



HOPE
LOWERTOWN
ST. PAUL

**HEY!
I HAVE A
QUESTION!**

Summer Sermon Series

Five Weeks ago:

“Is the Bible a reliable guide for my life?”

Focus Passage: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

This week's question:

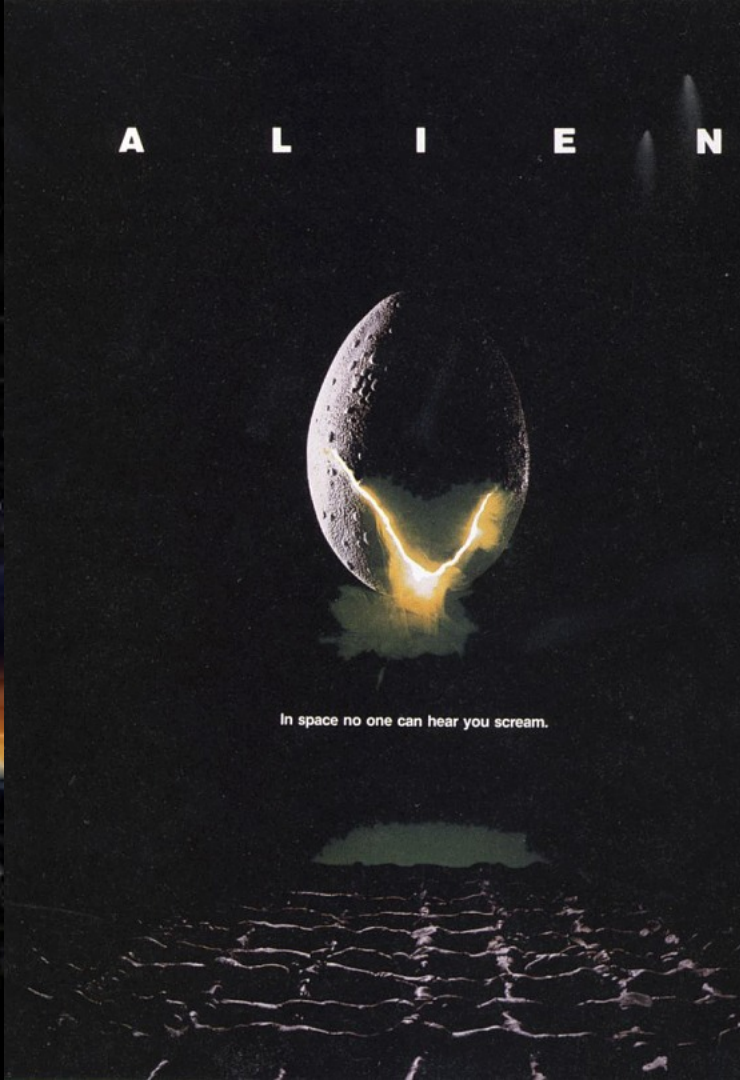
“Why would God punish anyone if God is love?”

Heaven and Hell

The Difficulty on the Doctrine of God's Love

“God is love,” Says St. John. When I first tried to write this book I thought that his maxim would provide me with a very plain highroad through the whole subject. I thought I should be able to say that human loves deserved to be called loves at all just in so far as they resembled that Love which is God. The first distinction I made was therefore between what I called Gift-love and Need-love...The reality is far more complicated than I supposed.

~ C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (Harcourt Brace & Company, 1960), 1-2.





JODIE FOSTER
MATTHEW McCONAUGHEY



A message from deep space.
Who will be the first to go?
A journey to the heart of the universe.

CONTACT

ARRIVAL



The love of God is viewed as if the other
attributes of God didn't exist

5 Ways the Bible talks about God's love

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1. The Way the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father.

John 3:35

³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.

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John 5:20

²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.

John 14:28-31

²⁸ “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

³⁰ I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, ³¹ but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

5 Ways the Bible talks about God's love

1. *The Way the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father.*
2. *God's providential love over all He has made.*

God creates everything, and before there is a whiff of sin, he pronounces all that he has made to be “good” (Gen. 1). This is the product of a *loving* Creator. The Lord Jesus depicts a world in which God clothes the grass of the fields with the glory of wildflowers seen by no human being, perhaps, but seen by God. The lion roars and hauls down its prey, but it is God who feeds the animal. The birds of the air find food, but that is the result of God’s loving providence, and not a sparrow falls from the sky apart from the sanction of the Almighty (Matt. 6). If this were not a benevolent providence, a *loving* providence, then the moral lesson that Jesus drives home, viz. that this God can be trusted to provide for his own people, would be incoherent.

~ D.A. Carson, *On Distorting the Love of God*

5 Ways the Bible talks about God's love

3. God's Offer of salvation to the World

John 3:16-17

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

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Ezekiel 33:10-11

¹⁰ “Son of man, say to the Israelites, ‘This is what you are saying: “Our offenses and sins weigh us down, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?” ’ ¹¹ Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?’

5 Ways the Bible talks about God's love

3. God's Offer of salvation to the World

4. God's selecting love for his elect

Deuteronomy 7:7-8

The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 10:14-15

¹⁴ To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. ¹⁵ Yet the LORD set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations – as it is today.

Ephesians 5:25-33

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church — ³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church.

5 Ways the Bible talks about God's love

5. God's love towards his people can be conditional depending on their obedience

Jude 20-21

²⁰ But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

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John 15:9-10

⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

So is God love? Is his love unconditional?
Does he love everyone the same?

How can a loving God send someone to hell?

How does the Love of God overlap with the Wrath of God?

How can a loving God send someone to hell?

How does the Love of God overlap with the Wrath of God?

How does the Love of God overlap with the Holiness of God?

...wrath, unlike love, is *not* one of the intrinsic perfections of God. Rather, it is a function of God's holiness against sin. Where there is no sin, there is no wrath – but there will always be love in God. Where God in his holiness confronts his image-bearers in their rebellion, there *must* be wrath, or God is not the jealous God he claims to be, and his holiness is impugned. The price of diluting God's wrath is diminishing God's holiness.

D. A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000), 9–24.

Where there is sin, there is wrath

Where there is sin, there is wrath

Where there is sin, there is love

Beautiful Scandalous Night

go on up to the mountain of mercy
to the crimson perpetual tide
kneel down on the shore
be thirsty no more
go under and be purified
follow Christ to the Holy mountain
sinner, sorry and wrecked by the fall
cleanse your heart and your soul
in the fountain that flows
for you and for me and for all

at the wonderful tragic mysterious tree
on that beautiful scandalous night you and me
were atoned by His blood and forever washed white
on that beautiful scandalous night
on the hillside you will be delivered
at the foot of the cross, justified
and your spirit restored
by the river that pours
from our blessed Savior's side

you carry the sin of mankind on your back
and the sky went black
go on up to the mountain of mercy
go the crimson perpetual tide
kneel down on the shore
be thirsty no more
go under and be purified

I'm cool with Jesus, but not with God – he's
full of wrath.

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God loved you so much, he chose to pour
out his wrath on his Son if you have faith in
who his Son was, and is.

God, who needs nothing, loves into existence wholly superfluous creatures in order that He may love and perfect them. He creates the universe, already foreseeing...the buzzing cloud of flies about the cross, the flayed back pressed against the uneven stake, the nails driven through the mesial nerves, the repeated incipient suffocation as the body droops, the repeated torture of back and arms as it is time after time, for breath's sake, hitched up. If I may dare the biological image, God is a "host" who deliberately creates his own parasites; causes us to be that we may exploit and "take advantage of" Him. Herein is love. This is the diagram of Love Himself, the inventor of all loves.

Gospel Application:

God loves you

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God loves you

God's name is Holy