

Is It Selfish to Emphasize God's Love for Us?

From: In Defense of My Father:
Toward a Better Understanding of the Sovereignty of God

Chapter 2: God is Love
by C. D. Hildebrand

Although Christians already know God personally as a provision of the New Covenant, we can still discover more **about** Him from the Scriptures. The most revealing description is that God is love. Understanding that God is love is foundational to understanding the sovereignty of God.

**“God is love,”
describes all of who He is,
and determines all that He does.**

Between a severely warped worldly view of love and a damaged Christian perspective of God's love, it can be difficult to arrive at a pure and clear image of God as love. So, it is correct to focus on His love for us.

We often hear Christian teachers say, “Yes, God is love, but He is also (insert supposed opposite quality here).” The second part of the sentence usually demeans or nullifies the first. It is almost as if the speaker doesn't want us to bask in the love of God too long for fear we might become proud and arrogant.

His love for us is pure beyond measure. It does not need to be “balanced.” It is out of balance by nature. His love for us is so immense that even eternity will not completely reveal it.¹

No Greater Love

To show His love for us, He sent His Son to die for us (in our place). Stop right here. There can be no greater expression of His love for us than this. We needed rescuing, and He was the only One who could save us.

¹ My third book was written to encourage believers to know and believe how deeply they are loved. It is Know and Believe: A Lifetime Journey toward Rediscovering God's Love for You by C. D. Hildebrand. There is a free video Devotional Study Guide Journal for this book at www.graceandfaithministries.org/know-and-believe/.

Romans 5:6-9

*For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸ **But God** (commends, proves) **His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.²*

How absurd to say to a Christian, “Yes, God is love, but He is also a God of wrath,” when Jesus paid the penalty of death to take away our sins *and* our judgment. We have been justified (made righteous) by His blood, which He gave **because He loves us**. Certainly, now we shall be “saved from wrath through Him.”

Ephesians 2:4-7

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

The Greek word “great” in verse four is **polus**. It is not meant to describe the *quality* of His love for us, but the *quantity*—the amount. It is often also translated as “many” or “much” in the New Testament or used to refer to “great” multitudes of people. We could accurately translate this as, because of His “plenteous,” “abundant,” “immense,” or “overflowing” love with which He loved us. Again and again, Jesus’ sacrifice is equated with God’s love.

Offering correction, a minister once said to me, “To emphasize God’s love for us is **selfish**. We need to stress the importance of **us** loving God.”

**That sounds humble, even noble,
but it is incorrect.**

Under the *Old* Covenant, the greatest command was to love God with one’s entire being, but the New Covenant emphasizes God’s love for us.

² If you would like to meditate on or memorize this verse, go to:
https://youtu.be/7Nn1C9bYly4?si=J8T_oEueOhnKZW4O

1 John 4:9-10

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. 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.

It sounds lofty and righteous to emphasize how greatly we love God, and of course, we do love God, but let us not overlook the fact that under the New Covenant, we have *new* commandments which are better (Heb. 7:12).

1 John 3:23

And this is His commandment: that we should **believe** on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and **love** one another, as He gave us commandment.