

# Love - the Basis of All God's Dealings With Man

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes that love is the foundational basis of all God's interactions with humanity, highlighting His unchanging love and the importance of understanding it in our lives.*

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:5, Song of Solomon, Isaiah 49:15, Jeremiah 31:3, Hosea 1 - 3, Zephaniah 3:17, Matthew 7:9-11, Luke 15:11-32, 1 John 4:19

**Topics:** "Trust in God's Plan", "God's Love"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes that the foundation of our love for God is rooted in His unchanging love for us, as stated in 1 John 4:19. He explains that God's intention for humanity was to live in an atmosphere of love, where obedience stems from love rather than slavery. Throughout the Bible, God's enduring love is evident, as seen in His relationship with Israel and His unwavering compassion despite their doubts. Poonen highlights that every trial we face is a manifestation of God's loving plan for our ultimate good, urging believers to trust in His love to alleviate anxiety. The ministry of Jesus exemplifies God's loving nature, correcting misconceptions about His character and inviting us to experience His grace.

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## Transcript

We need a solid foundation for our love for the Lord. That foundation is His own unchanging love for us. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Many Christians experience difficulties later on in their lives, because they were never clear on this point initially. Right at the start of our Christian life we need to get this foundation strongly laid.

When God created this earth, and put man upon it, His intention was that everything in it should live and move in an atmosphere of love. Even the obedience that He sought from man was not the obedience of slavery but of love. Since there can be no love in the true sense of that word where there is no freedom of choice, God endowed Adam with a will that was free to choose, even though it involved the great risk of a wrong choice- of man disobeying Him. At any cost God would have a relationship with man that was free. He never wanted slavish service from man. He did not want it then, and He does not want it today.

Right through the Bible we see this picture of love governing all God's dealings with mankind. Right through the history of the nation of Israel God sought to impress upon them the enduring nature of His love. He loved them with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3; Deut. 4:37). He told them that the response that

He sought was their love in return (Deut. 6:5). But they were just like us. They constantly doubted His love. And yet God kept on loving them. When they complained that He had forgotten them, He replied in those tender words of Isaiah 49:15: "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget yet will I not forget thee." A mother may not think of her grown-up children all the time; but if she has a child on her breast, there is hardly a moment of her waking hours when her thoughts will not be upon that child. When she goes to sleep at night, her last thought is about that baby sleeping beside her.

The book of Hosea also stresses this. The painful experience that Hosea went through in his own personal life was a parable of God's attitude to Israel. His love, it tells us, endures as does that of a faithful husband to an unfaithful wife. Why, do you think, has the Lord placed a book like the Song of Solomon in the Bible if it, too, does not embody a picture of this great truth—the faithfulness of the divine Lover to His wayward bride?

Our faith needs to be founded firmly upon this fact that all of God's dealings with us are based upon His love. The words "He will rest in his love" in Zephaniah 3:17, have been translated: "He is silently planning for you in love." Do we realize that every single thing that God allows to enter into our lives comes from a heart that is planning for us in love? Every trial and problem that has come into your life and mine has been planned for our ultimate good. When He crushes our plans, it is in order to save us from missing His best. We may not be able to understand it fully on earth, but if only we realized that there are no second causes, but that everything comes from the hands of a loving God, it would take away all the worries and fears and hard thoughts that normally plague us. It is because believers are not firmly established upon this truth that these anxieties and cares arise in their minds, and they remain strangers to the "peace of God that passeth understanding".

The ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ was very often a corrective to the false conceptions that even religious people of His day, well read in the Old Testament scriptures, nevertheless had about their God. Everything about Jesus, His healing the sick, His comforting words to the sorrowing, His loving invitation to those burdened with sin, His patience with His disciples and finally His death on the Cross, all showed the loving nature of the heart of God. How often He impressed upon His disciples that their heavenly Father loved them and cared for their every need. How often Jesus rebuked them for doubting their Father. If earthly fathers knew how to provide for their children, how much more would their loving heavenly Father provide for them (Matt. 7:9-11). The parable to the prodigal son was also intended to show them God's great forgiving love towards his wayward, rebellious children. By irresistible logic, by parable and by personal example Jesus sought to correct the erroneous.

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