

God's Love

What Is God Like?

Luke 15

We don't have a complete picture of God until we see Him as a loving Heavenly Father who wraps His strong arm around us to protect us.

If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And 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. 1 John 4:15-16

In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like Him. 1 John 4:17

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because He first loved us. 1 John 4:18-19

We are not going to be responsive to God until we understand that He loves us, even though we are imperfect.

The Parable of the Loving Father

How God responds in His unconditional love to sinful people who come to Him

1. God is a Generous Father

Three Characteristics of God's unconditional love

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons.

The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. Luke 15:11-12

*"Do your giving while you're living,
then you're knowing where it's going."*

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

my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Psalm 23:5-6

Two facts about the Generosity of God

1. God despises grumbling

And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

1 Corinthians 10:10

*Do everything without complaining or arguing, **Philippians 2:14***

2. God delights in praise

*the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise. **Isaiah 43:21***

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise. **Psalms 111:10***

When we begin to understand how much God loves us, we can't help but respond to Him in praise.

Do you know God?

*Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. **Luke 15:13***

Instead of praising his father for his generosity, the Prodigal Son rebelled

2. God is Patient

Three Characteristics of God's unconditional love

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6

*After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. **Luke 15:14***

*He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. **Luke 15:16***

Three Steps the Prodigal took in coming to repentance

1. He evaluated his situation

"he came to his senses" (vs. 17)

2. **He acknowledged his need for help**

"I will set out and go back to my father" (vs. 18)

3. **He took action**

"So he got up and went to his father." (vs. 20)

3. God is Forgiving

Three Characteristics of God's unconditional love

*So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. **Luke 15:20***

*"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' **Luke 15:21***

*"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. **Luke 15:22-24***

*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- **John 1:12***

*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. **1 John 4:10***

*God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." **Hebrews 13:5***

*"I will redeem you with an outstretched arm." **Exodus 6:6***