

Quarter Two: Growing in a Relationship with God

Jill Morikone

Lesson 2—To Know God

Tuesday: God Is Love

April 7, 2026

- **Last Week:** “Reality Check”
 - Rev 3, Laodicean Church – understanding our true heart condition
 - Responding to His love, repentance, abiding in Him & receiving the Holy Spirit
- **This Week:** “To Know God”
 - God’s character is often misinterpreted & misunderstood
 - How to understand the true character of God – as revealed in His Word
 - A clearer understanding of God’s character invites a closer relationship with Him

Memory Text: ““And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent”” (John 17:3, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** A Clearer Picture of God (Ryan)
 - Gen 3:1 – 5 – Satan’s misinterpretation of God’s character to Eve; how we can understand God’s true character
- 2. **Monday:** God Is Holy (James)
 - Multiple Scriptures – holiness as the center of who our God is & all of his other attributes
- 3. **Tuesday:** God Is Love (Jill)
 - 1 John 4:7 – 19 – love as the essence of God’s character; a Biblical understanding of His love
- 4. **Wednesday:** God in Creation (John L)
 - Gen 1 & 2 – transcendent (Elohim) & immanent (Yahweh) God – He is in control of everything, yet intimately involved in our lives
- 5. **Thursday:** Immanuel, God with Us (SQ)
 - Multiple Scriptures – discovering who God is by studying the life of Jesus

Tuesday: God Is Love

1 John 4:7 – 19; Gen 1:27; John 3:16; Rom 5:8; Isa 59:1, 2; John 14:9; Heb 1:3; John 12:32; 1 Cor 13:4 – 8

- God. Is. Love.
 - Three of the most significant words in the Bible, in history, in life.
 - What does it mean?
 - I love my spouse, Greg: deeply, consistently, with all my heart.
 - Is that love ever selfish?
 - Is that love ever egotistical?
 - Do I strive to be first or right or recognized?
 - Do I sacrifice for the one I love?
 - Yes, but are my motives always pure?

- Hard to separate the love I have for someone from the imperfections in me which distort or taint my love.
 - Our love toward others is distorted, at best
 - Others love toward us has been selfish & twisted, as well – hard to truly understand God’s love as pure, unselfish, other-centered
 - God’s holiness makes His love perfect
- God. Is. Love.
 - What does that truly mean?
 - Rom 11:33 – “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!”
 - God’s love is truly unfathomable.

5T, p. 740 (from Friday) – “All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. Tongue cannot utter it; pen cannot portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond. You may study that love for ages; yet you can never fully comprehend the length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of the love of God in giving His Son to die for the world. Eternity itself can never fully reveal it. Yet as we study the Bible and meditate upon the life of Christ and the plan of redemption, these great themes will open to our understanding, more & more.”

9 attributes of God’s love (1 John 4:7 – 19) – just scratch the surface

- 1 John 4:8 – He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
 - **Attribute #1: God’s love is the essence of His character**
 - God is not “loving” – God **is** love
 - Love is who God is – not just what He does
 - Love originates with God
 - God didn’t learn how to love from someone else: He is the Source
- 1 John 4:7, 9 – “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ... (9) In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.”
 - **Attribute #2: God’s love is other-centered**
 - DA – “From the cradle to the cross, He lived to bless others.”
 - God so loved that He gave Jesus – Jesus chose to humble Himself & come - other-centeredness of God
 - Phil 2:6 – 8 – “who (Jesus) being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, (7) but made Himself of no reputation ... (8) ... He humbled Himself ... even to the death of the cross.
 - Love others because Christ loved us
 - John 13:34 – “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

- 1 John 4:10 – “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
 - **Attribute #3: God’s love is sacrificial**
 - Other-centered to the point of extreme self-sacrifice
 - Jesus became our Substitute & Surety
 - 2 Cor 5:21 – “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
 - Double imputation
 - Isa 59:1, 2 – “Behold the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. (2) But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.”
 - Sin brought separation from God
 - Jesus came to bridge that gap & reconcile the world back to God (2 Cor 5:18, 19)
- 1 John 4:11, 12 – “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (12) No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been **perfected** in us.”
 - **Attribute #4: God’s love is relational**
 - He abides in us – desires to be in relationship & live in us
 - Ex 25:8 – “Let them make me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell with them.”
 - Eph 3:17 – “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love”
 - **Attribute #5: God’s love is purifying**
 - His love has been perfected in us
 - Perfected = Gk, *tel-i-o’-o* (from *telos*) (to consecrate, finish, fulfill, make perfect, bring to its intended end)
 - Heb 12:6, 10, NIV – “Because the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and He chastens everyone He accepts as His son. ... (10) They (earthly fathers) disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in His holiness.”
- 1 John 4:13 – 16 – “By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. (14) And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. ... (16) And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”
 - **Attribute #6: God’s love is evidentiary**
 - It is evident who knows God and who abides in God’s love
 - John 13:35 – “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
- 1 John 4:17 – Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.”
 - **Attribute #7: God’s love gives us assurance**
 - No need to fear the judgment

- *lack of assurance of salvation
- 1 John 4:18 – “There is no **fear** in love; but perfect love **casts** out fear; because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.”
 - Fear = Gk, “be afraid, exceedingly fear, terror”
 - Casts = Gk, “casts out; throws down”
 - **Attribute #8: God’s love is emotion-shaping** (He changes our emotions)
 - He can change fear into faith
 - Weakness into strength
 - Sadness into joy
 - Worry into peace
 - Frustration into serenity
 - Failure into victory
 - Addiction into freedom
- 1 John 4:19 – “We love Him because He first loved us.”
 - **Attribute #9: God is the originator of love**
 - We don’t convince God to love us: He loves us first & invites us to respond & love Him in return
 - Rom 5:8 – “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

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- Attribute #1: God’s love is the essence of His character
- Attribute #2: God’s love is other-centered
- Attribute #3: God’s love is sacrificial
- Attribute #4: God’s love is relational
- Attribute #5: God’s love is purifying
- Attribute #6: God’s love is evidentiary
- Attribute #7: God’s loves gives us assurance
- Attribute #8: God’s love is emotion-shaping (He changes our emotions)
- Attribute #9: God is the originator of love