

Do You Really Love God?

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.” (Mat. 22:37-38)

Everyone seems to be quite familiar with the facts that “God is love” (1 John 4:8) and “God so loved the world” (John 3:16). We enjoy pondering the thought that *God loves us*, but what about our love for him? How can a love relationship be proper when only one party is expressing love? Can a marriage be right when the wife doesn’t love the husband? No it cannot, and our fellowship with God isn’t right when we only *say* that we love him, yet there is no evidence of it in our Christian walk. **“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)**

The sad fact is that most people, Christians included, do not really love God. This can be easily proven by comparing our Christian testimony to a good healthy marriage. If a married couple truly loves one another, then there will be clear evidence of it. The same is true when a person loves God. **“But if any man love God, the same is known of him.” (1 Cor. 8:3)**

Do You Enjoy God’s Word?

If I really love my wife, I am going to have an open ear for her. I am not going to come in from work and ignore her concerns while pursuing my own interests. If I did so, she would quickly come to realize that I didn’t love her.

The same is true with God. How can one say they love God when they seldom read his word? Jesus said that if you love him you will keep his words (John 14:23). How can you keep them if you don’t read them? In John 8:47, Jesus said, **“He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”** Friend, you spend hours each week absorbing the words of men, but how much time do you spend with the words of God? If you really love someone, you really want to hear what they have to say.

Do You Enjoy God’s Fellowship?

Suppose you came to me and said, “Brother Melton, I think you’re the greatest! Your publications have been such a blessing to me. I love you so much in the Lord, *but I hate your wife!*” Do you think I’m going to be close friends with you? I think not.

Well, many people claim to love God, but they visit their dentist more often than they attend church services! That’s not much love! The church is the

bride of Christ, yet most professing Christians are more comfortable with worldly unsaved people than with God’s people. The only things they love are themselves and the world. Such people can sit patiently through a television program, a ball game, or even a dirty joke, but they can’t bring themselves to sit through a preaching service with God’s people.

The fact is that you fellowship with those whom you love, be it God or the devil. Who receives *your* fellowship? **“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Cor. 1:9)** **“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?” (II Cor. 6:14)**

Do You Enjoy Praising God?

If a woman really loves her husband, she will praise him and speak well of him. The same is true when a man loves his wife. Proverbs 31:28 says, **“Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.”** He praises her because he *loves* her. It is human nature to praise those whom you love. Even God praises men on occasion because he has a special love for his special servants (Job 1:8; 1 Cor. 4:5). If you love someone, you will praise them.

Friend, how often do you praise God? How can you say

you love God when you seldom praise his holy name? The word "praise" is found 248 times in the Bible, but how many times have you praised God this week? Hebrews 13:15 says, "**By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.**" Of all the words which have flowed from your lips this week, how many of them were offered as a sacrifice of praise to God?

If you really love the Lord, you will praise him! You will praise him in the church, in the home, in the work place, in the school, and in the general public. God wants us to praise him "continually," and if we love him we will.

Do You Enjoy Sacrificing for God?

I love my wife and children, so I do not mind sacrificing for them. I often have to do without the things in life that I would like to have because my family has *needs* which are more important than my "wants." I love my family, so I sacrifice for them.

The Bible says that we are to offer up "spiritual sacrifices" to God (1 Pet. 2:5). The needs of the ministry are more important than our personal "wants." A Christian who really loves God will set aside his own will and seek God's will. Jesus said, "... **not my will, but thine, be done.**" (Luke 22:42) Selfishness has no place in Christianity. It is an enemy of the cross of Christ.

Paul said in Romans 12:1, "**I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.**"

So it is *unreasonable* for a Christian to not give himself to God for Christian service. If you love God, you will *sacrifice* in order to serve him and please him. You will gladly attend church services, and you will involve yourself in the various ministries of the church. You will tithe and give to missions. Rather than jump to negative conclusions, you will give your brethren in the Lord the benefit of a doubt. You will forgive others who trespass against you, and you won't hold grudges. When others step forward in self exaltation, you will take the "lower seat" of humility and wait on the Lord. Friend, if you love God, you will bear your cross and follow your Saviour.

Do You Enjoy Thinking of the Lord's Return?

When you love someone you want to be with them. I become homesick when I have to spend even one night away from my wife and children. If I enjoyed being away from home more than being at home, I wouldn't love my wife and children. My love for them causes me to think of them when I'm away, and it causes me to look forward to being with them again.

My love for the Lord should be same. Every Christian should

desire to be with the Lord. Every Christian should be "homesick" for heaven and looking for Jesus to return.

Friend, do you know the last prayer of the Bible? It isn't a prayer for world peace, nor is it a prayer for anyone's health, or even anyone's salvation. After being shown all of the breathtaking events of the book of Revelation, the apostle John sent up one final prayer to the Lord: "**Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**" (Rev. 22:20)

Can you honestly pray like that? Can you honestly say that you want Jesus Christ to return more than anything in this world? If you could have any prayer answered in the next sixty seconds, what would be your petition? Would you express your love for yourself by praying for something selfish, or would you express your love for God by asking Jesus to return? If you love him, you should want to be with him. "**... Now therefore why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?**" (II Sam. 19:10)

This tract has been written for the edification of Christians, those who know Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour. If you are not sure of your salvation, please send for a free copy of *Understanding God's Salvation Plan* at the address below.

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