive anyone who will repent of their sins (sin), and have faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.*** He will not forsake you, but He will receive you. Come as you are to Christ, with all of you problems and failures, He will never cast you aside, He will accept you and love you and care for you. God accepts you because of who He is, not because of who you are.

Mercy- The true biblical meaning of the word mercy is that God not only forgives transgression against Himself, but He extends help toward the party which offended Him. It is a free pardon and a helping hand to the sinner, the one pardoned.

Zodiatas puts it this way; To have compassion on a person in unhappy circumstances. To be pitied, obtain mercy, implying not merely a feeling for the misfortunes of others involving sympathy, but also an active desire to remove those miseries.

So we see that God's mercy toward us is not only freely pardoning our offenses toward Him, but also extending His loving hand to help remove us from our miserable state. He is intent on reconciling us to Himself and furthermore sustaining and strengthening our life by His great Love.

Psalms 145:8-9- The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. **The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.**

Heb 4:15-16- For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-- yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, **so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**

Jesus is here to help you friend, not condemn you. God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. Oh how ready He is to forgive you and meet your need. Won't you look to Him today. His tender mercy is new every morning, it will not fail you in time of need.

His care for us-

God's love for us is so complete that He will always do for us what is in our best interest. He will always strengthen us to live, He will always provide for us and protect us from sin and temptation. He will meet our every need if we will only turn to Him. He is a very present help in time of trouble.

Take the imagery of a sheep and their shepherd. The scripture says that we are the flock of His pasture. Can't you see the gentle hand of our shepherd, caring for His lambs.

Has He not carried you to this very day? Is He not so greatly concerned for your well-being? He is. And He will continue to be until He has brought you safely into His kingdom, where we will be like lambs let out into a field with great joy.

If you have come to Christ in repentance:

You are His lambs. He will care for you. He will meet your needs.

You are His lambs. He will protect you from the enemy. With a strong arm He will deliver you.

You are His lambs. He will nurture you and sustain you, and provide rest for your soul.

Matt 11:28-30- "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will **give you rest**. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will **find rest for your souls**. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

John 10:14-15- "I am the good shepherd; **I know my sheep and my sheep know me**--just as the Father knows me and I know the Father-- and I lay down my life for the sheep.

John 10:27-29- My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. **I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand**. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

Psalms 55:22- Cast your cares on the LORD and **he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall**.

2 Peter 1:3- His divine power has given us **everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him** who called us by his own glory and goodness.

If you are in Christ, you can know the love that God has for you. He cares for our every need. He sustains and provides for us in every way. He has given us everything we need to live and to be fulfilled in life. We have only to look to Him to receive from the riches of His grace, all that we need for life.

And so we know this love that God has for us. We have experienced it and are confident that He loves us. We know this love, which is beyond understanding and we can also rely on His love.

Ephesians 3:17-19- And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, **to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge**-- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

We rely on the love that God has for us

How great is the love that the Father Has lavished on us. It is complete and it is all-sufficient. We can rely on God's love for us. We can trust Him to care for us, and to guide us and lead us. Ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened (Matt 7:7). God is so ready to meet our needs. Listen to how the Amplified Bible translates our text-

1 John 4:16- And we know (understand, recognize, are conscious of, by observation and by experience)and believe(adhere to and put faith in and rely on the love God cherishes for us. God is love, and he who dwells and continues in love dwells and continues in God, and God dwells and continues in Him.

So we adhere to, and put faith in, and rely on the love God has for us. We can trust Him to give us all that we need. We should never be lacking in anything. We have life, and we have it in abundance. And our God is with us every step of the way. Through the deep waters and on the mountain top, He will live with us and walk among us, and He is our God and we are His people. ***He will comfort us in all our suffering, provide for all our needs, grant us His peace and rest, and when it's all said and done, He will crown us with eternal life!*** If we are in Christ, we are the recipients of every promise He has made! The Lord is the strength of our life. He is everything to us and we can trust Him.

2 Corinthians 1:20 - 20 **For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.** NIV

Psalms 27:1 - **The LORD is my light and my salvation**--whom shall I fear? **The LORD is the stronghold of my life**-- of whom shall I be afraid? NIV

Psalms 37:28-29 - 8 For **the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever**, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off; 29 the righteous will inherit the land **and dwell in it forever.** NIV

Psalms 62:5-8 - 5 **Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.** 6 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. 7 **My salvation and my honor depend on God**; he is my mighty rock, my refuge. 8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for **God is our refuge.** NIV

Friend, consider this. Has not God brought you to this very day, safe and sound? Is His grace not sufficient for you? Indeed it is, if you are in Christ. Dear reader, if God would not spare *the life of His Son to die for your sin*, will He not also graciously sustain you day by day, to receive the salvation that He purchased with this precious blood of His Son? Indeed He will, if you hold firmly to the hope held out in the gospel (Col 1:23).

Romans 8:31-33 - 31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 **He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?** NIV

Behold the profound description of God's Love in Holy Scripture!

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 - 4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. NIV

In this we can trust, the blessed Savior and His love! Friend, He is *patient* with you, pouring out His *kindness* every day to meet your needs! Sister, He is *not rude or selfish*, but *gently* meets your needs and *graciously forgives* your sin again and again! My brother, has God remembered your sins? I tell you if you are in Christ, they reside on the ocean floor, in the deepest part of the sea, as far as the east is from the west, so far has He *removed your transgressions*!

Psalms 103:11-12 - 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, **so great is his love for those who fear him**; 12 as far as the east is from the west, **so far has he removed our transgressions from us.** NIV

Oh sinner, shall I describe the love of God to you? Look you, and look you well upon the tree at Calvary! There your Maker hangs, bleeding and dying for your sins! Will this not suffice for you! Can you find it in your soul O man to beat your breast in repentance? Open your ears deaf man, and hear His invitation for you to come! Will you not listen to the One who formed your ears?

Revelation 22:17-"Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and **whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.**

Come and doubt no more. The Lord will receive you! Come in repentance to the Calvary's Lamb, there you will find His loving care!

Psalms 27:10-Though my father and mother forsake me, **the LORD will receive me.**

Matthew 11:28-30 - 28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and **I will give you rest.** 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and **you will find rest for your souls.** 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." NIV

So we rely on the love He has for us. God will receive us, He will care for us and will accept us with all of our faults and failures and problems. We simply need to call out to Him in repentance and faith in His Son. And all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. He will not forsake us but will stick with us right through till the very end if we will trust Him and rely upon Him. So the scripture says;

1 John 4:16

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love.