

Everlasting Love

by Chuck Smith

God loves us with an everlasting love and draws us to Himself through various means, including affliction, physical weakness, sickness, and financial difficulties.

Duration: 38:14

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:5, Psalm 119:65-72, Proverbs 3:11-12, Jeremiah 31:3, Hebrews 12:6

Topics: "Gods Love", "Faithfulness"

Description

This sermon focuses on God's everlasting love and how He draws us with loving kindness, even in times of affliction and hardship. It emphasizes the importance of trusting God's guidance and recognizing His protection in redirecting us from destructive paths. Through personal experiences and biblical examples, the message highlights God's faithfulness in drawing us closer to Him for our ultimate good and His glory.

Transcript

Shall we turn in our Bibles to Psalm 119. Our scripture reading will be verses 65 through 72. Psalm 119, 65 through 72.

I'll read the odd numbered verses. Pastor Brian will lead the congregation in the even. Shall we stand as we read.

Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according unto thy word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe thy commandments. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word.

Thou art good and doest good, teach me thy statutes. The proud have forged a lie against me, but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart. Their heart is as fat as grease, but I delight in thy law.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. Let's pray.

Father, as David declared, it was good for us that we were afflicted, for in the afflictions we learned your statutes. We thank you, Lord, that you do deal with us when we are prone to go astray, that you just don't leave us. But Lord, you do work to draw us unto yourself, that we might experience the richness and the fullness of your love that you have for us.

As we have gathered together today, Lord, we ask that you would speak to us through the word and give us an understanding, Lord, of your ways and of the riches and the depth of your love. In Jesus' name, amen. You may be seated.

Tonight Pastor Skip will lead us in our study through Jeremiah 30 and 31. So we would encourage you to read them over and then come out tonight and join with us as we journey through the Bible studying the word of God, growing in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This morning we'd like to draw your attention to Jeremiah chapter 31, verse 3. Here the Lord declares, The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

God's declaration. I have loved you with an everlasting love and therefore I have drawn thee with my lovingkindness. When I was a young boy and needed discipline, after my father would take me into the bedroom and would spank me.

We lived in the old days. He used a belt. And as he would leave the room and I would be there in the darkness crying, my thought would be, my dad doesn't love me.

That brought more tears in the belt. Thinking that he didn't love me. If he loved me how could he inflict this kind of pain on me? Surely he doesn't love me.

Now is that the reason why we discipline our children because we hate them? We want to inflict pain upon them? I think not. When we see our children engaged in an activity that we know can be very dangerous, can bring great pain to them, we discipline them in order to spare them future grief, future pain. Much greater pain if they would continue in the practices that they were engaged in.

For instance if your child takes a great fascination with fire, begins to play with matches, and you warn them and they continue to play with matches until you discipline them. Why are you disciplining them? Because you know that by playing with matches they are endangering their lives. They could get severely burned.

They could become disfigured. They could bring a lot of damage, even death to themselves in a fire. And so you take those measures that are necessary to deliver them from the possible pain and disfigurement should they continue in playing with fire.

In the time of the Lord speaking to Jeremiah, I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Jeremiah was actually in prison. He was going through a great place of disappointment and despondency as far as the ministry was concerned.

Because he had been giving the people God's Word which the people didn't want to hear. The people were going into captivity. In fact many of them had already been taken into captivity.

At this particular time the Babylonian army had set siege on Jerusalem. Jerusalem was suffering. And the king put Jeremiah into the stocks because he had been telling the people surrender.

Don't fight Babylon. And he was accused of being treasonous against the government causes. God is saying, I love you with an everlasting love.

Therefore have I drawn you with loving kindness. The love that God has for us is far richer than we could ever imagine. Paul prayed for the Ephesians that they might know what is the length, the breadth, the depth, and the love of God which passes human understanding.

God loved the nation of Israel but they had started on a path that was going to bring total destruction to them. But God loved them too much to allow them to totally destroy themselves. He had warned them over and over again of the danger of their worship of the false gods.

Gods that could not help them. Gods that actually pandered to their own fleshly desires. And because they would not listen to God, God wanted to draw them unto that place of safety for the future.

And so God allowed them to go into captivity. God allowed them to experience the sufferings of war and its ultimate kind of devastation over the land. Because God was wanting to draw them back unto Himself where He could pour out His blessings and His love upon them.

They had removed themselves from God's love. And thus they were experiencing some of the ravages of war. As I look back on my life I see that there were bitter experiences that I went through in the ministry.

Looking at it from this perspective, looking back on it, I now have a much better understanding than I had at the time that I was going through the particular trials that I was experiencing. Probably one of the lowest points in my ministry was the first time I pastored a little church in Corona, California. I had come from a church in Tucson, Arizona where God was blessing, the church was growing, and I really felt that I pretty much had the ministry wired.

I knew how to grow a church, you know. So we came to Corona because we liked the idea of living in California. I'm a native son and though we loved Tucson, just the thought of being back in California, close to the family, close to so many of our friends, I accepted this call.

And it was a little church but I thought, you know, just a matter of time. I know how now to grow a church. The church could only pay \$20 a week salary.

So I had to work at Alpha Beta in order to supplement the income because we had a growing family, a couple of children at the time. Jeff was born while we were there in Corona. And I preached my heart out.

But I watched the church slowly dwindle in size. Rather than growing, it was getting smaller. I remember one Christmas Eve, our service.

The only one that showed up was an old man. My wife and three children were there, but this old man was there and he slept during the service. There was a drunk lady that showed up that night, but she was looking for the Lutheran church and the candlelight service that they were having, so we had to send her up the street.

But it was a difficult time for the ministry. Probably the lowest point that I had in the ministry. At this point we were questioning the call of God upon our lives.

We were questioning God's love for us. The Lord did send in an older lady. She was a godly woman.

A real prayer warrior. And she was of great encouragement to K&I. She was always calling and praying and just a real godly woman.

She had a son and daughter-in-law with a small family. They were about our age. And K&I prayed and we thought, oh if only this young couple would come we could have another young couple in the church and fellowship.

But they never did. They were going to another church and never did attend our church there in Corona. I spent a lot of time complaining to God about the hardships of the ministry.

The difficulty of keeping food on the table for our family. We were discouraged and actually resigned from the ministry and got a job in secular work. Moved back to my home in Santa Ana.

But then the Lord opened the door for us to minister in Huntington Beach where we spent a glorious five years of blessed ministry. Saw the church grow and double and the people excited in the things of the Lord. And God was blessing the church so much that it caught the attention of the leaders of our denomination at the time.

And when they were having difficulty in one of the largest churches in the denomination here in Southern California they requested that I go out and I pastor that church because the previous pastor had to resign under difficult circumstances, certain indiscretions. And they felt that this church would probably fall apart but they requested that I go out and that I take over the ministry there which we did. And while we were there in Las Heranas this young couple from Corona that we had prayed and wished that they would have come to our church there they started attending our church in Las Heranas with a couple of other young couples from Corona.

And they were a tremendous asset to the church there and helped us to go through the transition period and God began to really bless the ministry there in Las Heranas. But then because of my mother's illness I felt I needed to be closer to her so I accepted a pastorate in the local area here with the denomination to be close to my mother and to be able to minister to her. But the couples that were coming from Corona requested that I start a home Bible study in Corona.

Now I had become pretty much disenchanted with denominationalism. I saw the politics that were involved and I really wanted to sort of get away from it. Probably the issue that really was the breaking point, we were at a pastor's conference down in Phoenix, Arizona and the bishop was saying that he was going to share some secrets on how to really enlarge our attendance.

He was going to share secrets of success that he learned while pastoring one of the largest churches in the Pacific Northwest. He shared with us how that he knew that motivating people through competition was carnal motivation. But he said, let's face the facts.

The majority of our people are carnal thus we must use carnal motivation to get them to bring their friends to church. He presented his program of getting all of the churches involved in competing with each other and explained the program and then said, all in favor stand to your feet. I was holding Jan.

She was just a little baby at the time and I was really too tired to stand and so I sat there. The other pastors all stood except some of them saw me sitting and they sort of thought, why am I standing? And they began to sit down. The bishop noticed that and right afterwards made his way towards me, invited me out for coffee.

He started talking to me about the sin of rebellion. It was as the sin of witchcraft. And it wasn't a pleasant meeting.

I told him however that when he introduced the program that he said that he knew that motivating people through carnal motivation was through competition was carnal motivation but needed to recognize most of our people were carnal and thus we had to use it. I said, but then you must assume that most of the ministers are carnal too because you got them all whipped up over the idea of competing with each other. I said, I am more carnal than I want to be.

I don't want to be carnal and I don't want to pander to that side of my nature. I want to be spiritual. And had you said, let's face it, most of the people are carnal, if you had said, let's pray, let's get the people praying and let's seek God to make them spiritual people, I said, I would have stood to my feet gladly.

I went back to my room, got on my knees and I said, God, You know my heart and You know that in my heart I'm not rebelling against You. I love You God. I am rebelling against this program that seeks to pander to people's carnality.

And yet Lord, what am I to do? And the Lord spoke to my heart, gave me the scripture and the Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved. And I said, thank you Lord. I'll accept that and I need that.

I think I said that was Jan that was, I was holding it was Cheryl. It was later on in the ministry. But at any rate, at the end of the contest period, I received the telegram from the bishop.

He said, congratulations, your church had the greatest growth of all of the churches in the area and we have a trophy for your church. I wrote him back and apologized and told him that I wouldn't be able to come and receive the trophy, that the people didn't really know that there was a contest. And he wanted me to take 20 minutes and explain to the other ministers how we had organized the people and all to get busy on this contest.

And I said, we didn't do anything. The Lord added daily to the, well, that, you know, that was sort of the end. But how do you go independent? I didn't know.

You see, I now have a family of four children. I have a lot of seniority within the denomination. And you leave all of the security and the seniority that you have over 17 years of ministry.

And starting over again in an independent work, I just didn't see how it could be done. However, these couples that had come to the church from Los Serranos, they said, the Bible study in Corona was growing and it was outgrowing actually the house. And so they said, why don't you come out and start an independent church in Corona? We had incorporated as Corona Christian Center.

And so I went out and I started ministering there in Corona in an independent church. And my dream sort of come true. No longer involved in the politics of denominationalism and just really the kingdom of God serving the Lord and just being able to listen to the Lord and to follow his leadings.

After about a year, I was invited to come down and take this little independent church in Costa Mesa called Calvary Chapel. And so we felt called of God to come down and take the church here. But in looking back, those difficult years in Corona where I resigned from the ministry, God loved me and he was drawing me through the hardships, drawing my heart towards an independent work and drawing me into the center of his will.

Actually, the focus of the ministry fellow who opened up his home in Corona to us to have the Bible studies, which led into the development of the church was Johnny Zell. He happens to be our head

accountant here at Calvary right now. His wife Velma has been teaching our kindergarten since we opened MCA Academy.

And it was just exciting to see how God's hand was there all the time, even when I thought that God would have forsaken me, when I thought that God didn't love me, he was drawing me with loving kindness to the place where he wanted me to be. Oftentimes God works in our lives and we are very disappointed and we think, God has forsaken me. God doesn't care.

God doesn't love me. And Jeremiah could very well have been in that place. In fact, he was.

He says that, I said, I'm not going to talk anymore in the name of God. Look what it's got me. I'm here in these stocks and all.

I'm through. I quit. And he put his designation in.

But he said his word was like fire in my bones and I just had to speak. And so God sometimes uses difficult situations to draw us into the center of his will, where he can then do the things he's longing to do because he loves us so very much. During this time God said to Jeremiah, I love you with an everlasting love.

Therefore, with loving kindness, I have drawn thee. The scripture tells us, don't despise the chastening of the Lord. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.

Often physical weakness is a method that God uses to draw us to himself. We feel too weak to go on and we are drawn to call unto God. We are drawn to God for help and for strength because as we look at the tasks that need to be done, I realize I just don't have the strength for this.

Oh God, help me. And I'm drawn by my own weakness to trust in him for the help and the strength that I need. Sometimes God uses sickness that we might be drawn to him to experience his healing power in our lives.

And oftentimes this sickness is beyond man's ability to help so that I am forced to him. The doctor says there's nothing we can do and I am forced to turn to God. I'm drawn by his loving kindness that I might experience his everlasting love in touching my body and healing me.

Sometimes we are drawn through financial difficulties. We don't know how we're going to pay the bills and we are drawn to just seek God and to put our trust and faith in him that he might show us his ability to supply all of our needs according to his riches in glory. So God often uses these things that we look upon as afflictions.

But as the psalmist said, it was good for me that I was afflicted for then I learned your statutes. God, it was good because it drew me close to you. Sometimes we get so busy in the daily routine of life that we neglect to call upon God until some tragedy comes upon us.

We lose our job. Our kid breaks an arm and we've just lost our hospitalization insurance. We lose everything.

And you see I'm drawn to God. He's the only one that can help me in this. I see no other resource.

I see no other means and I'm drawn to call upon God. But in so doing I experience then the love that God has for me as he lavishes his love upon me and he sees me through the heavy experiences. Maybe what looks to you like a great investment and you're being pressured to get involved in this wonderful investment, you'll be able to double your money in one year's time.

And so you think, oh my, that's exciting. I think I'll withdraw our retirement fund and invest in this because this looks great. I can double it in one year.

And they give you all this sales pitch and these people that are getting, you know, 20% a month interest in this kind of stuff on their money. But then the galvanized pipes in your floor of your house begin to leak and you're going to have to spend some of the money to get copper re-plumbing. And you think, oh no, I'm going to miss this opportunity of investment.

You know, I don't have the full \$25,000 that I need to put in because I've got to, oh Lord, you know, that's so terrible. And you know, you go on and complain and then you read in the paper of this Ponzi scheme and how people lost their life savings and so forth. And you think, oh Lord, thank you, you know.

Ways by which God draws us unto Himself. Ways by which God spares us pain. I have loved Thee with an everlasting love and with loving kindness, God said, I have drawn Thee.

How wonderful it is to know that God loves me so much. He's not going to let me destroy myself. There are things in our life that bring temporary joy and excitement.

But in the long run they can be totally destructive. And in His loving kindness God draws us away from these things. For God can see the pitfalls and the ruin that lies ahead on that path.

And I might foolishly accuse God of not loving me and not wanting me to have any fun. But in reality He is keeping me from death. It is because of His loving kindness that He drew me away from that object.

And though we might sometimes think that God is cruel, He's depriving us of, depriving us of something that is so desirable. It may be desirable, but it isn't good. And God knows it isn't good for us.

You remember back in the Garden of Eden when Satan came to Eve and he suggested to her that God really didn't love them. That God was trying to hold them back from something that was so desirable and so good. That tree, oh the fruit looked so delicious.

And Satan said to Eve, God knows that in the day that you eat it, you're going to be your eyes will be opened and you're going to be as gods, knowing good from evil. And so God's trying to protect His territory. He's trying to keep you from becoming as gods.

And He's holding back because He's really not interested in what is best for you. And sometimes Satan comes to us with the same suggestion that if God really loved you, He would not have held back from you. That which you were desiring and that which seemed so attractive, but God uses oftentimes afflictions in order to keep us from hurting ourselves.

I see in the statement, I have drawn thee, an interesting insight. God didn't say I have pushed you. He doesn't say I have forced you, but He said I have drawn you.

God could be forceful. God could push, but He would rather draw us. He would rather draw unto His perfect will.

Perhaps, well, the Bible tells us that when He brought the children of Israel into the promised land, He sent swarms of bees before them that invaded the area, began to sting the people and drove the people out. So you might say God didn't compel them to go against their will, but He made them willing to go. And God may not push you or compel you to go against your will, but He has ways of making you willing to go.

I have drawn thee. With loving kindness, I have drawn thee. Maybe you are here today because you're going through some deep waters, heavy experiences.

You're sort of up against the wall. And maybe the thought came, I should probably go to church. Maybe God can help me.

And God drew you here today to hear this message that you might know that God hasn't forsaken you, that God isn't angry with you, but that God loves you. And He is seeking through loving kindness to draw you unto Himself that you might know the riches and the glory and the blessing of living in close fellowship with Him. Perhaps He's protecting you from things that you don't know that would lie in the future in the path that you have taken.

And so He's helping and seeking to divert you from the destruction that waits for you if you continue the path you are going. And He's drawing you in loving kindness to what is best for your life. I would encourage you.

Let the Lord draw you in His loving kindness unto Himself today. Father, we thank you for the fact that you don't forsake us. Though at times we may feel that we've been forsaken, but that you withdraw for a period that we might draw to you.

You often step back so that we will step forward coming to you, Lord, and committing our lives and committing the issues of our lives to you that we might, Lord, find that everlasting love that you have for us as your children. Help us, Lord, to follow as you draw us to yourself. In Jesus' name, amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9006.mp3>

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/TTwiOOz_9ZA.mp4

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/everlasting-love/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net