

## THE TOP TEN GRACE KILLERS<sup>1</sup>

### Grace Killer #6 Diminishing God's Love for Us

#### Definition of "Diminish"

1 To make less or cause to appear less

2 To lessen the authority, dignity, or reputation of: **Belittle**

**Truth:** God's love for you is beyond measure.

**The Error:** God's love for you is based on your performance (or improved by it) and is reflected in your circumstances and/or feelings. It is more important how much you love God vs. how much God loves you.

Sadly today many teachers within the Christian church seem intent on minimizing the importance of God's love. Religion puts the love of God in a lesser position to the "weightier, more spiritual" endeavors of trying to please God through religious formula and exercises. This is nothing new. During the time Jesus walked on the earth, the Pharisees were more focused on keeping the details of the law than on God's love.

#### **Luke 11:42**

*"But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."*

The same thing happens today. Instead of focusing on God's love and what His love has made us and given us, an emphasis is put on what the individual "must DO" in order to "please" God. Love is seen only as a foundational doctrine for some; a starting point, and that after that we must move on to the "deeper things of God". It sometimes seems that there is a deliberate attempt to side-line/demean the love of God by "balancing" it with something else. However, God's love IS of the utmost importance and the most precious treasure we possess.

#### **Jude 1:20-21**

*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, <sup>21</sup> keep yourselves in the love of God (God's love), looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

#### **1 Corinthians 13:13**

*But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

Paul prayed that the Ephesians would be "rooted and grounded" in love.

#### **Ephesians 3:14-19**

*For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup> that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— <sup>19</sup> to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated all scripture is taken from the New King James Version (NKJV)

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## DISCOVERING THE TRUE NATURE OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US

1. God's love is AT ALL TIMES unmerited and was/IS demonstrated through Jesus' death.

*Romans 5:8-10*

*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

*1 John 4:9-11*

*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. <sup>10</sup> 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.*

2. God demonstrated His love for us by giving us Jesus in death. To side-line God's love is to demean Christ's sacrifice.

*John 15:13*

*Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*

*Galatians 2:20*

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

*John 3:16*

*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.*

*1 John 4:9*

*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.*

3. God's love was demonstrated through Jesus' life (actions).

*Colossians 1:15 AMP*

*[Now] He is the exact likeness of the unseen God [the visible representation of the invisible].*

*John 14:8-10*

*Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? <sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.*

4. God is FOR us NOT against us.

*Romans 8:31-34*

*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not **with Him also freely give us all things**? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. (He is on our side!)*

5. Nothing can separate us from His love. Nothing. No ifs. No ands. No buts. No whys.  
*Romans 8:35-39*

## Studies in Grace and Faith THE TOP TEN GRACE KILLERS

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?<sup>36</sup> As it is written:*

*“ For Your sake we are killed all day long;  
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”*

*<sup>37</sup> Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

### 6. God’s love is manifested in that we are children of God.

*1 John 3:1*

*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!*

### 7. God’s very NATURE is love.

*1 John 4:16*

*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.*

**If a=b and b=c, then a=c**

**God = agape. Agape = 1 Cor. 13:4-8, then God = 1 Cor. 13:4-8**

*We know this is what love looks like, and we see it as how we should be,  
but forget that God IS love.*

*How unthinkable that He would ask us  
to be better than He Himself is!*

### 8. Love is not something we lay aside to get to the more “important” or “weightier” things of God. His love is the reason for the good news. God IS love, and love is:

- *-God is patient (patient, longsuffering, forbearing, lenient)*
- *-God is kind (benevolent, useful, good, gracious) More about this in a minute.*
- *-God does not envy (not against, not jealous)*
- *-God does not parade Himself (not boastful)*
- *-God is not puffed up (not haughty, not arrogant, not proud)*
- *-God does not behave rudely (unbecomingly, unseemly, unmannerly)*
- *-God does not seek His own (not conceited, not arrogant, not inflated with pride, does not demand His own way or own things).*
- *-God is not provoked (not exasperate, not irritable, not touchy or fretful or resentful).*
- *-God thinks no evil (take no account of the evil done to Him, pays no attention to a suffered wrong, keeps no record of wrong, does not impute evil)*
- *-God does not rejoice in iniquity (injustice, moral wrong, unrighteousness). . .*
- *-God rejoices in the truth (sympathizes in gladness with the truth, rejoices when right and truth prevail, rejoices when the truth wins out)*
- *-God bears all things (covers with silence, endures patiently, bears up under anything and everything that comes, never gives up)*

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- **-God believes all things** (is ever ready to believe the best of every person, never loses faith, has faith in, entrusts, commits to, put in trust with)
- **-God hopes all things** (to expect or to confide, have hope, His hope is fadeless under all circumstances, is always hopeful)
- **-God endures all things** (remains, bears, endures everything without weakening, endures through every circumstance)
- **-God never fails** (never lapses, never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end, will last forever, never stops existing, never ends)

1. We could study each aspect of God's love above. We won't do that in this lesson, but let' take the fact that God/love is kind.

### **Definition:**

"good, virtuous, mild, pleasant" (in contrast to what is hard, harsh, sharp, bitter).  
Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words.

- A The Hebrew word for lovingkindness is hesed, which is translated in the Hebrew New Testament as grace.

### **Ephesians 2:8**

For by (THE) grace (hesed, lovingkindness) you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

### **Titus 3:4**

But when the **kindness and the love** of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He **poured out on us abundantly** through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been **justified by His grace** we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### **Ephesians 1:5**

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the **kind** intention of His will.

### **Ephesians 1:9**

He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His **kind** intention which He purposed in Him.

### **Ephesians 2:7**

so that in the ages to come He might show the **surpassing riches of His grace in kindness** toward us in Christ Jesus.

### **Matthew 11:28-30**

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. <sup>30</sup>"For My yoke is **easy (kindness)** and My burden is light."

- B God's nature is to have lovingkindness toward you.

### **Psalms 63:3**

Because Your **lovingkindness** is better than life, my lips will praise You.

### **Psalms 85:10**

**Lovingkindness** and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

### **Psalms 89:14**

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; **Lovingkindness** and truth go before You.

### **Psalms 103:4**

Who redeems your life from the pit, Who crowns you with **lovingkindness and compassion**.  
**Isaiah 54:10**

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*"For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken," says the LORD who has compassion on you.*

**Jeremiah 9:24**

*but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.*

### 2. Knowing we are loved causes us to believe in God.

**Galatians 5:6 AMP**

*For [if we are] in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything (IT ISN'T ABOUT RELIGIOUS WORKS OR KEEPING THE LAW), but only faith activated and energized and expressed and working through love.*

### 3. Knowing we are loved by God causes us to repent.

**Romans 2:4**

*Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?*

**MANY BELIEVERS HAVE READ THE ABOVE SCRIPTURES AGAIN AND AGAIN.  
THEY "KNOW" ABOUT GOD'S LOVE.  
HOWEVER, WHEN GRACE KILLERS ENTER THE PICTURE,  
HIS LOVE FOR THEM IS DIMINISHED.  
SOMEWHERE INSIDE THEY ARE THINKING:**

Grace Killers ~~#1~~ and ~~#2~~

(Combining Covenants: The Moral Law)

- *Yes, I know God loves me, but He will curse me if I sin. I can only be blessed if I keep the law.*

Grace Killer ~~#3~~

(Foolishness: Thinking I can perfect myself)

- *Yes, I know God loves me, but I don't want to splash in the shallow waters of His love like a little child. I must go deeper and become mature by keeping certain spiritual disciplines. I can "feel more" of God's love by doing more and being better.*

Grace Killer ~~#4~~

(Ignorance of who I am and what I have in Him)

- *Yes, I know God loves me but I didn't come to God for what He could give me. I gave my life to Him so I could give to Him.*

**MIXTURE ALWAYS  
DILUTES AND THEN  
NULLIFIES GOD'S  
GRACE.**

Grace Killer #5  
(Sin Consciousness)

- Yes, I know God loves me, but if I sin, He will hide His face from me and be upset with me until I “get right” with Him.

4. When you do not know and believe that God’s love is toward you as a Father to His child, you will fear.

*Romans 8:15*

*For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”*

*Luke 12:32*

*“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

5. Jesus made and makes God’s love known to us.

*John 17 :26*

*I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”*

6. He has already given everything, the very best He had, BECAUSE HE LOVES US. Certainly, now that we are His beloved children, He will give us all things.

*Romans 8:31-32*

*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?*

**Freely give = Graciously grant**

Charizomai (khar-id'-zom-ah-ee) to grant as a favor, that is, gratuitously, in kindness, pardon or rescue:  
- deliver, (freely) give, grant.

Now, along with Him He graciously grants to us everything. This is done without us deserving it or paying for it because His LOVE FOR US IS ALWAYS UNMERITED. He will not withhold anything from us.

10. God’s love should NEVER be diminished. The Love of God is EVERYTHING and affects EVERY aspect of our lives.

a. God’s love is our very existence, the core of our relationship with Him.

*1 John 4:16*

*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.*

*1 John 4:9*

*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.*

b. Faith works by love.

*Galatians 5:6*

*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.*

c. His love released us from our sin.

**Revelation 1:5**

...and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood—

**d. His love controls us.**

**2 Corinthians 5:14 AMPLIFIED**

For if we are beside ourselves [mad, as some say], it is for God and concerns Him; if we are in our right mind, it is for your benefit,

<sup>14</sup> For the love of Christ controls and urges and impels us, because we are of the opinion and conviction that [if] One died for all, then all died;

<sup>15</sup> And He died for all, so that all those who live might live no longer to and for themselves, but to and for Him Who died and was raised again for their sake.

**e. We love God and others more than any religion of self-effort could ever produce.**

**1 John 4:19**

We love because He first loved us.

**1 Thessalonians 4:**

But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.

**Galatians 5:22**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love.

**1 John 4:7-8**

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

**f. Under the New Covenant the emphasis is not on US loving God. It is upon GOD loving us. As we walk in His love for us, we will love Him more than anyone ever could under the law.**

**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.

**11. God not only loves you, He loves you just as He loves Jesus.**

**Ephesians 2:4-7**

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

**John 17:25-26**

“O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; <sup>26</sup> and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

**John 17:23**

I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.