

# Growing in the Love of God

04.26.2026 @ The Refuge

## Open in prayer

Father, open our hearts today.

Help us not just hear about Your love—but truly understand it.

Convince us deep in our souls that there is nothing we could ever do that would make You love us more... or less... than You do right now.

Amen.

## Introduction

I originally planned to preach a message about how we love God and love others—the Greatest Commandment.

But as I was preparing, I felt the Lord gently redirect me.

Because before we can ever talk about how we love God... we have to settle something first:

### **Do we actually believe that God loves us?**

**1 John 4:19 says:**

“We love because He first loved us.”

So here’s the truth:

**Your ability to love God and others is directly connected to how well you understand God’s love for you.**

And I think a lot of people—even in the church—aren’t sure.

Francis Chan once asked a room full of pastors:

“How many of you are at least 80% sure God loves you?”

And around 70% stood up.

That’s pastors. So if they struggle with it...we probably do too.

# We Need A Revelation of the Love of God

## God is crazy in love with you...

### God Doesn't Just Show Love - He *is* Love

- **Exodus 34:6-7** - God reveals his character - compassionate, merciful, slow to anger, and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness
- **1 John 4** goes even deeper: **God is Love.**

Not just loving.

Not just occasionally loving.

Love is His nature.

It's who He is.

Which means:

- God doesn't wake up in a bad mood
- He doesn't withdraw His love
- He doesn't change based on your performance

### He cannot be anything other than love toward you.

### God's Love is Personal and Emotional

**Zephaniah 3:17** says He rejoices over you with singing.

Think about that.

God isn't tolerating you.

He's not just putting up with you.

### **He delights in you.**

Some of us struggle to believe that.

Because the voices in our life have told us otherwise.

But the truth is, **God sings over you.**

### God's Love is Steady and Unchanging

- **Isaiah 54:9-10**

- His faithful love will never be removed
- **Lamentations 3:22-23**
- His mercies never run out.

That means:

- You haven't sinned your way out of His love
- You haven't failed your way out of His love
- You haven't drifted too far for His love

**His love doesn't rise and fall with your behavior.**

Why This Matters.

**Ephesians 3:14-19**

- 17 - Roots will grow down deep into God's love. (like a tree planted by water)
- 18 - Then you'll have the power to understand God's love
- 19 - Experience the Love of Christ.
- 19 - And **then** you will be made complete (filled to complete fullness) with all the life and power that comes from God.

Did you catch that?

**Wholeness comes after love is understood and experienced.**

Not before.

We spend so much time trying to fix ourselves...  
when what we really need is to be rooted in His love.

God Has Already Proven His Love

**Romans 5:1-11 NLT**

- 5 - ESV says that God has "poured his love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit." God loves us so much that he has literally taken up residence within us. He wants to be with us every second of every day.
- 8 - Go showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.
  - Not when you cleaned yourself up.
  - Not when you got your life together.

**At your worst... He chose you.**

- 10 - Our friendship has been restored with God by Christ's death.
- 10 - How much more will we be saved - sozo - because He is alive!

- Sozo = fully healed, made complete; Heart, soul, mind, and strength.

There is something supernatural that happens here. Something truly mysterious. God pours his love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

## Nothing Can Separate You From God's Love

**Romans 8:31-39** makes it undeniable.

- 31 - God is for us.
- 32 - God has not held back even his Son, himself, from us.
- 33 - We've been chosen by God and given right standing with him.
- 34 - Jesus is pleading with God on our behalf.
- 35-39: Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Not your past

Not your failures

Not your doubts

Not your pain

**Nothing.**

## Conclusion

So if you hear nothing else today, hear this:

God loves you.

He's not disappointed in you.

He's not keeping score.

He's not waiting for you to earn it.

He loves you right now. Fully. Completely. Unconditionally.

There is nothing you can do to make Him love you more...  
and nothing you've done that makes Him love you less.

## Altar Call

I want to be really honest for a moment.

It's easy to say, "I love Jesus."

But it's harder to say,

**"I truly believe God loves me."**

Some of you are here today... and something is blocking that.

Maybe it's your past.

Maybe it's how you were raised.

Maybe it's wounds, rejection, or disappointment.

And because of that... you struggle to trust His love.

So today, we're not responding out of guilt.

We're responding out of invitation.

If you're here and you're not 100% confident that God loves you...

or you just need that truth to become real in your heart...

I want you to come forward.

No shame.

No pressure.

Just people who want to stand with you and pray that you would truly experience the love of God.

You don't have to leave here wondering anymore.

**You are loved.**