



WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: By Your Love, Your Love Never Fails, Love of God

WELCOME

What is your all-time favorite love song?

WORD

1 John 4:7-10

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Most of us are eager to experience the love of God. After all, love is God's core attribute, and we greatly benefit from experiencing God's love. But the challenge for most of us is the application of this same kind of love to our relationships. How do we love like God? We need to know the kind of love God has for us.

To "know" God's love means that you have a first-hand, personal experience of His love (1 John 4:8). It's not merely knowing at a superficial or intellectual way. It's similar to the unique intimacy between a husband and his wife. That's how much God can be known and desires to be known. The outcome of that is ~~that~~, if we know God that way, we will be able to love others the same way. God's love is not in conflict with His other attributes like His holiness, righteousness, justice and even His wrath. God's attributes are in perfect harmony such everything God does is loving, as much as it is just and right.

GOD'S LOVE THROUGH THE AGES

Based on who God is, His love is consistent whether we look at the Old Testament, New Testament, or the "Now" Testament --- the times we live in. God's mighty deliverance of His people, Israel, from four hundred years of slavery in Egypt is an example of how He showed His love by giving them the solution to their slavery problem. Through Moses, God gave an instruction for the "Passover lamb" and what they were to do with it (**Exodus 12:3-7**). The blood of the lamb will protect the Israelite homes and will cause God to "pass over" them and not destroy them like He would strike the Egyptians (**Exodus 12:13**). The Israelites

obeyed God's rather strange instructions, they put their trust in God and were saved. One insight we get from this is that unless and until we are so desperate to be freed from the slavery of sin, we will not accept God's solution. We will continue to look for other ways to solve our sin problem through religion, good works, etc. But the only time we will accept God's solution is when we realize that there is no other way for our salvation. The New Testament shows us that Jesus is our Passover Lamb --- God's only solution for our sins (**1 Corinthians 5:7-8**). The Bible is God's love story, His love letter to us!

In Old Testament times, the prophet Hosea and his unfaithful wife, Gomer had a love story that illustrates God's love for Israel. In many ways, God's love for us doesn't make sense! We don't deserve God's love. Though Israel "prostituted" themselves with idols, God's love pursued them to win them back. God's love for His people remains through the ages, redeeming us with the precious blood of Christ (**1 Peter 1:18-19**). Hosea and Gomer's story also has a lesson for those of us who are already believers in Christ --- God's holiness plus God's love equals God's discipline. When we purposely go astray, we can be sure of His discipline (**Hebrews 12:5-6**). It's like how raising up children includes punishment when they disobey.

GOD'S LOVE THROUGH HIS SON

"God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, 'I love you.'" (Dr. Billy Graham).

God loved us first; He showed this by sending Jesus to be the propitiation (payment or sacrifice that covers the cost of sin and turns away God's wrath) for our sins (**1 John 4:10**). We see here that God's attributes cannot be taken apart --- His love and wrath are connected and are all a part of Him.

God's love was there at the beginning of time, with Adam and Eve, as He intervened after they sinned and offered a solution to the fall of Man (**Genesis 3:7, 21**). God did not just make the garments and throw it at them --- He clothed them Himself. God took the initiative to give them the solution. Where did the skin come from? An innocent animal had to die for God's solution to be put into place. We see again a picture of Jesus, the Lamb of God, the sacrifice for our sins (**John 1:29**). Like what happened to Barabbas who was set free in exchange for His life, Jesus gave His life in exchange for our freedom from sin (**1 Peter 3:18**). Just as the veil of the temple was torn in half when Jesus died on the Cross (**Exodus**

26:31-34, Matthew 27:50-51), the way to God is now open for us through Jesus (**Hebrews 10:19-20**).

GOD'S LOVE THROUGH YOU AND ME

God is the source of love; when we give our lives to Him through Christ, we are born again into God's family. Our lifelong journey of knowing Him and applying His love in our lives begins (**1 John 4:7**). This means that if we are consistently unable or unwilling to love others the way God loves us, we likely have NOT been born of God and do NOT know Him.

There is an ongoing mission before Jesus' return. We are to make disciples, to have a lifestyle of evangelism. This is one of the best ways to show God's love to others! Let's ask ourselves, "Have I done my best for Jesus?". Jesus is worthy of everything we can give! Jesus gave His best for you by giving His all. How will you respond to His love? As we celebrate CCF's 41st Anniversary, remember that God is love, so let us love like God!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. How have you personally experienced the love of God in your life?
2. How will you respond to God's love for you through His Son, Jesus?
3. In what specific ways will you show or share God's love to others this week?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people around you to experience and respond to God's love by putting their trust in Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Let God's love be evident through your relationships with others this week. Share the gospel in every opportunity that is before you!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.
- For the rest of the Israeli hostages to be restored to their families safely. For Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- Pray for Jewish people worldwide who are experiencing a surge of antisemitism; may this lead them to the Messiah, Jesus as they turn to God for help and comfort.
- For protection of Iranian, Syrian and Lebanese Christians and other minorities, and freedom from oppression. Pray for the gospel to spread rapidly throughout their region.
- Pray for Sudanese and Nigerian persecuted Christians; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples

- For elders, pastors, deacons, and families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)
- For ministries and church expansions worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

1 John 4:10

10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.