



## IDENTITY – LOVED BY GOD

By Nomawetu Jonas  
Christian Centre Abbotsford

24 July 2022

---

### Introduction

We are on our journey in our new series Church Alive. **We're trusting that each one of us will be awakened in our God-given gifts and callings in a fresh way and begin to serve one another and make a difference in our city.**

In the last two weeks we have been taught about our identity in Christ Jesus. Jen showed us clearly how we should see ourselves in the mirror of the Word of God. Last week Craig shared on Gospel identity: who we are in Christ. Craig also shared a prophetic word from the story of Sleeping Beauty. God wants His bride to wake up, be alert, and intentional about her identity.

### Loved by God

Today I am sharing on the Love of God - His Fatherly love.

#### 1. **Understanding God's Love**

Understanding God's love will free us from everything we are struggling with.

The Greek word for this love is **"agapoa,"** which is derived from **"agape,"** describing **"godly love."** **God's love** – agapoa - means unconditional love, preferential love that is chosen and acted out by will. It is not love based on the goodness of the beloved, or upon natural affinity or emotion. Rather, this is the kind of love that always seeks the good of the beloved. This type of love is exclusive to the Christian community because it flows directly from God's love.

In the New Testament, it is the fatherly love of God for humans, as well as the human reciprocal love for God. In Scripture, the transcendent agape love is the highest form of love and is contrasted with "eros", or erotic love: passion or romantic love; and "philia": friendship love or brotherly love.

God modelled this love:

*John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.* This verse is often described as a summary of the Gospel message. Agape is the word used for the love that moved God to send his only Son for the world's redemption. The term necessarily extends to the love of one's fellow humans, as the reciprocal love between God and humans is made manifest in one's unselfish love of others.

We were sinners, and we were going to perish. God loves us so much that He gave His Son to die for us and redeem humanity from the power of sin and eternal death.

*1 John 4:7-8 "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love".*

God is love. **This is God's character;** it is who He is. Agape love goes beyond loving those who are easy to love, when it is easy to love them. It is making the choice to love no matter what.

The Holy Spirit will teach you to love like this.

Most of us think that we really understand the love of God, but our experience proves otherwise. We feel lonely, depressed, discouraged, and defeated. Every one of these negative emotions would be turned to positive by a proper revelation of God's love for us.

As for loving others, most of us would admit there are some people who are very difficult to love. Some of us grew up in homes without parents or a present father, so it is hard for us to understand God's love. **Since we do not fully understand God's love for us, we fail in loving others. We can't give away what we don't have. If we receive a full revelation of God's love for us, it becomes easy to love others with the love that we have received.**

**When we struggle to believe that God's promises to us will come to pass, that's unbelief; but the root of that unbelief is a lack of love. Galatians 5:6 says "faith works by love." That means love is the driving force behind our faith. Remove or diminish love, and faith ceases to be what it should be. Many of us try hard to believe, when we should be seeking a greater revelation of God's love for us. Then, faith would just naturally work.**

*Luke 12:32 says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

We forget how much God loves us. God delights in our prosperity (Ps. 35:27). He gets no pleasure from watching us starve. As the revelation of God's love for us becomes clear, we will have no doubts and no unbelief flooding over us; all doubt that our needs would be supplied will be gone.

God has given us everything. He doesn't need our help. Relax and let Him take over. We tend to worry instead of searching the Scriptures. We look at the external circumstances, the natural, instead of listening to Him on the inside. We walk by sight instead of by faith, but He wants us to know His love and trust Him.

Focus on God; not your problems. Look to Him; search the Scriptures for your answers instead of running to the world and trying to fix your own problems. Seek God and His help first. He delights in our prosperity; He has good plans for us.

Value God above everything else. We are so busy we don't give Him time. Talk to Him about your situation – your work, your spouse, etc. Take it to God in prayer. Ask Holy Spirit to teach us to love the way God does.

God loves us unconditionally. There is nothing we can do to make Him love us more or love us less. He loves us, period.

### **Some examples of God's love:**

- Luke 10:25–37 - The good Samaritan
- Luke 15:11–32 - The prodigal son  
The main message of the prodigal son is that it doesn't matter how far we stray from our Heavenly Father or how much we squander the gifts He provides, He is always delighted when we turn back to him. His unconditional love is waiting for us to return home where He greets us with open arms.
- The crucifixion
- Mother Teresa  
Mother Teresa is often the first person that comes to mind when looking for examples of selfless love. Since founding the Missionaries of Charity in 1950 Mother Teresa dedicated her life and felt it her mission to spread love and compassion to all she met. While many may have disagreed with all her methods and practices, she is a global symbol of agape love for her fellow human beings. Due to her tireless work, there have

been thousands fed at soup kitchens, housed in orphanages, received hospice in death, and compassion in life.

- My testimony: Healed and restored back to life. He is WITH US in the difficult circumstances (E.g. in the fire; in the lion's den)

## 2. What Hinders Us **from Receiving God's Love**?

### 2.1 Lack of knowledge

Read the Word and meditate on the Word. The truth is in the Word of God.

*Ephesians 3:14-19*

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

You will observe that God's love isn't just one dimension: there is the height, depth, length, and breadth to it. Many of us only see God's love as we would see a painting in one dimension, we never see the multi-dimensional reality of God's love.

### 2.2 Magnifying our challenges

Most of us think that we really understand the love of God, but our experiences prove otherwise. We feel lonely, depressed, discouraged, **and defeated when things don't work out** the way we expected but every negative emotion can be turned positive by a proper revelation of **God's love for us**.

Magnify God. Appreciate and value God the way we ought to, above our challenges.

*Romans 8:32-36*

*He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."*

### 2.3 Unbelief

We do not believe in the promises of God. We trust other things more than we trust God.

**God's love for us is unconditional. That is, God doesn't love us because of some virtue we possess. God loves us because "God is love" (1 John 4:8), not because we are lovely.**

## 3. **How Do We Receive God's Love?**

### 3.1 For those who are not saved, by receiving the Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We are reconciled to God and can come to know Him as Father.

### 3.2 Be still and know that I AM God. (Psalm 46:10)

Still your heart and mind, turn toward the Lord, and repeat a **Scripture about God's love** in your mind. Ask God to pour His love out on you and sit there long enough to receive it. If you spend time in the presence of God, He will speak to you. You will hear that small voice speaking to you.

### 3.2 Read the Word and mediate on it. (Joshua 1:8)

Like all the verses mentioned demonstrate, the gospel is one of the best places to start when it comes to finding God's love. Dive into Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to understand God's love and understand who you are: loved by God. As I've read more Scripture, I've come to understand the overarching story of God's grace, centred around Jesus Christ, and carried throughout the entire Bible. From creation to redemption, God has cared for us like the Good Shepherd He is.

### 3.3 Magnify God. (Psalm 34:3)

Give God glory. Put worth and value on Him. Pray and say, "Lord you are bigger than my sickness, financial problem, marriage issues, etc. You are awesome and bigger than anything." When you start magnifying God, your faith just grows.

### 3.4 Be thankful. (Psalm 100: 4-5)

No matter how big your problem is or how bad your situation is, do not gripe and complain, instead be thankful to God from the good He has already done. Enter His gates with thanksgiving.

We have clothes, food and shelter. Be thankful for all He's done for you.

### 3.5 Remember God's goodness. (Isaiah 26:3)

If you keep your mind fixed on the goodness of God, you'll be encouraged and joyful. If you are discouraged, depressed, etc. it is because you are not focusing on God and His goodness - you are focusing on your problems.

*2 Corinthians 4:18 As we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

## Conclusion

Remembering the Lord is powerful. If you constantly keep God on your mind, it will change your **life because you'll experience God's love.**

Value God and put Him first. Seek Him and give Him time in your life. Search the Scriptures for the truth about your situation. Pray and listen to what He says to you.

---