

Lesson 99 - The Love of God

1. What is God the Father? **1 John 4:8**

EGW: God is love. Like rays of light from the sun, love and light and joy flow out from Him to all His creatures. It is His nature to give. His very life is the outflow of unselfish love.

"His glory is His children's good;
His joy, His tender Fatherhood."

He tells us to be perfect as He is, in the same manner. We are to be centers of light and blessing to our little circle, even as He is to the universe. We have nothing of ourselves, but the light of His love shines upon us, and we are to reflect its brightness. "In His borrowed goodness good," we may be perfect in our sphere, even as God is perfect in His. {MB 77.2}

2. How does He love, implying that He has no expectation of receiving anything back? **Hosea 14:4**

EGW: All who enter the city of God, enter there through the strait gate,-- through agonizing effort. But none who have fallen need give themselves up to despair. Aged men, once honored of God, may have defiled their souls, sacrificing virtue on the altar of lust; but there is still hope for them if they repent, forsake sin, and turn to God. He who has so graciously declared, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," has also inspired the invitation, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." God hates sin, but he loves the penitent, and declares, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." {RH, February 22, 1906 par. 11}

3. How long will such love last? **Jeremiah 31:3**

EGW: The love of God still yearns over the one who has chosen to separate from Him, and He sets in operation influences to bring him back to the Father's house. The prodigal son in his wretchedness "came to himself." The deceptive power that Satan had exercised over him was broken. He saw that his suffering was the result of his own folly, and he said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father." Miserable as he was, the prodigal found hope in the conviction of his father's love. It was that love which was drawing him toward home. So it is the assurance of God's love that constrains the sinner

to return to God. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Romans 2:4. A golden chain, the mercy and compassion of divine love, is passed around every imperiled soul. The Lord declares, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. {COL 202.1}

4. As the Lord exercises lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, what is His attitude? **Jeremiah 9:24**

EGW: "This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." And the prophet Jeremiah declared: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Scarcely can the human mind comprehend the breadth and depth and height of the spiritual attainments of him who gains this knowledge. {RH, September 19, 1912 par. 7}

5. Who else has love dwelling in Him? **John 15:12**

EGW: The Samaritan had fulfilled the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," thus showing that he was more righteous than those by whom he was denounced. Risking his own life, he had treated the wounded man as his brother. This Samaritan represents Christ. Our Saviour manifested for us a love that the love of man can never equal. When we were bruised and dying, He had pity upon us. He did not pass us by on the other side, and leave us, helpless and hopeless, to perish. He did not remain in His holy, happy home, where He was beloved by all the heavenly host. He beheld our sore need, He undertook our case, and identified His interests with those of humanity. He died to save His enemies. He prayed for His murderers. Pointing to His own example, He says to His followers, "These things I command you, that ye love one another"; "as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 15:17; 13:34. {COL 381.1}

6. How did God the Father demonstrate His love? **John 3:16-17**

EGW: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. "Unto us a child

is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder." God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. The I AM is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," is not ashamed to call us brethren. Hebrews 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love. {DA 25.3}

7. How did Jesus demonstrate his love? **Hebrews 12:2**

EGW: Our Lord says, Under conviction of sin, remember that I died for you. When oppressed and persecuted and afflicted for My sake and the gospel's, remember My love, so great that for you I gave My life. When your duties appear stern and severe, and your burdens too heavy to bear, remember that for your sake I endured the cross, despising the shame. When your heart shrinks from the trying ordeal, remember that your Redeemer liveth to make intercession for you. {DA 659.2}

8. Who loved first? **1 John 4:19**

EGW: Christ denied himself. He did not count heaven a place to be desired while we were lost, and he left the heavenly courts to suffer a life of shame, reproach, insult, and mockery. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. He lived a life of self-sacrifice and self-denial, and passed over the ground that we must travel, in order to leave us an example that we might follow in his steps. And we love him, because he first loved us. We should cultivate love for Christ by yielding obedience to all his commandments. If we truly follow our Lord, we shall depart from all iniquity, the transgression of God's law, and become loyal and true to the requirements of Heaven. The church has been made the depository of precious truth, and its members are not only to believe these truths, but to disseminate their glorious light to those who sit in darkness, that souls may be brought to the Sun of Righteousness. In this way they may represent Christ to the world. {ST, June 1, 1891 par. 3}

9. How much love did the human race show towards God to motivate Him to give us His son? **1 John 4:10**

EGW: When all hope was excluded from Adam and Eve in consequence of transgression and sin, when justice demanded the death of the sinner, Christ gave Himself to be a sacrifice for the sin of the world. The world was under condemnation. Christ became substitute and surety for man. He would give His life for the world, which is represented as the one lost sheep that had strayed from the fold, whose guilt as well as helplessness was charged against them and stood in the way, hindering their return. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins." "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Every son and daughter of God, if they have an abiding Saviour will act out Christ. Every soul that has not an abiding Saviour will reveal the same in unchristlikeness in character. Love is not cherished and put in exercise. "Lift Him up, the risen Saviour," in our words, in our conversation, in our dealing with the erring. {FE 283.1}

10. In fact, what were we when Christ died? **Romans 5:8**

EGW: Mark how tender and pitiful the Lord is in his dealings with his creatures. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, and he stands ready to receive every wanderer who will return. The ear of the Lord is open to the cry of every one who is poor in spirit. Even before the prayer is offered, or the yearning of the soul made known, the Spirit of God goes forth to meet it. Never has there been a good desire, however weak, never a prayer lifted to God, however faltering, never a tear shed in contrition of soul, but grace from Christ has gone forth to meet the grace working in the human heart. {RH, April 10, 1900 par. 11}

11. What was Jesus fashioned into showing not only love for us but humility? **Philippians 2:8, Hebrews 2:16**

EGW: There are mysteries in the plan of redemption--the humiliation of the Son of God, that He might be found in fashion as a man, the wonderful love and condescension of the Father in yielding up His Son--that are to the heavenly angels subjects of continual amazement. The apostle Peter, speaking of the revelations given to the prophets of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," says that these are things which "the angels desire to look into." And these will be the study of the redeemed through eternal ages. As they contemplate the work of God in creation and redemption, new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. As they learn more and more of the wisdom, the love, and the power of God, their minds will be constantly expanding, and their joy will continually increase. {5T 702.2}

12. What is the greatest demonstration of love? **John 15:13**

EGW: If the Majesty of heaven could do so much to evidence his love for man, what ought not men to be willing to do for each other, to help one another up out of the pit of darkness and suffering? Said Christ, "Love one another as I have loved you;" not with a greater love, for "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Our love is frequently selfish; for we confine it to prescribed limits. When we come into close union and fellowship with Jesus Christ, our love and sympathy, and our works of benevolence, will reach down deeper, and will widen and strengthen with exercise. The love and interest of Christ's followers must be as broad as the world; and those who live merely for "me and mine" will fail of heaven. {RH, June 22, 1886 par. 3}

13. And what did Jesus do in the context of love? **1 John 3:16**

EGW: We must keep Jesus our pattern ever before us. This is and ever will be present truth. It was by beholding Jesus and appreciating the virtues of His character that John became one with his Master in spirit. With spiritual vision he saw Christ's glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and he was changed from glory to glory into His likeness. And to him was committed the work of telling of the Saviour's love and the love His children should manifest for one another. "This is the message that ye heard from the beginning," he writes, "that we should love one another.... We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." {1888 135.4}

14. And what object does Jesus love? **Ephesians 5:25**

EGW: The spirit that Christ manifests toward us is the spirit that husband and wife are to manifest toward each other. "As Christ also hath loved us," "walk in love." "As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Ephesians 5:2, 24, 25. {MH 361.4}

15. Despite our sinfulness, being motivated by the love for us, what is He willing to do towards our sins?
Revelation 1:5

EGW: Before entering the city of God, the Saviour bestows upon his followers the emblems of victory, and invests them with the insignia of their royal state. The glittering ranks are drawn up, in the form of a hollow square, about their King, whose form rises in majesty high above saint and angel, whose countenance beams upon them full of benignant love. Throughout the unnumbered host of the redeemed, every glance is fixed upon him, every eye beholds His glory whose "visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." Upon the heads of the overcomers, Jesus with his own right hand places the crown of glory. For each there is a crown, bearing his own "new name," [Revelation 2:17.] and the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord." In every hand are placed the victor's palm and the shining harp. Then, as the commanding angels strike the note, every hand sweeps the harp strings with skillful touch, awaking sweet music in rich, melodious strains. Rapture unutterable thrills every heart, and each voice is raised in grateful praise: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever." [Revelation 1:5, 6.] {GC88 645.3}

16. What is granted to us by the love of God? **Last word in 2 Thessalonians 2:16**

EGW: The apostle Paul says: "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." {RH, November 29, 1898 par. 5}

Here are presented the two great forces that are to co-operate in the work of saving souls: the strong, loving, working faith of the human agent is to unite with divinity. This is what Christ means when he says, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This is the condition of the partnership. We must be laborers together with God in seeking and saving the lost. Christ said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And we are not to be idle nor indifferent. Souls are perishing around us. It behooves all who claim to believe Christ to show their faith by their works. As soon as we leave the black banner of Satan, and stand under the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel, there is earnest work for us to do. {RH, November 29, 1898 par. 6}

17. What is also provided richly? **Ephesians 2:4**

EGW: The grace of Christ and his righteousness are offered to men as a free gift. The apostle Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, says: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." {RH, December 24, 1908 par. 1}

18. By the love of God, once we are clean, what is God willing to call us? **1 John 3:1**

EGW: When we seek for appropriate language in which to describe the love of God, we find words too tame, too weak, too far beneath the theme, and we lay down our pen and say, "No, it cannot be described." We can only do as did the beloved disciple, and say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." [1 John 3:1.] In attempting any description of this love, we feel that we are as infants lisping their first words. Silently we may adore; for silence in this matter is the only eloquence. This love is past all language to describe. It is the mystery of God in the flesh, God in Christ, and divinity in humanity. Christ bowed down in unparalleled humility, that in his exaltation to the throne of God, he might also exalt those who believe in him, to a seat with him upon his throne. All who look upon Jesus in faith that the wounds and bruises that sin has made will be healed in him, shall be made whole. {CE 77.1}

19. By His love, what do we become? **Romans 8:37**

EGW: Like a roaring lion, Satan is seeking for his prey. He tries his wiles upon every unsuspecting youth; there is safety only in Christ. It is through His grace alone that Satan can be successfully repulsed. Satan tells the young that there is time enough yet, that they may indulge in sin and vice this once and never again; but that one indulgence will poison their whole life. Do not once venture on forbidden ground. In this perilous day of evil, when allurements to vice and corruption are on every hand, let the earnest, heartfelt cry of the young be raised to heaven: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" And may his ears be open and his heart inclined to obey the instruction given in the answer: "By taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psalm 119:9). The only safety for the youth in this age of pollution is to make God their trust. Without divine help they will be unable to control human passions and appetites. In Christ is the very help needed. . . . You can say with the apostle: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). Again; "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection" (1

Corinthians 9:27). {AG 108.4}

20. What other agent, motivated by love, makes sure that the love of God is spread in our hearts?

Romans 5:5

EGW: When the Spirit of God controls the mind and heart, it turns the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. The law of Jehovah will then be regarded as a transcript of the divine character, and a new song bursts forth from the heart that has been touched by divine grace; for he realizes that the promise of God has been fulfilled in his experience, that his transgression is forgiven, his sin covered. He has exercised repentance toward God for the violation of his law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ who has died for his justification.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." {RH, June 21, 1892 par. 6}

21. What is another way that God shows love towards us? **Proverbs 3:12, Revelation 3:19, Hebrews 12:6**

EGW: Let the tempted and tried souls remember that when chastisement comes upon them, it is the Lord who would save them from death. Let the souls to whom reproof comes, remember that "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." The human agent imbued with the Spirit of Christ will watch for souls as they that must give an account. The claims of Christ are upon us, and we must understand our duty, and do it in the fear of God, with an eye single to his glory, and not prove unfaithful. Let no thought of self or of natural feelings be cherished to keep the lips silent. Speak, and be not afraid, with the heart full of tenderness and love for souls, care, exhort, and entreat. Never cease to labor for a soul while there is one ray of hope. Your words may cut to the soul. Oh, then be cautious and clothe them with the love and tenderness of Jesus. Soften every accent with love and sympathy, remembering that you are not to be ignorant of the plague of your own heart, and that if Christ should mark your every word and action, there would be an array of figures written in his book, showing that you yourself are greatly out of harmony with his holy will. As you deal with others, as you judge others, so the Lord will judge and deal with you. Let the agent who claims to be a child of God, practise the lessons of Christ. If he is compelled to wound, let him feel the duty of healing as compulsory upon him. The truth is ever to be spoken in love, with the Spirit of God abiding in the soul. {PC 393.4}

22. What is God's plan towards those that He loves and pities? **Isaiah 63:9**

EGW: "I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." This should be the theme of our conversation. {RH, January 25, 1898 par. 13}

The Lord has rich blessings for all who serve him in righteousness and truth. Great thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, unselfish purposes, yearnings for purity and holiness, will bear fruit in words that reveal the character of the heart-treasure. This is religion. Let us pray, as did David, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer." {RH, January 25, 1898 par. 14}

23. In accordance to that plan, what is God's love supposed to do? **Psalms 40:11, Psalms 145:20, Psalms 37:28, Psalms 31:23**

EGW: "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me." Those who in sincerity present this prayer to our heavenly Father will not pray in vain. As we see our great need of help from God, we may look up and away from ourselves. As we seek the Lord not with lip service, but with our whole hearts, we shall be brought in contact with Christ. We can afford to renounce every evil thing for Christ's sake, that we may say that we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, that we walk not in craftiness, or handle the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commend ourselves to every man's conscience. The religion of Christ will uplift the life to an elevated standard. The inward work of the Spirit of God humbles human pride, by causing us to understand something of the tender mercies and lovingkindness of God. {YI, February 9, 1893 par. 1}