

THE THREE GREATEST WORDS

1 John 4:8 - "...*God is Love...*"

(Not entirely original with me)

INTRODUCTION: There are a lot of wonderful words in the Bible but there is a verse in First John that has three words that describe God very clearly. One word has four letters, one has three, and one has only two, yet these nine letters form three little words that contain so much truth that no one has ever been able to fully describe and define this little phrase. "...*God is Love...*" sums up the whole contents of the Bible and the Bible is God's love story, about God's love for a sinful world. There is enough power in these three words to break the hardest heart, power to reach every person sunk deep in sin and lift them up until they are fit to stand beside the Lord Jesus Christ. Just what does the Bible say about how God shows His love?

I. GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE BY PARDONING SIN

1. Isaiah 45:7
2. God speaks clearly in the Bible that He is willing to forgive any sinner that lives, no matter how deep he/she has gone into sin and if that person will only turn from his/her sin to Him, He will forgive that person the very moment he/she does.
3. God cannot forgive a person while he/she holds on to his/her sin.

II. GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE BY PUNISHING SIN

1. Hebrews 12:6
2. God is love and therefore He takes account of and punishes sin.
3. Some parents will not punish their children when it is necessary for their good. It hurts their feelings and so they sacrifice the welfare of their children in order to spare their own feelings.
4. God also suffers when He has to punish His children, but He loves His children so much, that when they need to be punished, He does so but also suffers along with them.

III. GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE BY SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS CHILDREN

1. Isaiah 63:9
2. When God had to punish Israel, their afflictions were the direct consequences of their own sin, a judgment sent by the hand of God, and yet God suffered with them in their sorrow.
- There is not a person who is in trouble but God sympathizes with.
3. As parents sympathize with their sick child, so God sympathizes with His own children in their time of trouble.

IV. GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE BY HIS GIFTS

1. 1 John 3:1-2
2. Just think what a wonderful gift God has given to those who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ - they are called the "children of God."
3. God looks down upon the filthiness of sinful mankind and yet so loves that whenever one of the filthiest of sinners calls upon the name of Jesus, God loves, forgives and calls that sinner His son/daughter.

V. GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE BY THE SACRIFICE HE MADE

1. People tell one another that they "love" each other, but one cannot tell whether they really love until the opportunity comes for them to make a sacrifice for those they say they "love."
2. God has proven His love. **"...God so loved the world that He gave..."** Gave what? **"...His only begotten Son..."** God has given the best He had, the object of His eternal love, gave His Son to suffer and die on the cruel cross for YOU and Me.
3. God looked down upon this lost world, upon people, humanity and saw US. He saw that there was only ONE price that would save lost sinners and he did not stop at that sacrifice.
 - **"...God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life..."**
 - Then there is the cry of His Son from the cross: **"...My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?"**
4. It is very clear as to how much God loves us.

CONCLUSION:

1. What are YOU going to do with God's love? Accept it or walk on it?
 - Accept the Lord Jesus Christ and you accept God's love.
 - Reject it and you walk on God's love.
2. How can any person in their right mind harden his/her heart against such love that God has for him/her?
3. No one can every begin to repay God for His love, but to believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, enables God to love one even more and call all who believe in His Son, His children.
4. Are YOU one of God's children?