

## **The Good Life – Part 2**

*How can I know that God loves me?*

1 John 4:16; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 8-23-20

Last week we answered the question: *What is the 'essential business' of believers?* And the answer is:

- Love God.
- Love people.
- Love life.

*What is love for God?* Love for God is to live to please Him and to be pleased with Him.

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. – 1 John 5:3

*What is love for people?* Love for people, believers or unbelievers is to do good to them and to desire their good even if it is not returned.

<sup>27</sup>“But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. – Luke 6:27-28

*What is love for life?* Love for life is to receive everything from God’s hand in thanksgiving for the gift and to trace everything back to His heart in worship of the Giver.

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always; <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing; <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

The question I want to answer this week and next week is: *What is essential in order for us to love God, love people and love life?*

<sup>19</sup> We love, because He first loved us. – 1 John 4:19

<sup>16</sup> We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. – 1 John 4:16

### **Belief in the Love of God**

*How can I know that God loves me?*

#### **1. God is love.**

*The Character of God:* The first reason to believe that God loves me is found in the character of God, not in me or in my character. When I read of the God of the Bible, I should see that God as

One who loves me. (1 John 4:8; 1 John 4:16; Matthew 9:36) *Can a God 'who is love' ever not love? (Psalm 136:1; 1 John 1:5; 4:8, 16; Psalm 145:17) Do we think that God the Judge has somehow stopped being the God who is love? Isn't the problem that people believe that God loves them? No, this does not come naturally to believers or unbelievers. (Deuteronomy 1:26-27)*

## **2. God does me good.**

*The Circumstances of Good:* The second reason to believe that God loves me is found in the circumstances of good that I experience, even when I don't deserve it. When I experience something good in my life, I should see that as an expression of God's love to me. (Deuteronomy 10:18; Matthew 5:43-48; Acts 10:38) *Why is there good and beauty and enjoyment and even rescue in a fallen, rebellious world? Do we ask, 'If God is so good and loves us, why is there is evil and suffering in the world?', but do not ask, 'If God is so bad and hates us, why is there good and enjoyment in the world'?*

## **3. God commands love for all.**

*The Commandment to Love:* The third reason to believe that God loves me is found in the commandment to love given by God Himself. When I look at God's commands to love all people, I should see Him as commanding others to love me as He loves me and as commanding me to love others as He loves all people. (Luke 6:27-36; Mark 10:21-22; Luke 10:36-37) *Would God command us to love all men, even our enemies, if He did not do so? Do we think that God says, 'Do as I say, not as I do?'* (Matthew 23:1-4)

## **4. The cross reveals the love of God.**

*The Cross of Christ:* The fourth reason to believe that God loves me is found in the cross of Christ who died in the place of sinners. When I look at the cross, I should see the love of God for me. (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:19)

## **5. God calls me to come to Him.**

*The Call to Come:* The fifth reason to believe that God loves me is found in the call to come that God extends to me. When I see God/Jesus in the Bible calling me to come to Him, I should hear that as an expression of love to me. (Matthew 11:28-30; Matthew 23:37; Revelation 3:19-22; Luke 11:9-13) *Would God call you to come for forgiveness and fellowship if He did not love you? What would you think of someone who invited you over and then slammed the door in your face?*

- Do you know that God loves you?
- Do you believe that God loves you?
- How has (should) it changed (change) your life?