

# The Doctrines of Grace

## Doctrine 1-The Absolute Sovereignty of God

### Part A/Lesson Six

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## Part A- The Character and Nature Of God- continued

### God is Love

**1**John 4:7-16

**7** Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

**8** He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

**9** In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

**10** Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

**11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

**12** No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

**13** Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

**14** And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

**15** Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

**16** And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

The Apostle John teaches here that God is Love. Now that statement is very different than simply saying that God *loves* or that God *issues* love or that God is *loving*. To say that God Himself *is* Love is to say that part of God's Own Nature is not just that God loves- but that part of the very makeup of Who God is- is pure, holy, and perfect Love.<sup>1</sup>

Nobody loves like God loves because God's Love is always pure and never clouded with misinformation or confusion. God's Love is not an *emotional* love that

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Washer says, "It is important to recognize that the Scriptures declare that, 'God is Love' and not, 'Love is God'. The two phrases are not interchangeable. The universe was not created and is not ruled by a sentiment, emotion, or attitude called, 'love', but by the Sovereign Lord of Scripture Who, in His very Nature, is Love" [The One True God; Third Edition; Granted Ministries Press; Hannibal MO; page 114]

is predicated on events or circumstances. God's love is not fickle or temporary. When God sets His Love on an individual or even a nation- that Love is eternal- regardless of how that person or nation responds to that love.

### **Jeremiah 31:3**

**The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.**

One way in which God's Love is misunderstood and misappropriated in our day is when we assume that since it is true that God is Love- therefore anything that we love or anything that we call, "love" must therefore be of God. But that is not true. So the question that we need to ask is this:

Is it possible for us to love something that is wrong? Doesn't the fact that we love something *automatically* mean that what we love is therefore "lovely"?

And sadly, the answer to the first question is, "Yes!" and the answer to the second question is "No!". You see, as fallen human beings- we have an enormous capacity to literally "love" things that are *not* good; things that are *not* of God; and things that are in fact sinful- therefore our "loves" must be *managed*; they must be kept in check; they must be governed by God's Word and God's Spirit because God has commanded us *not* to love everything.

### **1John 2:15-17**

**15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

**16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.**

**17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.**

Since we are finite creatures- we must be careful to always define God's Love from inspired and infallible Scripture and not from our own human subjective reasoning. To equate fallen human tenderness or emotional displays as examples of God's Love is *not* the best way to understand it- but to simply diminish it.

God's Love is never understood in engaging in or celebrating sin. The Bible says that God *hates* sin and God detests all unrighteousness.

### **Proverbs 6:16-19**

**16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:**

**17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,**

**18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,**

**19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.**

We must understand that for us to say that God is Love does *not* mean that God never corrects or disciplines His children or that God always agrees with what we do and say and think. God's Love is not like our love and God's Love does not prohibit God from judging sin or correcting those He loves- rather it *allows* Him to do so- because ultimately the overriding Purpose of God's Love is to bring forth Righteousness- which in turn- honors God.

### **Hebrews 12:6**

**For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.**

Three ways in which the Biblical Record of God's Love is understood is in comprehending God's Mercy, Grace, and Patience. Mercy has to do with God lovingly *refraining* from giving to His creatures the Eternal Damnation that they have earned and deserve through their sin and disobedience. Grace has to do with God lovingly giving to His creatures what they patently do *not* deserve; have *not* earned; and are *not* worthy of. And the Patience of God (Longsuffering) has to do with God's loving willingness to suffer long with the weakness and disobedience of His creatures.

In every respect- God manifests these three Characteristics- not out of any sense of obligation or duty toward Man- but strictly in accord with His Own Infinitely perfect Kindness and Generosity.

### **Longsuffering not Leniency**

God's Love allows for God to suffer long with the weaknesses and sin of those He chose to save. But we must be careful that we do not confuse this Longsuffering with Leniency. Leniency allows sin to continue due to the unwillingness of the one in charge to stop it. So God is not Lenient in that He is absolutely willing to stop sin now and He *will continue* to stop sin- ultimately by destroying all sin by destroying all unrepentant sinners. The Longsuffering of God toward those He loves is only manifested to give them "space" to repent- not so that they may continue in their wickedness.

Finally the Love of God is also understood in the sense that God's Love for us never changes. It never grows nor does it ever diminish. Our love for God, however, *does* change- hopefully it grows and becomes more profound as we grow in our knowledge and wonder of God. But God set His full Love upon His elect totally from the very beginning.

## **God is Faithful**

### **Deuteronomy 7:9&10**

**<sup>9</sup> Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;**

**10** And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

**Isaiah 49:7**

Thus saith the LORD , the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

**1Corinthians 1:9**

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

**1Corinthians 10:13**

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

**Hebrews 2:17**

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

**1John 1:9**

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**The Revelation 1:5**

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

**The Revelation 19:11**

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

The word, *faithful* comes from the Hebrew word, *aman*, and the Greek word *pistos*. Both words communicate the idea of: *certainty; stability; and trustworthiness*. An appropriate understanding of these two words would be a strong column that holds up the weight of a building or the strong arms of a father who upholds and protects his helpless child. When the word, faithful is used to describe God- it means that He is worthy of absolute trust.

It is important for us to understand that God's faithfulness not only results from His Own Perfect Character-but is totally dependent on His Power and Immutability to exist. For example- if God had limited Ability (Power), He would be unable to fulfill His Promises, and if God were mutable (one who changes), then He

would change His Mind about what He had promised as He saw events and circumstances change.

In the Holy Scriptures- there are four main proofs or evidences of God's infinite Faithfulness:

1. The Covenants
2. The Word
3. The Works
4. The Coming of Jesus

**The Covenants of God** are the Promises that God has made to His people. These Promises and Covenants are Divine Commitments that God has willingly obligated Himself to fulfill without fail.

**The Word of God** is as steadfast and sure as God Himself is. Not one single Word that has come forth from the Mouth of God has ever or will ever fail.

**The Works of God**- the things that God does- mirror the faithfulness of His Own Person and are as reliable as God is.

**The Coming of Jesus** is the best demonstration of God's Faithfulness in that from the very first Chapters of the Holy Scriptures- God promised that the Savior would come; destroy satan; and rescue the lost.

An important by- product of the wisdom of trusting in a God Who is utterly faithful is the contrast that it makes with the abject foolishness of trusting in ourselves.

### **Jeremiah 17:5-8**

**5 Thus saith the LORD ; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD .**

**6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.**

**7 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD , and whose hope the LORD is.**

**8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.**

## **God is True**

### **Jeremiah 10:10**

**But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.**

### **John 17:3**

**And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.**

### **1Thessalonians 1:9**

**For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;**

### **The Revelation 6:10**

**And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?**

God being True speaks to God's Own personal Integrity. It means that God's Character is Whole, Flawless, and Unimpaired. It also speaks of God being Authentic, Genuine, and Real. God is always exactly as He reveals Himself to be. This makes God to be different and unique from all the other false "gods" of the earth that do not exist and are the imagination of corrupt and fallen Man.

### **Psalms 115:3-9**

**3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.**

**4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.**

**5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:**

**6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:**

**7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.**

**8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.**

**9 O Israel, trust thou in the LORD : he is their help and their shield.**

### **Isaiah 46:5-10**

**5 To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?**

**6 They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship.**

**7 They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.**

**8 Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors.**

**9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,**

**10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:**

## Recap of Lesson Six

1. Is it the same thing to say since "god is Love" therefore "Love is God"? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What does Jeremiah 31:3 teach about God's Love? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is it possible for saved human beings to genuinely love something that is wrong?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Explain your answer \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. In what way do we need to be careful as we explain God's Love? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Why do we need to be careful about doing this? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Finish this sentence, "God's Love is never understood by engaging in or by celebrating \_\_\_\_\_".
9. Does God's Love preclude Him from chastening His children? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is the ultimate Purpose of God's Love? \_\_\_\_\_
11. What three ways are used in Scripture to help us understand God's Love?
  - a. Physical Healing; Deliverance; Blessings
  - b. Heaven; Streets of Gold; Purgatory
  - c. Angelic Visitations; Personal Prophecy; Prophetic Anointing
  - d. Mercy; Grace; Patience
12. Define God's Mercy \_\_\_\_\_
13. Define God's Grace \_\_\_\_\_
14. Define God's Patience \_\_\_\_\_
15. What is the difference between Longsuffering and Leniency? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. Faithful means that God is worthy of \_\_\_\_\_

17. What two other Characteristics does God's Faithfulness rest on? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. What are the four "proofs" or "evidences" of God's Faithfulness? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

19. Having a better understanding of the one true living God of the Bible being Faithful from this Teaching- explain how that knowledge makes it patently ridiculous to trust in ourselves \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

20. What does God being True reference? \_\_\_\_\_

21. What six other Characteristics does God's Truthfulness relate to: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

22. Read **Jeremiah 10:3-16** and answer the following questions concerning God being True and the other gods of the world being false:

- The false idols of Man are nothing but \_\_\_\_\_ (Verse 3)
- The false idols of Man are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (Verse 8)
- We are not to fear the false idols of Man because they can't do what two things? \_\_\_\_\_ (Verse 5)
- What does Verse 14 teach about the false idols of Man \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How does God describe idolaters in Verses 8 &14? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How is the one true God described in Verses 6,7, 10, 12&13? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

23. Read **Exodus 20:3-5; 23:13; Leviticus 19:4; 1Thessalonians 1:9** and **1John 5:20&21** and write down how we are to live our lives in light of what we have learned about the Glory of the one true living God and the vanity of the dumb idols  
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\_\_\_\_\_