

# KNOWING AND BELIEVING THE LOVE OF GOD

## I. GOD IS LOVE

God's very essence is love – love is who God is. Yet, God's love is related to all aspects of His character (e.g., God uses His power to love you, God uses His omniscience to love you.) God loves you always. God's love is infinite.

## II. WE HAVE COME TO KNOW AND BELIEVE THE LOVE OF GOD – 1 John 4:16

A. "*We*" – John is speaking of himself, for he had come to know and believe God's love. God's Spirit, God's Word and people had ministered to his heart this love of God. John is also including the believers he is writing to. You need to be with others so you can more fully experience the love of God. Ephesians 3:14-18, Acts 2:42-47

B. "*Have come to know and have believed*" – this is the past perfect tense, which means it takes place in the past over a period of time. When you were saved you believed that God loved you, and since that time you have continued to believe that God loves you.

C. God has purposed and planned to love you, and has continually loved you in very specific ways over the years. God has loved you so much. Jude 21

D. "*have come to know*" – you have come to know, to realize, to understand in your mind and heart what God says in His word about loving you. The Bible is a love letter.

E. "*and have believed*" – in your heart you really believe that God loves you. You don't question it or doubt it. You are relying and depending on God's love. You may not feel God's love, but you believe and trust what God says in His Word about it. This believing, this faith is the key to knowing the love of God. Hebrews 11

## III. SOME CHRISTIANS HAVE A HARD TIME BELIEVING GOD LOVES THEM

A. Some Christians get stuck in life, and it may relate to the fact that they aren't fully believing God's love for them. There may have been a difficult situation, trial, illness, conflict, a death in the past, or an enemy who was against them. Psalms 31, 34, 55, 59

B. You think back about a difficult situation, and you may still get fearful, tear up, get angry, etc. You have a hard time believing God loved you when this situation was going on. You felt and may still feel like God left you and abandoned you.

C. You need to rightly think about the past and believe that God loved you during that time, that God was with you, that He really did care for you. Psalm 13

D. The answer is to repent of your sin of not believing God loved you – and ask God to help you believe that He loved you. Don't go by how you think or feel, but by what God says in His Word. Believe what God says – *"His lovingkindness is everlasting."*

E. You need to process life with the love of God in mind. Psalm 136

#### IV. WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN ---

A. Bad things do happen to good people - the Bible is filled with examples of this.

B. You need to learn to also process life with the sovereignty of God in mind. God not only loves you during the bad things, but is sovereign over those bad things, over sinful things and over sinful people. God is not the cause of the sin or evil, but He is sovereign over it; and He could've stopped it, but He didn't.

C. When bad things or sinful things happen, then you need to believe that God is sovereign, and that He loves you. Romans 8:28, Acts 2:23-24

D. The processing of difficult things, of bad things, does not always take place quickly. The examples of Job, Moses, and of Joseph – Genesis 41:50-52, 50:15-21.

E. The example of Peter – Luke 22:31-32. If you know someone who is going through a hard trial, then pray for them. Pray for their faith, and specifically pray that they believe God's love for them. Psalm 136

GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD,  
FOR HIS LOVINGKINDNESS IS EVERLASTING.

Psalm 136:1

#### SOME QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND APPLICATION

1. What is the main thing you believe that God wants you to learn from this lesson?
2. What does *"God is love"* mean? Why is this truth so important for your life?
3. What is one of the main reasons you need to be in fellowship? *"We..."*
4. What does it mean to know and believe God's love?
5. Have you had a situation in life where it was hard to believe God's love for you. Describe it.
6. Why is it so important to believe in both God's love and God's sovereignty in your life?
7. How are you doing at processing difficult things that have taken place in your life?  
What are some of the keys to processing these difficult things?