

Quarter One: God's Love and Justice

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Lesson 2—Covenantal Love

Tuesday: Conditional Relationship

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- **Last Week:** “God Loves Freely”
 - The unmerited, undeserved, unqualified, sometimes unrequited love of our God
- **This Week:** “Covenantal Love”
 - Agape vs Phileo
 - God's love is not unilateral, but relational
 - It matters to God whether humanity loves Him back & reflects His love to others

Memory Text: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him’” (John 14:23, NKJV)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** The Everlasting Love of God (James)
 - Multiple Scriptures – God's love is for each & every one; His salvation is freely offered to all, too
- 2. **Monday:** Covenantal Love (SQ)
 - Deut 7 – God's covenant love & covenant people; His *hesed* & the conditions of that, too
- 3. **Tuesday:** Conditional Relationships (Jill)
 - Matt 22 & others – God's love continues forever; however, we can choose to accept or reject that love & therefore, our relationship with Him is conditional on our response
- 4. **Wednesday:** Mercy Forfeited (Daniel)
 - 1 John 4; Matt 18 – God's love toward us is first; however, we can choose to reject that love & thereby, forfeit the love & forgiveness of God
- 5. **Thursday:** You Have Freely Received; Freely Give (John D)
 - We can't earn God's love; it's freely bestowed on us; however, we are called to freely extend that grace & love & compassion to others. Since we are loved; we should so love

Tuesday: Conditional Relationships

Matt 22:1 – 14; 22:37 – 39; Hos 9:15; 14:4; Jer 16:5; Rom 11:22; Jude 21; John 14:21; 16:27

- If – Then Statement
 - A conditional statement or an “if-then” statement is a statement with a hypothesis followed by a conclusion.
 - **If** this happens, **then** that will happen (if = hypothesis)
 - #1 – If you work overtime, then you'll be paid time and a half
 - #2 – I'll wash the car if the weather is nice
 - #3 – I'll be a millionaire when I win monopoly

- #4 – All equiangular triangles are equilateral
 - (If a triangle is equiangular, then it is equilateral.)
- If – Then statements for our relationship with God
 - He freely loves us – love is given to each & every one
 - Gift of salvation is freely extended to all
 - At the cross, provision made for all to be saved
 - Does this mean all are saved?
 - All continue in a love relationship with Jesus?
 - Can I reject His love?
 - Is there an “if” (a condition) for my relationship with Him?
 - If so, what is it?

Biblical Snapshots of God’s love: (includes conditional relationships)

- **Hosea’s story: God & His people**
 - Hos 1:10 – “...in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ there it shall be said to them, You are sons of the living God.”
 - God loved His people
 - Yet, they had rejected Him
 - He forgave & took them back
 - **Takeaway #1:** Love = relationship
 - Restoration of relationships
 - They were “not His people” – but He wanted to make them His people again
 - Hos 2:14 – “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her.”
 - Context: God’s people rejected Him again
 - They followed other lovers / idols
 - Yet, when the Israelites deserved justice; received mercy instead
 - Hos 2:19, 20 – “I will betroth you to Me forever, yes I will betroth you to Me in righteousness & justice, in lovingkindness & mercy; (20) I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord.”
 - **Takeaway #2:** Love = commitment
 - Instead of what we deserve, He gives us love & forgiveness
 - We are “betrothed” / committed to each other
 - Hos 4:1, 2, 6 – “For the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: ‘There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. (2) By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint, with bloodshed upon bloodshed. (6) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. **Because** you have rejected knowledge, **I will also** reject you from being priest for Me; **because** you have forgotten the law of your God, **I will also** forget your children.”
 - **Takeaway #3:** Love = choice
 - Beautiful results: being loved, forgiven, in relationship, treasured, valued, cherished, safe, happy

- But, we can also choose to walk away from God
 - **If** we do that, **then** He will let us go
 - **If** we don't love Him back
 - **Then** He will let us go
 - **If** we choose our own idols,
 - **Then** He will let us go
 - Not Him punishing us – Him allowing us freedom to make our own choices

- Hos 9:15 – “All their wickedness is in Gilgal, for there I hated them. Because of the evil of their deeds I will drive them from My house; I will love them no more. All their princes are rebellious.”
 - *Texts hard to understand: “I will love them no more”
 - Jer 31:3 - Thought His love was everlasting
 - **Takeaway #4:** Love = ownership
 - Godly jealousy
 - God is jealous **for us** because He owns us
 - 2nd commandment: don't bow down to graven images. Why?
 - I the Lord thy God am a jealous God...
 - *Husband feels this over his wife
 - 2 Cor 11:2 – “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”
 - Worldly jealousy (Satan's jealousy)
 - We are jealous **of** others because we want something that doesn't belong to us
 - *We feel this over other people's cars, homes, position, money
 - Jealous **for us** = a divine trait; jealous **of us** = an evil trait
 - Love wants nothing between itself & the object of its love
 - Clearly, there is a conditional aspect or benefit to our love relationship with God

- Hos 14:4 – “I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from them...”
 - **Takeaway #5:** Love = forgiveness & restoration
 - God will restore & heal & forgive
 - Difference is me:
 - I need to turn from backsliding – back to God
 - Make choices away from my idols – for God

- **Other Biblical snapshots**
 - Rom 11:22 – “Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.”
 - All about Israel as God's people – branches
 - Gentiles being able to be grafted in

- Some of the unbelieving Jews (who didn't accept Christ) being cut off
- Jude 21 – “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”
 - Choice to remain in the love of God
 - **Takeaway #6:** Love = response
 - We all have a choice – God's goodness/mercy is extended to all
 - Whether we continue in, or not, depends on our response toward His love
- John 14:21 – “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to Him.”
 - **Takeaway #7:** Love = obedience
 - Obedience is not divorced from love – they are married together
 - Obedience comes from love

Biblical Snapshots of God's love

- #1: Love = relationship
- #2: Love = commitment
- #3: Love = choice
- #4: Love = ownership
- #5: Love = forgiveness & restoration
- #6: Love = response
- #7: Love = obedience