

Summer Sermon Series: Sing to the LORD

“The Love of God”

(John 3:16)

Introduction

- For this year’s Summer Sermon Series – “Sing to the LORD” – we are utilizing biblical themes/lyrics from great worship songs as the basis for our sermons. To this point, we have used the following worship songs to preach on great doctrines from the Bible: “How Great Thou Art” (1885) to preach from Psalm 139 on the greatness of God; “Rock of Ages” (1776) to preach from 2 Corinthians 5:21 on the substitutionary atonement of Christ; “A Mighty Fortress is our God” (c. 1529) to preach from Psalm 46 on the sovereignty of God; “Before the Throne of God Above (1865) to preach from 1 John 2:1 to preach on Jesus as our Advocate; “Our Great God” (2002) to preach from various Scriptures on the character and activity of the devil; “Come Thou Fount” (1758) to preach from 1 Samuel 7 on God’s salvific mercy; “Lord from Sorrows Deep I call” (2018) to preach from Psalms 42-43 on crying out to God in times of sufferings and sorrows; “Holy, Holy, Holy” (1826/1861) to preach from Isaiah 6 on the holiness of God.
- When Bill Gaither, the well-known gospel writer and singer, was asked what he thought was the greatest Christian lyric ever written – not including the songs of Scripture – he did not hesitate to quote the words from F.M. Lehman’s 1917 hymn “The Love of God.” Bill Gaither added that, in his opinion, no lyrics in all hymnody surpass the third verse of that song. This great hymn has been sung in many different arrangements, and in countless venues. It is a song that resonates in the hearts of believers because it masterfully describes the infinite and matchless love of God for His children. I strongly encourage you to read (or sing) out loud the words of this beautiful hymn:

The love of God is greater far Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star, And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled, And pardoned from his sin.

Refrain: O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure, The saints’ and angels’ song.

When years of time shall pass away, And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall,
When men, who here refuse to pray, On rocks and hills and mountains call,
God’s love so sure, shall still endure, All measureless and strong;
Redeeming grace to Adam’s race – The saints’ and angels’ song.

Refrain: O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure, The saints’ and angels’ song.

Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill, And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above, Would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched from sky to sky.

Refrain: O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure, The saints’ and angels’ song.

➤ Truly this song echoes the great and profound truth that God is not only loving, but that God (in and of Himself) is love. The Bible teaches us, *“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love ... ¹⁶And 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”* (1Jn.4:8,16). We know, and rely on the truth, that God will always act in perfect love because God is at all times perfect Love. He cannot stop loving any more than He can stop living. As God is eternal so His love is eternal. We can trust the reality of God’s love just as we can trust the reality of God – because God is love. It is important to keep in mind that God’s love has no imperfections or impurities (as does the “love” that comes from the world). God’s love is as holy as He is holy; His love is perfect as He is perfect.

When thinking about any attribute (characteristic) of God, it is important to remember that all of God’s attributes help to define all of God’s other attributes. God is not a composite being. That is, He is not one part love, one part holiness, one part sovereign, etc. (or partly omniscient, partly omnipresent, partly omnipotent). His attributes are distinct but inseparable. Meaning, that God’s love is a holy love, a sovereign love, an immutable love, etc.

➤ The truth of the love of God is an essential component of the Christian’s faith and hope. For without God’s infinite and eternal love, a believer’s faith is mired in the muck of insecurity and instability. More importantly, however, is the reality that without the divine expression and personification of God’s perfect love we, as believers, would forever be steeped and drowning in a bottomless sea of sin and judgment. Therefore, it is completely by God’s love that Christians live and have eternal life!

As the Scriptures so wonderfully declare: *“Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail”* (Lam.3:22). In Psalm 136, the Psalmist repeated this refrain twenty-six times: *“His steadfast love endures forever.”* The true disciple of Christ can be assured that nothing – absolutely nothing – can separate them *“from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Rom.8:39).

➤ However, when we speak of the love of God, we must understand that we are limited by our human perspective. Our English word “love” is wide-ranging and often ambiguous. For example, I can say I love God, I love my wife, I love pizza, I love football, I love my kids, I love my grandkids, I love the Bible, I love my pizza, I love the church ... and I love pizza. Consequently, in our English vernacular, the word love is stretched, abused, diluted, distorted, and often confusing.

Furthermore, in today’s society love is often spoken of in passive uncontrollable terms. People speak of “falling in love” and “falling out of love”, “finding” or “losing” love, as though love was some clumsy and awkward accident, and not a conscious and sacrificial action.

➤ Perhaps the most famous verse in all of Scripture, John 3:16 is a short summary of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To fully understand this verse is to fully understand the entire Gospel (but it takes the whole Bible to understand this one verse, and specifically the context surrounding this verse). It is important to keep in mind that Scripture interprets Scripture. The Bible is not a mass-collection of isolated spiritual/religious fortune-cookie sayings. Nor did God give us His Word in order for us to make it say whatever we want it to say. Scripture must not be interpreted by our own personal (subjective) wants or beliefs, or by any secular or cultural philosophy (Col.2:8).

Here’s a vital truth to remember: All Scripture must be interpreted in light of all Scripture. That is, every verse of Scripture must be objectively interpreted within the context of Scripture (i.e., historical, grammatical, cultural, and geographical). As always, the Bible is the best commentary on the Bible.

➤ In light of this, as we study John 3:16, we must examine the immediate passage surrounding this verse and discover its truth as we consider all of Scripture. In order to do this, I want to ask and answer five questions concerning God’s sovereign and saving love.

John 3:16 ~ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16 ~ “For this is the way God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (NET)

John 3:16 ~ “For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.” (HCSB)

John 3:16 ~ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (NAS)

1. What is God’s love?

“For God so loved ...”

➤ This question is more difficult to answer than it may first appear. Any answer can raise a lot of philosophical and theological questions. Before we can correctly understand the phrase *“For God so loved...”*, we must first have a correct understanding of the word “love.” According to many in the world today, love is nothing more than a feeling – a fleeting elusive (sometimes romantic) emotion. I think it is safe to say that most of the love displayed in the world today is selfish, shallow, circumstantial and temporal – little more than a romantic or euphoric sensation. From our human perspective, love is seen as a feeling that comes and goes – i.e., some are “lucky enough” to find true lasting love, while most others are destined to wander through life looking for love.

Biblically, however, true love is not an emotional, involuntary, or selfish experience. The attribute of God’s love can be defined as the perfect and gracious expression of God’s affections.

➤ Thankfully, contained within the opening words of John 3:16 is an important clue: *“For God so loved...”*. The biblical (Greek) word translated *“love”* (*agapaō*) refers to a selfless, sacrificial, and sacred love. This is the purest and highest form of love (1Cor.13:4-8; Matt.22:37; Jn.17:26). It describes the willful and magnanimous decision to actively care for another. It is unconditional in its motivation and expression; not inspired by emotion or circumstance. In other words, while we cannot choose to be loved we always choose to love.

However, we must be careful in describing God’s love (biblical love) as unconditional. For many construe this to mean that God is lenient or indulgent. But God’s love is neither permissive nor pampering. Rather, His divine love is a perfecting love. His love is not the absence of correction or discipline, it does not prevent Him from expressing wrath or executing judgment, nor does it nullify His righteousness, holiness or goodness. Love is not the absence of discipline, but often the very motivation behind it (e.g. Heb.12:6-11). To speak biblically about God’s unconditional love is to describe His love as gracious and merciful – not having to be earned, secured nor repaid by our own goodness or good works.

1 John 4:8 ~ “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” (see Jn.8:54-55; 1Jn.2:4; 3:6)

➤ God’s love is quite the opposite of the false love of this world. In fact, because of our false views on love we have trampled and perverted what God’s love truly is. The Bible says, *“God is love.”* (1Jn.4:8, 16). It’s easy to misunderstand exactly what that means. Many people will simply slap on their human understanding of love and say that God is like that. Consequently, God is often portrayed as some all-permissive, aloof, tolerant, and impulsive being. But the love of God is more beautiful and grand than this. God’s love is not a permissive or pampering love, but a perfecting love. It is both infinite (space) and eternal (time). God is all-loving, but He is not all love.

➤ An important word of warning: the phrase “God is love” does not mean that love is God – a common misinterpretation (i.e., mathematics “symmetrical property of equality”: if A = B then B = A). To say that love is God is to deify love. That is, to make love into an idol (a significant problem in our world, and in evangelicalism). We must not equate anything as being equal to God except God Himself.

1 John 4:9-10 ~ “In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

1 John 4:15-16 ~ “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.”

➤ In order for us to rightly understand what it means to be loved by God, we must not think of human (i.e. worldly) love and reason upward to God. Rather, we must discover what the Bible says about God’s love and apply these truths to our understanding and our lives. God’s love is an (intrinsic) attribute of His divine character. It therefore does not originate with mankind, or anything in creation, and it is not influenced or rooted in anything in creation.

1 John 4:19 ~ “We love because he first loved us.”

➤ The love of God identifies the characteristic of God’s gracious and merciful benevolence – that is, His love is unmerited and undeserved. God’s love does not eclipse, diminish, or negate the attributes of His justice, His holiness, or His wrath (no attribute of God contradicts or contends with any other attribute of God).

Why is this so important? Because, apart from Christ, there is nothing inherently lovable about us. There was nothing about us that would be attractive to Him (Rom.5:6-10; 8:6-8). We did not, and could not, earn God’s love. This sets the whole stage for John 3:16. Because without God’s love there would be no love, and we would not be loved ... and we could not be saved.

2. Who does God love?

“For God so loved the world ...”

➤ This question has both an easy and difficult answer. In John 3:16, the apostle John wrote that God loved *“the world”* (*ho kosmos*). So, the simple answer to the question is the world. But this needs to be explained. What is meant by the word world? Some would argue for universalism, while others would limit it to “the world of believers” (God’s elect). Both interpretations fail in regard to the immediate context of this verse.

First, there is no indication in John’s Gospel (or in Bible) that the word *“world”* is limited to believers. Specifically, in verse nineteen we read: *“And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil”* (Jn.3:19). This clearly cannot be restricted to “the world of believers” (see also Jn.7:7, 12:31, 14:17, 17:14-16, 18:36; 1Jn.2:15-17).

Likewise, any claim to John 3:16 supporting universalism (universal salvation) is negated in the context of this verse (and through Scripture as a whole), as we will discover in this sermon. Universalism is the doctrine or belief that everyone will eventually be saved. Universalists claim that there are many different ways to God, and that Jesus Christ (Christianity) is merely one way to heaven. In universalism, any sincere pursuit of any so-called “god” is sufficient for salvation. More extreme forms of universalism teach that everyone goes to “heaven” even if they have no belief any god. Christian universalism – known as “universal reconciliation” – misinterprets a few Scriptures (e.g., Jn.1:29; 1Jn.2:2) to claim that everyone will be saved through Jesus Christ (either in this life, or after they die). All forms of universalism are unbiblical and heretical (see Gal.1:6-9).

➤ The *“world”* (*kosmos*) does not describe everyone universally, but everyone indiscriminately. In other words, the “world” does not refer to everyone without exception but everyone without distinction (i.e., Jews and Gentiles, men and women, slave and free; see Gal.3:26-29; Rev.7:9-10). Once again, we can see this is evident within the immediate context of John 3:16 [note: We use this same hyperbolic

language today (to convey everyone without distinction) when we say, “Everyone was there” or “the whole world is going to be there”; see Mk.1:37; Lk.2:1; 6:17; Jn.12:19].

Notice that the word “*whoever*” (“whosoever”, KJV) – regardless of ethnicity, gender, social status, or IQ – restricts salvation as pertaining only to those who believe in Jesus Christ (four times in five verses):

John 3:14-18 ~ “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”

- God truly loves the whole world – there is a beneficent/benevolent (general) love to all mankind – but He has a special (salvific) love toward those who believe (i.e., to those who, by faith, receive His Son Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; see Deut.7:7-8; 10:14-15). Only Christians know God’s sovereign and salvific love – they not only have received God’s love but are also controlled by “*the love of Christ*” (2Cor.5:14). God loves the whole world, but He does not love the whole world in the same way (see Jn.1:10; 7:7; 17:9). Like a father to a child, God has a special (sacred/salvific) love for those who are His children, and is angry and at enmity with those who reject Him as God (Ps.5:5; 7:11; Rom.1:18ff, 2:5; Eph.5:6).

3. How did God demonstrate His love?

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son ...”

- Notice again the phrase “*For God so loved the world*”, which can be translated “*For this is the way God loved the world*” or “*For this is how God loved the world.*” The adverb translated “*so*” (*houtōs*) can refer either to the manner (“this is how”) or the degree (“this is how much”) God loved. Both are applicable as we try to understand the manner and degree of God’s love. That is, how He loves us and how much He loves us!
- God so loved the world – in such a way – that “*He gave*” (*didōmi*) Remember, true (biblical and divine) love is a selfless, sacrificial, and sacred act. What did God give? Nothing less than His one and “*only Son*”, to die on the cross for our sins (Phil.2:5-11; Cor.5:21). The phrase “*only Son*” (*huios monogenēs*; also “one and only Son” and “only begotten Son”), may have immediately directed John’s initial readers to think about Abraham and Isaac (Gen.22), and even the Messianic Psalm 2. The gift that God gave was His Son. Jesus Christ is God’s love-gift, sent from heaven to earth, to be our Savior and Lord. God literally could not have sacrificed more than giving to us His one and only Son.

Rom 5:6-8 ~ “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die – ⁸but God shows [*synistēmi*; “demonstrates” (NIV/NET); “proves” (HCSB)] his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Rom 6:23 ~ “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Eph 2:4-5 ~ “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved”

Titus 3:4-7 ~ “But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our

Savior, ⁷so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

1 John 3:1 ~ “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.”

1 John 3:16 ~ “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.” (Jn.15:12-13)

➤The salvific love of God – its infinitude and eternity – is ultimately beyond our human comprehension (“Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made, Were every stalk on earth a quill, And every man a scribe by trade / To write the love of God above, Would drain the ocean dry. Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched from sky to sky”).

It was out of love that God sent His One and Only Son Jesus Christ to save a sinful and rebellious world. His love is the expression of His mercy, kindness, and grace. Jesus Christ is the one and only Son of God, and the one and only Savior from God. As the sinless Savior, Jesus died in our place and for our sins. He is the perfect, all-sufficient, substitutionary atonement for our sin (see Is.53:4-6; 2Cor.5:21). This is the highest expression of God’s love for us.

4. Who receives God’s saving love?

“... that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

➤If not the whole world, who then receives God’s saving (salvific) love? In simple terms, only those who believe. We must *“believe”* (*pisteuō*) in God’s Son – “that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” But this is no “easy believism” or “carnal” or “nominal Christianity.”

James 2:19 ~ “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!”

➤To “believe in” Jesus does not mean you simply believe that He exists (that there was a man who once lived who was named Jesus). It means we believe in Him as who He says He is, and we do what He says we do. It means that by faith we “receive” Him (Jn.1:11) as our Savior and “follow” Him (Jn.10:27) as our Lord.

We cannot come to Jesus “on our own terms” (see Matt.7:21-23). We must remember that without Christ, we are dying in our sins and justly condemned to hell for eternity. Salvation is not negotiation! It is a rescue, and we were the ones perishing. When we are saved from our sins, we will not return to the sinful life from which Jesus saved us (Rom.6:1-7; 2Cor.5:17; 1Pet.1:14).

➤In short, the Gospel declares that God’s love is displayed in His willingness to send His one and only Son to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus alone can save you from the eternal penalty of your sins. Jesus alone can transform your life and make you righteous before God. Jesus alone can restore you to perfect fellowship with God. Jesus alone can grant you eternal life in heaven with God. Jesus alone is the Savior and Lord of all who believe.

John 3:14-15 ~ “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”

John 14:6 ~ “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”

Rom 5:1-2 ~ “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Rom 5:9-10 ~ “Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.”

Eph 2:1-5 ~ “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved”

Eph 2:8-9 ~ “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

- When you believe in Jesus, He does not become one of your “saviors” or one of your “gods”. He is your one and only Savior, and the one and only Son of the one and only God. True conversion is a radical, life-altering, transformation. It necessitates a complete and fundamental change in one’s priorities, affections, pleasures, goals, perspectives, allegiances and worship. Jesus cannot simply be added to an otherwise moral, ethical or religious life. He will not be added to a pantheon of gods (idols). When a person truly becomes a Christian, Jesus Christ is their one and only Savior and they seek to serve, love and worship Him alone as God.
- The mystery of the Gospel is not that there is only one way to be saved, but that there is a way to be saved at all!

5. Who rejects God’s saving Love?

“... that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

- What about those who refuse God’s great and gracious love? What if we reject God’s love-gift of a Savior? What if we refuse to believe in Jesus Christ? God, by His true and perfect love, will not force His love upon us (He cannot make us love Him). True love, by definition, is freely given and freely received. It cannot be bought, earned, stolen or forced.

John 3:16-20 ~ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.”

John 3:36 ~ “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”

- People often ask, “Why would a loving God send people to hell?” Hell is not where God sends people who do not believe in Him (as if they were at once time deserving of heaven). People go to hell when they reject God’s saving love. The better question is, “Why would a just and holy God send people to heaven?” Hell is what we all deserve, and where we all go unless we receive God’s love-gift of a Savior. Our sins deserve the punishment of death (Rom.6:23), but God in His loving grace made a way when there was no way. He gave us His Son and our Savior!
- ✓ Illust: This is one reason why it is so ridiculous when people say they are mad at God. For God has demonstrated His immeasurable and unmerited love, by sending His one and only Son to die on the cross for all of your sins – graciously and mercifully saving you from God’s just wrath and eternal condemnation in hell. Why again are you mad at Him?

Rom 2:5 ~ “But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.”

➤ The two-word phrase “*storing up*” translates one Greek word (*thēsauroizō*, “thesaurus” – a treasury of words). It refers to that which is piled up or put away as a reserve. Every sin that you have committed is creating a heaping pile of sinfulness that is being stored up for the Day of Judgment when God’s wrath will be revealed against all sin.

Rom 3:23 ~ “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

➤ God does not love the world because we are so lovable. In fact, all of our sins did nothing but deserve the full justified wrath of God. God’s love was given to us because He knew that the world was lost and dead in sin. The heaping treasury of God’s wrath against the sin of our lives was laid upon Christ’s shoulders as He bore the punishment and shame for our sin.

➤ The vivid implication from John 3:16 – “*that whoever believes in him should not perish*” – is that those who do not believe will “perish.” The word translated “*perish*” (*apollymi*) means to destroy fully or to be utterly lost. Verse eighteen further clarifies that those who perish are “*condemned*” (Jn.3:18), and verse thirty-six states that they are also remain under “*the wrath of God*” (Jn.3:36). Jesus described this as “*eternal fire*” and “*eternal punishment*” in Matthew 25:41, 46, and the apostle Paul referred to it as “*everlasting destruction*” in 2 Thessalonians 2:9 (see also Matt.18:8; Mk.9:48; Jd.1:7; Rev.12).

1 John 5:11-12 ~ “And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

➤ The truth is, there are those who hate Christ (and Christians); those who reject Jesus as their Savior; who are enemies of the cross of Christ; those who think the Gospel is foolishness; those who rebel against God; those who are steeped in idolatry; those who refuse God’s Savior and are trying to be “saved” on their own terms. Everyone who does not put their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior cannot be saved, and (unless they confess and repent) will not know God’s saving love.

Conclusion

➤ As we close, I want to bring to light one more question that the Bible asks, and answers, concerning God’s love: “Can a true believer ever lose God’s saving love?” In short, the answer is no:

Rom 8:35-39 ~ “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ... ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (see Rom.8:28-34; 1Jn.2:19)

John 10:27-30 ~ “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one.”

➤ God’s love never fails (1Cor.13:8). His promises are true, and His love is secure. Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus! The love of God is infinite, eternal and pure, and has been demonstrated through the sending of His one and only Son to die for our sins.

✓ Illust: In the words of the first verse of F. M. Lehman’s hymn, “The Love of God”:

The love of God is greater far Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star, And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled, And pardoned from his sin.

Refrain: O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure, The saints’ and angels’ song.

➤ I suppose the most pertinent questions at this point are, “How are you going to respond to God’s love?” “Have you received God’s saving love through faith in His Son as Lord and Savior?” “Do you truly love God with all your heart, mind and soul” (Matt.22:37-38)? Scripture declares that today is the day of salvation (2Cor.6:2), now is the time to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Isa 55:6-7 ~ “Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; ⁷let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”