

Series: Theological Treatises

# The Love

A study on the key attribute of the character of the Godhead that explains the Plan of Salvation designed for us.



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## 1. General Introduction

The search for God’s knowledge and his purpose for man constitutes the most exciting of all the adventures that the human mind can propose. The challenge of finding in the Holy Book the golden thread of the plan of salvation will reward the scholar, who will be able to understand the majesty of the effort of the One who “**who did not spare His own Son**” (**Romans 8: 32**).

The set of Bible tracts, of which you have in your hands one of the studies, has been prepared to provide the lay member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the knowledge required to teach others about how to grow “**in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**” (**2 Peter 3: 18**) as well as for “**be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason of the hope in you**” (**1 Peter 3: 15**).

The author is a regular member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church since 1977, a church elder since 1979, a husband, father, and grandfather, with the joy of having his entire family in “**the faith once delivered to the saints**” (**Jude 1: 3**) and a full subscriber to the 28 official doctrines of the church.



I reiterate that these tracts have been prepared for the church member, so he must graduate the dose of knowledge that he must transmit to those who are interested in knowing Jesus, whom the prophet calls the “**Desire of all nations**” (**Haggai 2: 7**).

That's why, at the same time, we also wanted to include supplementary material to the Bible study that we hope will allow you to expand your current knowledge, as well as to be prepared to deepen on “**things the angels desire to look into**” (**1 Peter 1: 12**). Your ability to introduce these subthemes in harmony with the central concepts is key to the transfer of knowledge that you and I intend to pursue.

Since the knowledge of our God and His purposes will, by the work and grace of the Holy Spirit, always be in full swing, you will be able to find regular updates of each treatise (see the date yy.mm.dd that accompanies the name of the file). These updates, of course, will also correct some of the human flaws that may have gone unnoticed by the author. On the other hand, your well-meaning intention to help us improve these issues will always be welcome. These treatises were originally written in Spanish, my mother language, but translated to English by the author to reach more people, as the latter is considered

worldwide as the commercial and technical language.

## 2. Structure of the Theological Treatise

At the beginning of each treatise, we will present the general structure of the set of these using a numbered block diagram, called the General Treatise Map. This chart (shown on one of the following pages) will allow you to see where the tract you have in your hands fits concerning the other topics. To make it easier to locate, in addition to the numbering, it will be marked in a different color than the others. Collect the topics, update them, and arrange them in this sequence if you find them useful to your knowledge development.

The numbers in each block simultaneously establish the order of creation of these treatises and the logical dependence between them as well. The blocks from number 70 onwards represent, in turn, a set of special treatises. I have grouped them into 6 major themes:

- |    |                       |              |
|----|-----------------------|--------------|
| a. | Comparative Religions | Series 70.nn |
| b. | Chronologies          | Series 75.nn |
| c. | Gospel Harmonies      | Series 80.nn |
| d. | Genealogies           | Series 85.nn |
| e. | Bible biographies     | Series 90.nn |

The reading of these topics will give you the frame of reference to understand the most thematic treatises. These other topics have their own structure that will be related to the one mentioned here.

After the diagram of the whole, you will find a block diagram of the study itself, called the Treatise Map, where you will be able to notice the following:

- Each block of the diagram indicates the reference verse(s) at the bottom and a short phrase that corresponds to the logic of its inclusion in the topic.
- You will notice that there are some blocks, with different colored verses, that refer to parables that help to understand the central theme.





- c. Other blocks, which do not contain verses, expose issues that you might touch on when presenting the study; issues that have historical, geographical, scientific, technical, and other backgrounds. You will find in this study some information that will help you expose these concepts.
- d. These two types of blocks are not necessarily included in all studies.
- e. The arrows indicate the logical sequence in which the author thinks these topics should be presented. The sequence is set from left to right and from top to bottom. However, your initiative and the knowledge about your listeners' needs may point you in a different direction. Let yourself be guided in prayer by the One who cannot err.

At the end of this graphic phase, you will find the study in detail, which will follow, as far as possible, the structure of the block diagram. Some complementary materials to the study will be included at the end. I recommend that you read them in advance to find the exact moment to include them in your presentation.

To the extent possible, I have presented the source of some of these topics so that you can extend your understanding by reviewing them. I do not pretend to know everything these sources deal with, so I encourage you to go deeper and tell me how to improve this content. I have included some images found on the Internet to make your reading more enjoyable, I hope you like them.

The written phase of the study will contain:

- a. Headings for the main subtopics.
- b. Bible quotes (in red).
- c. Quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy (in green).
- d. Quotations from books or articles by various authors, aimed at expanding your knowledge on the subject (in blue).
- e. Comments on the mentioned quotations; in some cases, these will be presented before the quotation, as an anticipation of the statement, while in others they will be placed after it as a confirmation of the concept being held (in black).
- f. Maps, chronograms, genealogies, and other diagrams where appropriate to the subject matter.
- g. Complementary material grouped in a section that helps to understand some of the aspects that could arise when dealing with the central theme with other people. Not all topics necessarily contain this material.

Unless otherwise indicated, the quotes from the Holy Bible are from the King James Modern Version, my favorite in English. Sometimes I will include other versions to compare or expand the understanding of a text.

When you develop a Bible study on this subject with non-church people, I recommend that you use the section corresponding to the study (with the verses included in the block diagram) without presenting the statements of the Spirit of Prophecy. Discuss the accompanying materials as they come up in the exposition, as well as in the question-and-answer phase.

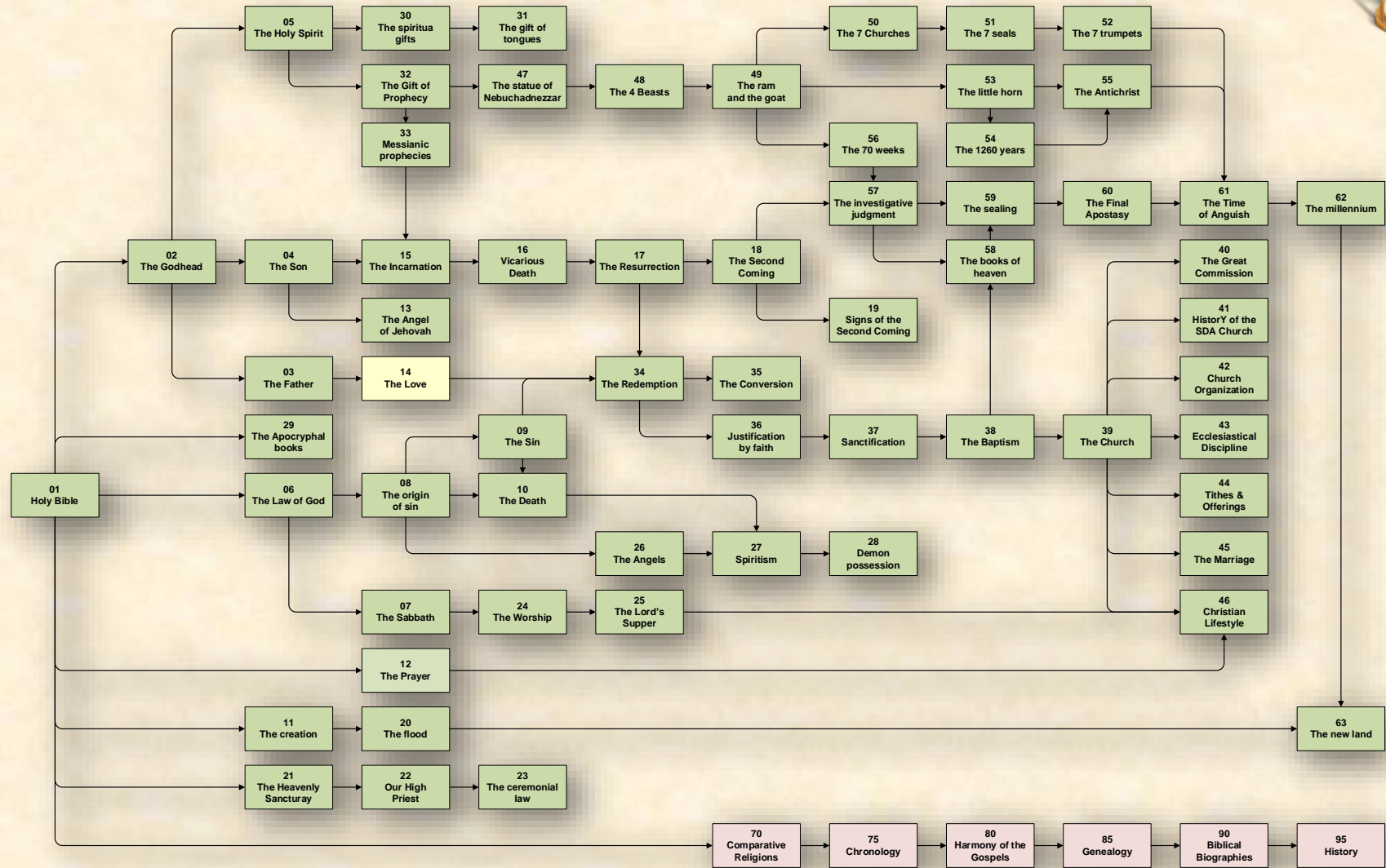
I have also prepared a file that includes all the block diagrams from the tracts so that they will be helpful to your memory when presenting the topic. I have also created a file with a copy of all the contents of the treatises so that you can review them without opening each of the documents, in case you are looking for a specific subtopic.

Allow me, as I have done so far, to address you personally during the study. I believe that this is how our Savior spoke to those He loved and wanted to save. Surely you will do the same with those who listen to you for this purpose.

This is free material that has surely come to you from someone who appreciates you and wants you to know even more about Jesus and His wonderful plan of salvation. Spread the word in the same way, as you "have received freely, freely give" (**Matthew 10: 8**).

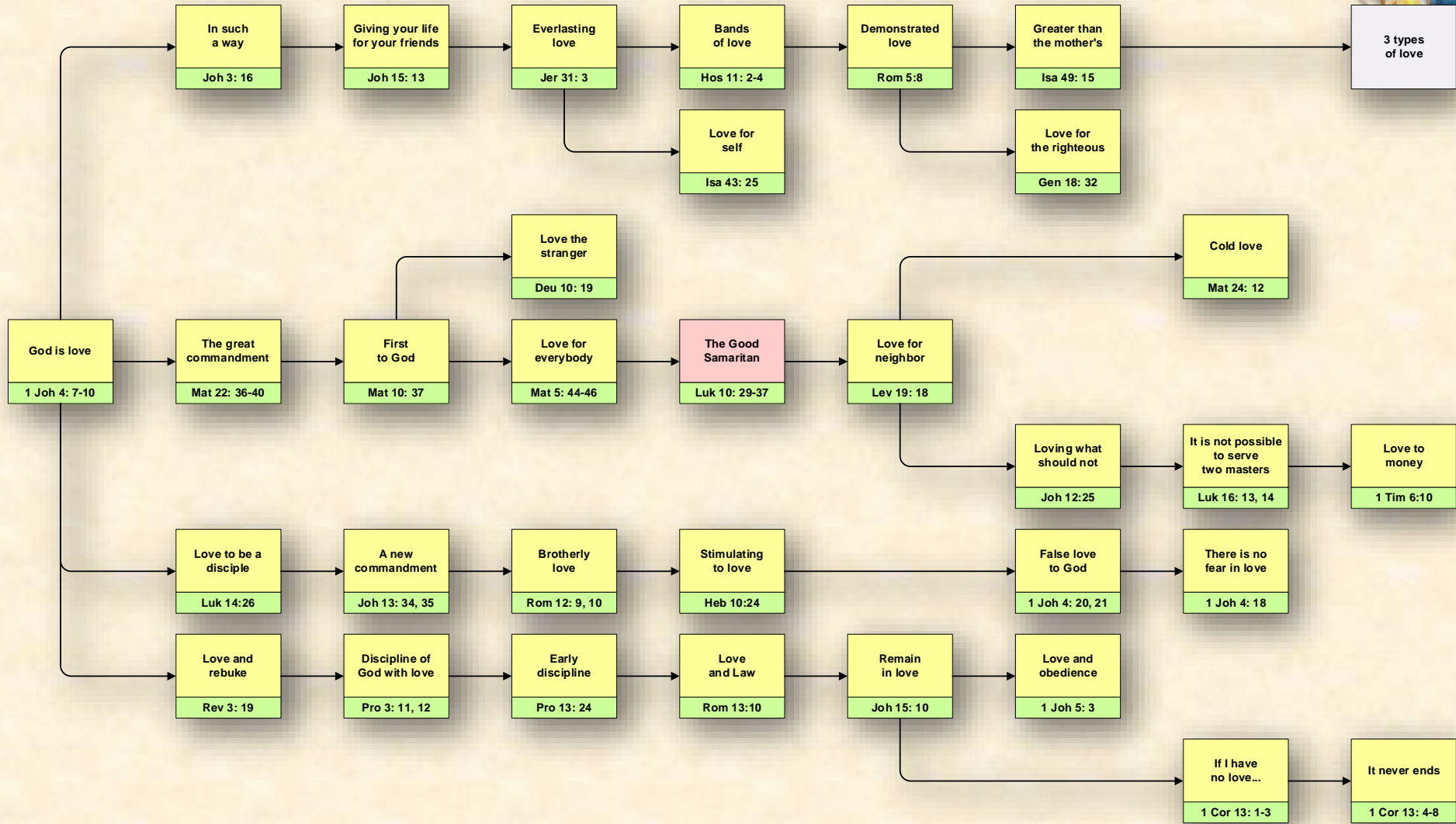


### 3. General Treatise Map





#### 4. Treatise Map







## 5. Purpose of the Treatise

The purpose of the treatise is as follows:

- a. Introduce love as the center of God's character.
- b. Define the correct response to God's love.
- c. Set the relationship between love and obedience.
- d. Show the characteristics of true love.

## 6. Development of the theme

### 6.1. Introduction

Love must be one of the most used words of our time. However, it is perhaps also one of the least understood or one of the most distorted words.

Love is usually spoken of as a feeling or an emotion, something not necessarily associated with the rational portion of the mind. Love is confused with sex and people generally associate love with passion, with a feeling that clouds reason.

I remember once (some years ago) when a famous Peruvian composer was being interviewed and asked the question of what a false love was. She thought for a few moments and said "a false love is not love". I could not agree with her more. Love is associated with words that absolutely deny it. I once heard someone talk about an "unhealthy love" ...hey, call it an obsession but don't call it love.

That is why I argued that the term, despite being one of the most widely used, has almost completely lost its real meaning for the vast majority of people. Homosexual marriage is "authorized" because they say that "they have the right to love and be loved". That is to say... inclinations that cause God's displeasure are sanctified because supposedly there is love.

Some people use love as a reason to kill (through so-called euthanasia) their sick relatives who have no chance of recovery. Is this the love of which the Holy Scriptures speak?

They also speak of "deserving" to be loved, i.e., they argue that some people deserve to be loved and others do not. Should I love only the people I like?

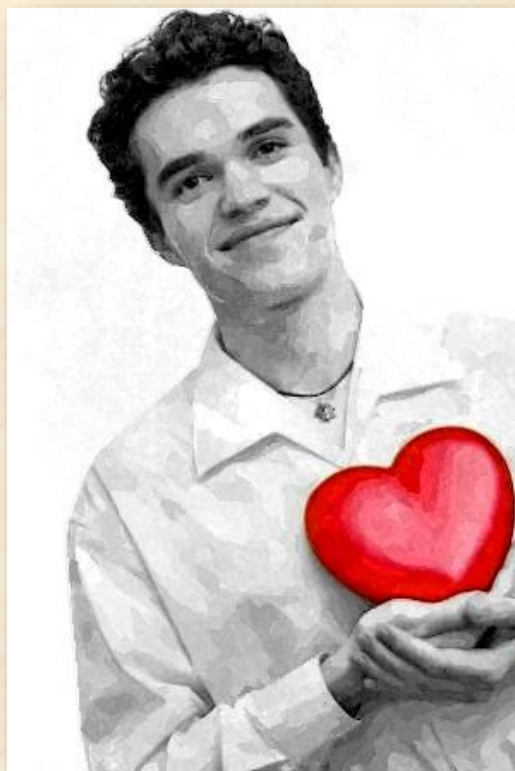
### 6.2. Divine love

When the Holy Bible speaks of love it refers more to a principle than to emotion. It is a divine principle that expresses itself in various ways between God and his creatures, and among them. To understand the love, we must understand that it comes from God, the unique and perfect source of true love. Love must be the motive for which we do all things.

Love must be the principle of action. Love is the underlying principle of God's government in heaven and earth, and it must be the foundation of the Christian's character. This alone can make and keep him steadfast. This alone can enable him to withstand trial and temptation.

And love will be revealed in sacrifice. The plan of redemption was laid in sacrifice, —a sacrifice so broad and deep and high that it is immeasurable. Christ gave all for us, and those who receive Christ will be ready to sacrifice all for the sake of their Redeemer. The thought of His honor and glory will come before anything else.

If we love Jesus, we shall love to live for Him, to present our thank offerings to Him, to labor for Him. The very labor will be light. For His sake, we shall covet pain and toil and sacrifice. We shall





sympathize with His longing for the salvation of men. We shall feel the same tender craving for souls that He has felt.

This is the religion of Christ. Anything short of it is a deception. No mere theory of truth or profession of discipleship will save any soul. We do not belong to Christ unless we are His wholly. It is by halfheartedness in the Christian life that men become feeble in purpose and changeable in desire. The effort to serve both self and Christ makes one a stony-ground hearer, and he will not endure when the test comes upon him.

**Ellen G. White, Counsels on Stewardship, 197**

When John has to explain the relationship between church brethren, between those who have accepted Jesus as their personal Savior, he says that they should love each other "because love is of God". He further says that everyone "who loves is born of God and knows God". Evidently, the love spoken of here is not that of which most people speak. It does not refer, without a doubt, to the love (read sex) that is practiced with ever greater liberality in all social sectors and at ever younger ages. We are dealing with a much higher conception of love than the one we usually have.

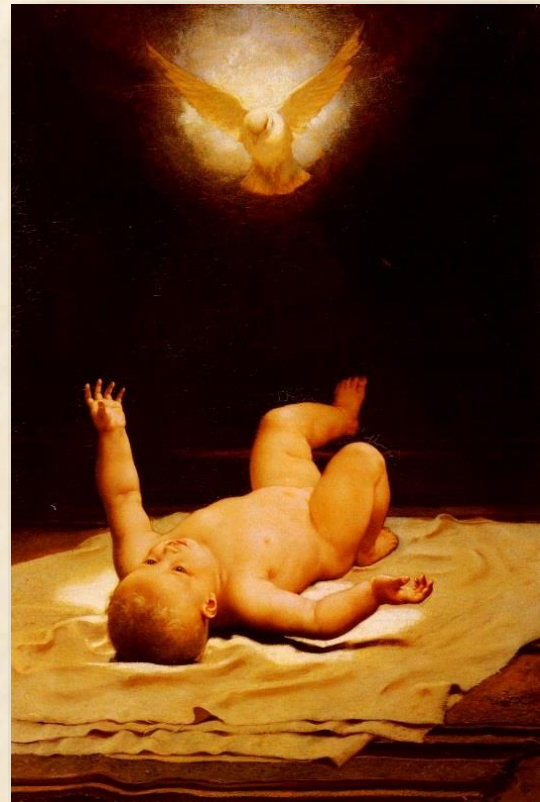
John also says that "God is love", he does not say that He has love but that He is. That is to say, His nature is love, He acts in this way consistently because it is not that something touches His heartstrings and then He loves, but that He always loves. His natural response to any circumstance is always love. I would like to expand on this. We sometimes respond with love, usually because we find that the object of our love returns the same, but we do not act with love when the other party is, for example, an enemy. It is easy for us to love our children, grandchildren, wife or husband, or our parents and blood brothers and sisters, and I must include friends as well, but we do not love others equally...

It is for this reason that John holds that our love is in response to God's love, it is not something that arises in us but is a natural response to the understanding of God's love, just as the light of the moon is a reflection of the light of the sun, the love of Christians is only a reflection of the one Who proved His love by giving His Son.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves has been born of God, and knows God. The one who does not love has not known God. For God is love. In this the love of God was revealed in us, because God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation concerning our sins.

**1 John 4: 7-10**

God has given us these things of beauty as an expression of His love, that we may obtain correct views of His character. We are not to worship the things of nature, but in them, we are to read the love of God. Nature is an open book, from the study of which we may gain a knowledge of the Creator and be attracted to Him by the things of use and beauty which He has provided...



"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore, take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (**Matthew 6: 30, 31**). Much unnecessary care and anxiety is felt in regard to our future, concerning what we shall eat and drink and wherewithal we shall be clothed. The labor and worry of needless display in apparel causes much fatigue and unhappiness and shortens our lives. Our Saviour would not only have us discern the love of God displayed in the beautiful flowers about us, but He would have us learn from them lessons of simplicity and of perfect faith and confidence in our heavenly Father.

If God cares to make these inanimate things so beautiful, that will be cut down and perish in a day, how much more careful will He be to supply the needs of His obedient children, whose lives may be as enduring as eternity. How readily will He give them the adornment of His grace, the





strength of wisdom, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. The love of God to man is incomprehensible, broad as the world, high as heaven, and as enduring as eternity.

**Ellen G. White, In Heavenly Places, 115**

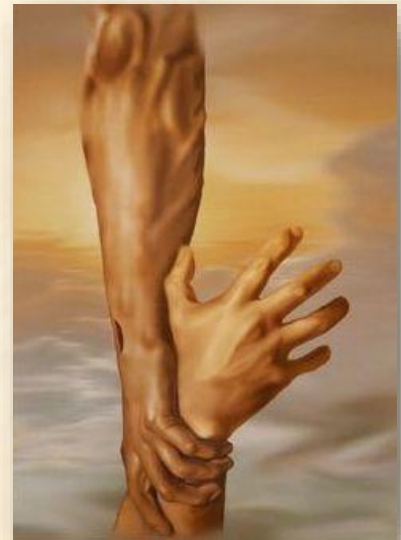
God's love finds its most beautiful demonstration in the sacrifice of his Son. John marvels at this love and that "**God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son**". Sometimes we do not understand the magnitude of this love because we do not bring it to our reality. Would we be willing to give up a son to save an enemy? Sometimes when I preach, I say that we should make an effort to imagine in the first person what we are reading; then we would understand what God did and how immeasurable is his love.

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

**John 3: 16**

John cannot find adequate words wherein to describe the amazing love of God to sinful man, but he calls upon all to behold the love of God revealed in the gift of His only begotten Son. Through the perfection of the sacrifice given for the guilty race, those who believe in Christ ... may be saved from eternal ruin. Christ was one with the Father, yet when sin entered our world through Adam's transgression, He was willing to step down from the exaltation of One who was equal with God, who dwelt in light unapproachable by humanity, so full of glory that no man could behold His face and live, and submit to insult, mockery, suffering, pain, and death, in order to answer the claims of the immutable law of God, and make a way of escape for the transgressor by His death and righteousness. This was the work which His Father gave Him to do, and those who accept Christ, relying wholly upon His merits, are made the adopted sons and daughters of God—are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ...

**Ellen G. White, That I may know Him, 60**



John also highlights love by saying that sacrifice for another is a remarkable demonstration of love, of a sublime, detached, generous love.

**No one has greater love than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.**

**John 15: 13**

It moves me to think about God's love and how it manifests itself. Jeremiah says that God's love is eternal, as eternal as God himself. It is not a love like ours that comes and goes, that expands and shrinks depending on our emotions or particular situations. God loves always, without that love being affected by our response, He loves so much that even though we do not deserve it, He extends His mercy to us so that we have time to reflect and give ourselves to Him.

**Jehovah has appeared to me from afar, saying, Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving-kindness I have drawn you.**

**Jeremiah 31: 3**

Through the prophet, Jesus declares, "**I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee**". He compels none to follow Him. "**I drew them**", He says, "**with cords of a man, with bands of love**", **Psalms 77: 20; Jeremiah 31: 3; Hosea 11: 4.**

It is not the fear of punishment, or the hope of everlasting reward, that leads the disciples of Christ to follow Him. They behold the Saviour's matchless love, revealed throughout His pilgrimage on earth, from the manger of Bethlehem to Calvary's cross, and the sight of Him attracts, it softens and subdues the soul. Love awakens in the heart of the beholders. They hear His voice, and they follow Him.

**Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, 480**

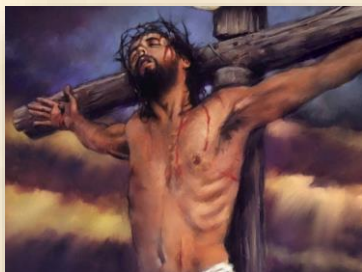
I remember, with a certain melancholy, the time when my daughters were small. I remember when they took their first steps and we had to hold them by their little hands until they learned to keep their balance. At some point we had to let them go and be careful not to let them fall... those are unforgettable moments. A few years ago, we experienced that with my oldest granddaughter, I remember the smile she gave me at the reception after the marriage of my second daughter, when she walked with me holding one hand... so



when I read this passage from Hosea, I imagine God holding Ephraim's hands and I understand the "bands of love" with which He drew them to Himself. I see him as a loving father who wants the best for his children, who treats them with tenderness, even if they do not respond to that love.

As they called them, so they went from them. They sacrifice to the Baals, and burn incense to graven images. I also taught Ephraim to go; He took them on His arm. But they did not know that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as those who take off the yoke on their jaws, and I gently give food to him.

**Hosea 11: 2-4**



The manifestation of God's love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having a clear conception of His character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions of Satan. Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His merits we appropriate the blessings of light, of peace, of joy in the Holy Ghost. And in view of the great things which Christ has done for us, we are ready to exclaim: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God".

Brethren and sisters, it is by beholding that we become changed. By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour, by contemplating the perfection of the divine character, and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image. Then let us not gather together all the unpleasant pictures—the iniquities and corruptions and disappointments, the evidences of Satan's power—to hang in the halls of our memory...

There are, thank God, brighter and more cheering pictures which the Lord has presented to us. Let us group together the blessed assurances of His love as precious treasures, that we may look upon them continually. The Son of God leaving His Father's throne, clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might rescue man from the power of Satan; His triumph in our behalf, opening heaven to man, revealing to human vision the presence-chamber where Deity unveils His glory; the fallen race uplifted from the pit of ruin into which sin had plunged them, and brought again into connection with the infinite God, and, having endured the divine test through faith in our Redeemer, clothed in the righteousness of Christ and exalted to His throne—these are the pictures with which God bids us gladden the chambers of the soul.

And "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen", we shall prove it true that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4: 17, 18)

**Ellen G. White, Lift Him up, 251**

The first time I read the verses containing statements like the following I was surprised. It seemed strange to me that God would do something out of love for himself. It took me some time to understand that God's love does not depend on the recipient, but on God's nature; it is a response to his own nature.

I, I am He who blots out your sins for My own sake, and will not remember your sins.

**Isaiah 43: 25**

One thing that is surely very clear to you and to me is that love is demonstrated indeed and not in words. The greatest demonstration God makes is to show his love even though being sinners we deserved death. On the contrary, when God knew that we would be lost forever without His intervention, he gave his only Son for us. An extraordinary manifestation of love that is not responded to as it should be!

But God commends His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

**Romans 5: 8**

The love of the mother is always pondered, but I understand that such sublime love is only a pale reflection of God's love for us. Isaiah compares it thus:

Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget, yet I will not forget you.

**Isaiah 49: 15**

We must come nearer to the cross of Christ. Penitence at the foot of the cross is the first lesson of peace we have to learn. The love of Jesus—who can comprehend it? Infinitely more tender and self-denying than a mother's love! If we would know the value of a human soul, we must look in





living faith upon the cross, and thus begin the study which shall be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. The value of our time and our talents can be estimated only by the greatness of the ransom paid for our redemption. What ingratitude do we manifest toward God when we rob Him of His own by withholding from Him our affections and our service! Is it too much to give ourselves to Him who has sacrificed all for us? Can we choose the friendship of the world before the immortal honors which Christ proffers, — “to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne”?

**Ellen G. White, Messages to Young People, 115, 116**

The meeting between Jehovah and Abraham before the destruction of Sodom and the other 4 cities of the plain allows us to understand one more issue about God's love. When Abraham asks God to consider that there might be some righteous in Sodom, God promises not to destroy it. The number is reduced after successive questions or intercessions of the patriarch. In each one of the opportunities, God says that He would not destroy it for the “sake” of the righteous that were there. Many times God has withheld His judgments out of love for the righteous. The world does not know that it owes the saints the blessings it still enjoys...

And he said, oh do not let Jehovah be angry, and I will speak only once more. Perhaps ten shall be found there. And He said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

**Genesis 18: 32**

### 6.3. The priorities of love

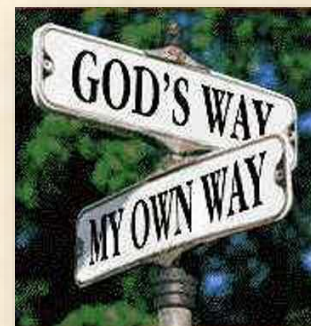
When one analyzes the Decalogue that God gave to Moses at Sinai, one finds that the first 4 commandments establish man's relationship with God and the remaining 6 with other human beings. This order also implies a priority: first the obligations to God and then to our fellow human beings. In the case of love, it is the same, God desires the first place in our heart, that nothing and no one replaces it. Know that having given the first place to God, our happiness and that of those around us will be assured. When Jesus is asked, “what is the great commandment in the law?” His answer is love, but He specifies that first is God and then our neighbor. He is not saying, as some claim, that we must only love and that the other commandments are not important, as we will see later.

Master, which is the great commandment in the Law? Jesus said to him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

**Matthew 22: 36-40**

Jesus makes this even more evident by establishing this priority with the people we love the most, our parents or our children, to denote the importance of the priority of putting God first, as ordered by the first commandment. As human beings, we sometimes incorrectly place our love for our parents or the respect we owe them before accepting our Savior.

I have heard people say that their parents raised them in one religion and that it would be disrespectful to them if they accepted another message. Others put love, or rather condescension, before their children and do not discipline them, not knowing that they are training them for destruction. The first place always goes to God, not in my way, but in His way.



He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

**Matthew 10: 37**

But love should not be circumscribed to God and our own, making love a matter of giving and taking. As you give me love, so shall I give it to you. If God's love is in us, it will extend even to those who are not exactly kind or good to us. These words of Jesus have always struck me as impressive for He contrasts God's boundless love with my limited love; He asks us to imitate him and emphasizes the fact that there is no merit in loving those who love us. I am absolutely right, it is very easy for me to love my wife because she is the best for me, I would not understand my life without her, the same happens with my daughters and grandchildren, it is even natural for me to love my daughters' husbands, good Christians and good husbands (in that order) but... to love the one who hurt me, the one who has deceived me, the one who... etcetera, etcetera, is very difficult, but it is what I have to do and I make an effort to do it...

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, so that you may become sons





of your Father in Heaven. For He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same?

**Matthew 5: 44-46**

To the Israelites, who considered themselves a special people, set apart from the rest, God's command to love the stranger must have seemed weird. They regarded the Egyptians as their oppressors (and they had been) and were in their midst as part of the mixed multitude that accompanied Israel when it left the land of the Pharaohs. But God's statement is definite, they should remember that they were strangers, they should remember that they would have wished to be treated differently, they should apply the golden rule with them.

Therefore, love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

**Deuteronomy 10: 19**

Some argue that the Old Testament presents a different reality of Christianity compared to the New. This assessment is not correct. When we read, for example, in Leviticus that God commands us to love our neighbor, and does so with almost the same words as Jesus, we cannot deny the coherence of all the Holy Scriptures.

You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people; but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am Jehovah.

**Leviticus 19: 18**

A well-known parable is that of the Good Samaritan. It is interesting to note that Jesus presents it to demonstrate or explain who the neighbor is. He does so by using as central characters a priest, a Levite (both considered depositaries of the faith and examples of the Jewish flock), and a Samaritan (a hated foreigner), in addition, of course, to the man attacked by the robbers, theoretically a Jew. The interpreter of the law, who was the one who wanted to know who his neighbor was when asked by Jesus about who had acted correctly, did not even want to say "the Samaritan" but said it was the one "who used mercy on him". So much was the prejudice against these strangers that he did not even want to mention it.

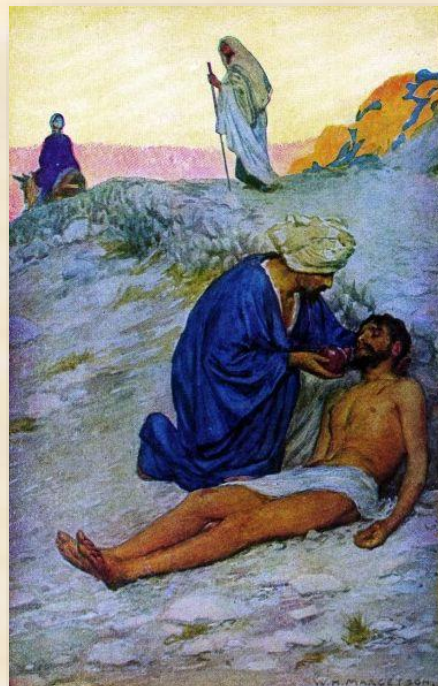
I would like you to notice the following: the exact question of Jesus is "Then which of these three, do you think, was neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?". He says that the Samaritan was the neighbor of the one who "fell among the robbers" not that this was the neighbor of the good Samaritan. The word neighbor comes from the word close, near; so, we could say that the neighbor is the one who is nearby. The Samaritan felt close to the one who was suffering, unlike the others who moved away from the suffering. Therefore, it is we who should feel neighborly. At the end of this parable, Jesus exhorts us to do the same as the Good Samaritan who is a symbol of Himself.

But he, willing to justify himself, said to Jesus, and who is my neighbor? And answering, Jesus said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers, who stripped him of his clothing and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by coincidence a certain priest came down that way and seeing him, he passed by on the opposite side. And in the same way a Levite, also being at the place, coming and seeing him, he passed on the opposite side. But a certain traveling Samaritan came upon him, and seeing him, he was filled with pity. And coming near, he bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, and set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And going on the next day, he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, Take care of him. And whatever more you spend, when I come again I will repay you. Then which of these three, do you think, was neighbor to him who fell among the robbers? And he said, the one doing the deed of mercy to him. And Jesus said to him, Go and do likewise.

**Luke 10: 29-37**

Note Ellen G. White's commentary on the priest and the Levite. Apply it to yourself...

In journeying from Jerusalem to Jericho, the traveler had to pass through a portion of the wilderness of Judea. The road led down a wild, rocky





ravine, which was infested by robbers, and was often the scene of violence. It was here that the traveler was attacked, stripped of all that was valuable, wounded and bruised, and left half dead by the wayside. As he lay thus, the priest came that way; but he merely glanced toward the wounded man. Then the Levite appeared. Curious to know what had happened, he stopped and looked at the sufferer. He was convicted of what he ought to do; but it was not an agreeable duty. He wished that he had not come that way, so that he need not have seen the wounded man. He persuaded himself that the case was no concern of his.

Both these men were in sacred office, and professed to expound the Scriptures. They were of the class specially chosen to be representatives of God to the people. They were to “**have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way**” (**Hebrews 5: 2**), that they might lead men to understand God’s great love toward humanity. The work they were called to do was the same that Jesus had described as His own when He said, “**The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised**”. **Luke 4: 18**.

The angels of heaven look upon the distress of God’s family upon the earth, and they are prepared to co-operate with men in relieving oppression and suffering. God in His providence had brought the priest and the Levite along the road where the wounded sufferer lay, that they might see his need of mercy and help. All heaven watched to see if the hearts of these men would be touched with pity for human woe. The Saviour was the One who had instructed the Hebrews in the wilderness; from the pillar of cloud and of fire He had taught a very different lesson from that which the people were now receiving from their priests and teachers.

The merciful provisions of the law extended even to the lower animals, which cannot express in words their want and suffering. Directions had been given to Moses for the children of Israel to this effect: “**If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him**”. **Exodus 23: 4, 5**. But in the man wounded by robbers, Jesus presented the case of a brother in suffering. How much more should their hearts have been moved with pity for him than for a beast of burden! The message had been given them through Moses that the Lord their God, “**a great God, a mighty, and a terrible**”, “**doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger**”. Wherefore He commanded, “**Love ye, therefore, the stranger**”. “**Thou shalt love him as thyself**”. **Deuteronomy 10: 17-19; Leviticus 19: 34**.

**Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, 499, 500**

Love and mercy are not just nice words, they must be turned into actions to be real. Of course, we live in such a bad time that sometimes we feel mocked by people who pretend to be in a bad situation and get money from some good people for not very holy purposes. The news tells us about people who have been assaulted and beaten for stopping to help a fallen pedestrian. There is so much evil that it seems, as Jesus predicted, that “**the love of many will become cold**”. I believe that it is still possible to do good without taking unnecessary risks. Let’s not find excuses not to do it, if you want to help you will find someone to do it, God will guide you towards it. It is all a matter of attitude.

I remember a television newscast interviewing a group of men drinking liquor outdoors on a street corner. When they asked one of them why they were doing it, he said there was no work. I think what this man meant was that he didn’t have a job, because there is always work. He could have been tidying his house, helping his wife with household chores, pruning the garden, sweeping the streets last, among a thousand other things more useful than consuming the few pennies he had left on drinking liquor... but of course, the excuse is perfect (or so it seems) to do what he wants to do, not what he should. Don’t make the same mistake...

**And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many will become cold.**

**Matthew 24: 12**

The warning that the Son of man is soon to come in the clouds of heaven has become to many a familiar tale. They have left the waiting, watching position. The selfish, worldly spirit manifested in the life reveals the sentiment of the heart, “**My Lord delayeth his coming**” ...

The same spirit of selfishness, of conformity to the practices of the world, exists in our day as in Noah’s. Many who profess to be children of God follow their worldly pursuits with an intensity that gives the lie to their profession. They will be planting and building, buying and selling, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the last moment of their probation. This is the condition of a large number of our own people...

My soul is burdened as I see the great want of spirituality among us. The fashions and customs of the world, pride, love of amusement, love of display, extravagance in dress, in houses, in lands—





these are robbing the treasury of God, turning to the gratification of self the means which should be used to send forth the light of truth to the world...

**Ellen G. White, Maranatha, 51**

We live in a selfish and hedonistic society, where people care about themselves and not about others. They want to enjoy everything possible because "life is short" they say. And they are right, their life will be short, while a few others focus their life on eternity and will live forever because they put their relationship with God first. These will be the ones who loved God more than themselves and the "delights" of this world.

It is amazing to me that so many people would rather live a few years in this sad world, in their own way, than all eternity in a perfect world, with no sickness, no pain, no death, with the joy of perfect youth and endless happiness.

**He who loves his life shall lose it. And he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.**

**John 12: 25**

This reasoning leads us to analyze perhaps the greatest of the evils of this world: the love of money. This is a means that for the vast majority of people has become an aim. They pursue wealth and when they attain it, they realize that it does not provide the happiness they expected. They have sometimes sacrificed their honesty or their family (or both) for something that is not worthwhile. They have their heart divided between two masters and cannot love both as Jesus pointed out.

**No servant can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. And being money-lovers, all the Pharisees also heard all these things. And they derided Him.**

**Luke 16: 13, 14**

The problem is not really the money, it is only a term of exchange for things that are bought and sold. The problem is that the love of money surpasses the love of one's fellow man and, what is even worse, of God. The problem is to love what money gives. Greed and selfishness have permeated our world. Only the power of God can transform us. I also think it is tremendous that the Pharisees mocked this statement of Jesus, well... just like the people of this time, they are blinded by money...

**For the love of money is a root of all evils, of which some having lusted after, they were seduced from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.**

**1 Timothy 6: 10**

Our Master expressly admonished His servants not to lay up for themselves treasures on earth; for in so doing their hearts would be set on earthly things rather than on heavenly ones. It is in this that many poor souls have allowed their faith to be shipwrecked. They have directly contradicted the express commands of our Lord and have allowed the love of money to become the ruling passion of their lives. They are intemperate in their efforts to acquire resources. They are as intoxicated with their unwholesome desire for riches as the drunkard by drink.

Christians forget that they are servants of the Master; that they themselves, their time, and all they have, belong to Him. Many are tempted and most are overcome by Satan's deceptive enticements to invest their money where it will bring them the greatest profit in dollars and cents. There are but few who consider the obligations that God has imposed upon them to make their chief occupation the satisfaction of the needs of His cause, leaving their own desires to be attended to last.







Few invest money in God's cause in proportion to their resources. Many have tied up their money in property to be sold, before they can invest it in the cause of God and put it to practical use. They make it an excuse for doing but little in the cause of their Redeemer. They have buried their money as effectively as the man in the parable. They rob God of the tithe, which He claims as His own, and in robbing Him they rob themselves of the heavenly treasure.

**Ellen G. White, Selected Testimonies, Volume III, 179, 180 (translated by the author)**

#### **6.4. Love and discipleship**

The following verse seems very harsh. It is because of our perception of the word abhor. In our everyday language to abhor is to hate, probably with an even more negative connotation, if that is possible. The word from which abhor comes is "miséo" which means among other things "to love less". What Jesus is saying is not that I should hate my loved ones, but that I cannot love them above the love I owe to God. I must dedicate my primary affections to God.

When I was single, I loved my parents very much (also today, don't be alarmed... well both rest in the Lord) as well as my siblings even though I fought with them almost continuously (otherwise we would not have been a normal family, they say), but when I fell in love, I thought that one could not love more... but then my daughters came along and I saw that love seemed like rubber, it extended and extended. Sometimes we children think that parents have to divide their love when a new child arrives, but it increases and increases and then the grandchildren, anyway... The same happens when we love God in the first place, our love grows and we can love more those around us, even those who do not want to be loved.

If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

**Luke 14: 26**

If I want to be His disciple my love must first be focused on Him. This is made clear when Jesus says that we are to love one another as He has loved us. Since God's love surpasses any love of this world, even that of the mother who seems to have excellence in this world, we can increase the love we dispense to others by loving God first. People will know we are His when they see the love we give everywhere.

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. As I have loved you, you should also love one another. By this all shall know that you are My disciples, if you have love toward one another.

**John 13: 34, 35**

God desires the willing service of our hearts. He has endowed us with reasoning faculties, with talents of ability, and with means and influence, to be exercised for the good of mankind, that we may manifest His spirit before the world. Precious opportunities and privileges are placed within our reach, and if we neglect them we rob others, we defraud our own souls, and dishonor our Maker. We shall not want to meet these slighted opportunities and neglected privileges in the day of judgment. Our eternal interests for the future depend on the present diligent performance of duty in improving the talents that God has given into our trust for the salvation of souls...

True religion works out the principles of God's law—love to God and love to man. Those who will be accepted of Heaven will have put their talents out to the exchangers for the glory of God and the good of humanity. They will have become laborers together with God...

**Ellen G. White, That I May Know Him, 113**

Love should also develop in us the generosity of preferring to give honor to others rather than to receive our own. This goes directly against the overestimation, of ourselves and our supposed talents, so common in our time, where everyone competes to be the best at something, not always at something good... Moreover, the matter of competition has been exacerbated, which sometimes includes the home and, what is worse, the Church.

Let love be without hypocrisy, shrinking from evil, cleaving to good; in brotherly love to one another, loving fervently, having led one another in honor.

**Romans 12: 9, 10**

The heart of him who receives the grace of God overflows with love for God and for those for whom Christ died. Self is not struggling for recognition... He is kind and thoughtful, humble in his opinion of himself, yet full of hope, always trusting in the mercy and love of God...

The grace of Christ is to control the temper and the voice. Its working will be seen in politeness and tender regard shown by brother for brother, in kind, encouraging words. An angel presence is in the home. The life breathes a sweet perfume, which ascends to God as holy incense. Love is manifested in kindness, gentleness, forbearance, and long-suffering. The countenance is changed.



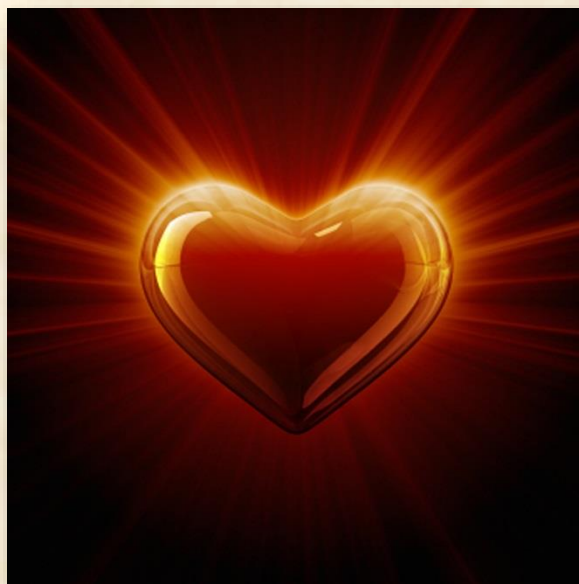
Christ abiding in the heart shines out in the faces of those who love Him and keep His commandments...

**Ellen G. White, God's Amazing Grace, 18**

No one lives for himself, what we do influences others positively or negatively. We are not an island; we are also influenced by others. It is our decision to become a positive influence on others, first at home, then among friends, at church, and so on. Let us be a source of encouragement to others toward good. Of course, it is also our decision (by default) to do the opposite... Let us know that our words affect others, always, at all times.

and let us consider one another  
to provoke to love and to good works,  
**Hebrews 10: 24**

If the love of the truth is in your heart, you will talk of the truth. You will talk of the blessed hope that you have in Jesus. If you have love in your heart, you will seek to establish and build up your brother in the most holy faith. If a word is dropped that is detrimental to the character of your friend or brother, do not encourage this evil-speaking. It is the work of the enemy. Kindly remind the speaker that the Word of God forbids that kind of conversation.



**Ellen G. White, Ye Shall Receive Power, 76**

Loving our fellow men will be a clear way of showing that God's love is in our heart. What cannot be is that we say we love God but there is no evidence of love for our fellow men.

If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And we have this commandment from Him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.

**1 John 4: 20, 21**

True sanctification unites believers to Christ and to one another in the bonds of tender sympathy. This union causes to flow continually into the heart rich currents of Christlike love, which flows forth again in love for one another.

The qualities which it is essential for all to possess are those which marked the completeness of Christ's character—His love, His patience, His unselfishness, and His goodness...

It is the greatest and most fatal deception to suppose that a man can have faith unto life eternal, without possessing Christlike love for his brethren. He who loves God and his neighbor is filled with light and love. God is in him and all around him. Christians love those around them as precious souls for whom Christ has died. There is no such thing as a loveless Christian, for "God is love."

**Ellen G. White, This day with God, 272**

The magnificence of God can be frightening to us sinners, but without losing reverence for the Supreme Being we can approach Him with confidence that He will hear us. Love for God, in response to His bountiful love, should drive fear from our minds.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment. He who fears has not been perfected in love.

**1 John 4: 18**

#### **6.5. Love, obedience, and discipline**

Some 30 years ago, or a little more, a trend emerged in the education of children that said that little children should not be denied anything because they could be traumatized. They should be given everything they asked for; that it was not necessary to correct them because there would be time later on. The psychologists, promoters of this methodology, supposed that the traumas of adulthood of previous





generations were because we had been denied things, without our understanding why. These tricksters recommended that children should be given everything they asked for, that they should not be restricted in anything, and that this method would form less traumatized human beings than we supposedly were.

The result has shown once again that human theories are contemptible. We have created a generation of people who want no moral restraints at all, hedonistic to the extreme, selfish, a generation that abandons their parents because they are burdensome to them... what a success this theory has been.

Happily, we, as parents, had books like "**Child Guidance**" (I recommend it and sometimes give it as a gift to couples who are going to get married or later when they are going to have a family) or "**The Christian Home**", written by a humble servant of the Lord who warned us about the relationship between love, obedience, and discipline. Thank you, Lord!

Some think that being tolerant of their children's natural tendencies will cause them (the tendencies) to correct themselves in time when they reach maturity. It is like pretending that a crooked tree will straighten itself. It is during the early years that the child learns concepts such as obedience and tenderness. If he does not develop them there, it will be very difficult for him to do so in the future. God loves us, that is why He reproves and corrects us. It is not a demonstration of love to let someone follow his course to eternal death just for not confronting him with the truth.



**As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; therefore, be zealous and repent.**

**Revelation 3: 19**

Let us believe in Jesus, trusting Him implicitly, although we may be tried as by fire... We may love Christ more and increase our capacity for loving Him by contemplating and talking of His love. Cultivate the habit of talking with the Saviour when alone, when walking, and working. Let gratitude and thanksgiving ascend to God because Jesus loves you and you love Jesus...

The Lord Jesus gave Himself a sacrifice for us. He knows us and He knows just what we need. Trial lasts only for a season. Encourage your heart in faith. We must not look on trial as punishment. Christ is the sin bearer. He is our Redeemer, and He desires to purify us from all dross. He means to make us partakers of the divine nature, developing in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The very fact that we are called upon to endure trials proves that the Lord Jesus sees in us something very precious that He would have developed. If He saw nothing in us whereby, we might glorify His name He would not spend time refining us. We do not take special pains to prune brambles. Christ does not cast valueless stones into His furnace. It is precious ore that He tests. He sees that the refining process will bring out the reflection of His own image. Be trustful, be hopeful, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. He loves you. Hear His words: "**As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten**" (**Revelation 3: 19**). He has not passed you by as unworthy of a trial.

What is the result of this refining process? That ye may "**be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ**". O how precious to the soul is one word of commendation that comes from the Redeemer's lips! We may not understand all now, but the day is coming when we shall be more than satisfied...

**Ellen G. White, That I may know Him, 277**

I am sure that very few people like to be reprimanded (I include myself); in fact, I think it is much more pleasant to reprimand others. This is because of our natural tendency to consider that the faults are in others and not in us, that the fault is always in others and not in us.

But the Lord desires us to accept the correction he gives us for our own good. For this rebuke is most certainly motivated by love, like that of a "father to the child he loves." I have felt this correction before (more





than once) and although it is not pleasant, I believe it produced good fruit in the end. The Lord does not rebuke without a purpose, it is our eternal happiness that is the goal of this rebuke. Let us learn to accept it.

**My son, do not despise the chastening of Jehovah; nor be weary with His correction; for whom Jehovah loves He corrects, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.**

**Proverbs 3: 11, 12**

This is an important statement; for there are many who desire to love and serve God, and yet when afflictions comes upon them, they do not discern the love of God in it, but the hand of the enemy. They mourn and murmur and complain; but this is not the fruit of love to God in the soul. If we have perfect love, we shall know that God is not seeking to injure us, but that in the midst of trials, and griefs, and pains, He is seeking to make us perfect and to test the quality of our faith. When we cease to worry about the future and begin to believe that God loves us, and means to do us good, we shall trust Him as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, and our will will be swallowed up in the will of God.

**Ellen G. White, Sons and Daughters of God, 193**

The issue of corporal punishment will always produce some controversy. I am sure that a parent does not need to "massacre" a child to correct him/her; but our society (especially the American one) has gone five times too far (as my Spanish friends say) in legally prohibiting all corporal punishment for children, even a spanking in the place where the sun does not reach. Physical punishment will always be the last option and should be administered calmly, not in anger. A gentle early correction is much more effective than a painful late punishment.

Recently a colleague was telling me about what happened in the family of a successful businessman we both knew. The father had had to authorize a specialized institution to enter his home in the wee hours of the morning to take his two teenage sons, strap them into straitjackets and take them away to be treated for drug addiction. This man will forever remember that night, seeing his children cursing him in every tone of voice as it happened. Today he will wonder what he did or did not do to make this happen. We have prayed for successful treatment. Remember it is not a demonstration of love to stop the punishment... or even to postpone it.

**He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him chastens him early.**

**Proverbs 13: 24**

In our relationship with our fellow human beings, if love is the driving force, we will always do good. God has established what is good in the 10 commandments; therefore, if we love God, we will obey God's Law.

**Love works no ill to its neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the Law.**

**Romans 13: 10**

John did not teach that salvation was to be earned by obedience; but that obedience was the fruit of faith and love... If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God...

There are many who, though striving to obey God's commandments, have little peace or joy. This lack in their experience is the result of a failure to exercise faith. They walk as it were in a salt land, a parched wilderness. They claim little, when they might claim much; for there is no limit to the promises of God. Such ones do not correctly represent the sanctification that comes through obedience to the truth. The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Through the exercise of faith, the believer comes into possession of these blessings. Through faith, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.

**Ellen G. White, Conflict and Courage, 359**

Many religious teachers say that Christ, by His death, freed us from the law; but not all take this view... The law of God, from its very nature, is unchangeable. It is a revelation of the will and character of its Author. God is love, and His law is love. Its two great principles are love to God and man. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The character of God is righteousness and truth, and such is the nature of His law. The psalmist says, "Thy law is the truth"; "all thy commandments are righteousness". And the apostle Paul declares, "the law is holy, and the commandments holy, and just, and good." Such a law, an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author.

**Ellen G. White, Reflecting Christ, 62**

Note the following quotes from Jesus. The obvious conclusion is that only if we obey, we remain in God's love. It is not possible to remain in the right relationship with God if we do not take into account his



ordinances if we do not fulfill the law if we do not obey. Jesus says that he did so, as an example for us. He maintains that if God's love exists in us, we will joyfully obey.

If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

**John 15: 10**

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome.

**1 John 5: 3**

We cannot by searching find out God, but He has revealed Himself in His Son, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. If we desire a knowledge of God, we must be Christlike... Living a pure life through faith in Christ as a personal Saviour will bring to the believer a clearer, higher conception of God...

Eternal life is the reward that will be given to all who obey the two great principles of God's law—love to God and love to man. The first four commandments define and enjoin love to God; the last six, love to our fellow men. Obedience to these commands is the only evidence man can give that he possesses a genuine, saving knowledge of God. Love for God is demonstrated by love for those for whom Christ has died.

**Ellen G. White, That I may know Him, 9**

## 6.6. Characteristics of love

Usually, when one attends a marriage in church one will hear the following verses used to exalt the love between the spouses. I have used them a couple of times when I have done the sermonette in marriage ceremonies (some other versions used the word live instead of charity). The usage is correct, although we should understand that the love spoken of here is not only love between spouses but love as a much broader principle, which also encompasses relationships with our fellow men and with God. Even the seemingly remarkable generosity, which is mentioned in them, can be worthless without the main ingredient: love.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have prophecies, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so as to move mountains, and do not have charity, I am nothing. And though I give out all my goods to feed the poor, and though I deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am profited nothing.

**1 Corinthians 13: 1-3**

When describing love one can note that it implies a way of being rather than a way of feeling. Love is a compendium of the most exalted virtues, where even sacrifice is acceptable. I marvel at this perfect description that Inspiration has brought to us. It is a sublime description where love surpasses all Christian virtues and is considered enduring.



Charity has patience, is kind; charity is not envious, is not vain, is not puffed up; does not behave indecently, does not seek her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil. Charity does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth, quietly covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Charity never fails. But if there are prophecies, they will be abolished; if tongues, they shall cease; if knowledge, it will be abolished.

**1 Corinthians 13: 4-8**

The truth of God is designed to elevate the receiver, to refine his taste, and to sanctify his judgment. The character of the Christian should be holy, his manners comely, his words without guile. There should be a continual effort to imitate the society he hopes soon to join, that of angels who have never fallen by sin.

No man can be a Christian without having the Spirit of Christ; and if he has the Spirit of Christ, it will be manifested in kind words and a refined, courteous deportment... External change will testify to an internal change. The truth is the sanctifier, the refiner. Received into the heart, it works with





hidden power, transforming the character. But those who profess to be followers of Christ, and are at the same time rough, unkind, and uncourteous in words and deportment, have not learned of Jesus. A blustering, overbearing, faultfinding man is not a Christian; for to be a Christian is to be Christlike...

Very many who are seeking for happiness will be disappointed in their hopes, because they seek it amiss, and are indulging in sinful tempers and selfish feelings. By neglecting to discharge the little duties and observe the little courtesies of life, they violate the principles on which happiness depends. True happiness is not to be found in self-gratification, but in the path of duty. God desires man to be happy, and for this reason He gave him the precepts of His Law, that in obeying these he might have joy at home and abroad. While he stands in his moral integrity, true to principle, and having the control of all his powers, he cannot be miserable. With its tendrils twined about God, the heart will be full of peace and joy, and the soul will flourish amid unbelief and depravity.

Kind words, pleasant looks, a cheerful countenance, throw a charm around the Christian that makes his influence almost irresistible. It is the religion of Christ in the heart that causes the words to be gentle, and the demeanor winning, even to those in the humblest walks of life. In forgetfulness of self, in the light and peace and happiness he is constantly bestowing on others, is seen the true dignity of the man. This is a way to gain respect, and extend the sphere of usefulness, which costs but little; and the one who pursues this course will not complain that he does not receive the honor that is his due. But Bible rules must be written on the heart; Bible rules must be carried into everyday life.

**Ellen G. White, Reflecting Christ, 305**

## **7. Supplementary material**

### **7.1. 3 types of love**

In the English language, the term love has a wide range of meanings and can be understood differently concerning the object of love, not so in the Greek language.

In Koine Greek, 3 words are used whose translation would be love: éros, filéo, and agápe.

The first of the terms, éros, is applied to the love between spouses and is related to passion and sexual love. It is the term most often confused today with true love. Evidently, éros love has a place in the life of man from the Christian point of view: marriage. God blesses love of this kind within marriage and the Holy Bible presents it in all its beautiful fullness in many inspired passages. Love éros is not mentioned in the New Testament, only in the Old Testament.

The phileo love applies fundamentally to the relationship between parents and children or siblings, friends, an affection that contains a natural sense at the same time, linked with emotions. There is no specific order for this kind of love in the Bible because it is understood to be more or less spontaneous or logical, like the love of a father for his son and that of a son for his parents. It is also the one that applies to friendship (philia in Greek). You, however, will agree with me that it is a type of love that is in retreat on our wretched planet.

Agape love, on the other hand, is the one that the Holy Bible deals with at great length and is used in all the verses of the New Testament that we have used in this study. This is the love we have described and which we hope can find a place in your heart and mine... It is love as a principle, which has no emotional roots, but perfectly rational ones, linked to my relationship with God.

God bless you.