**R995 (575) Rumination for Feb. 18, 2024**

The **T**heme:**TheLove of God** [berita-bethel-ung.com](http://www.berita-bethel-ung.com)

The **T**ext: *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*  I Jn. 4:8 cf. 16

The **T**hots:

*Intro.* Last week on Feb. 14, the world at large celebrated Valentine’s Day of Love. But what is LOVE?

 *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for* ***God is love****.*

Does that mean when two people are in love, they know God? See Reflections #1

 But what is that LOVE that God is?

1. **Consider the Attribute of The Love of God.**
2. It is the Love that Loves His Son, Jesus:

*As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.* Jn. 15:9a

*I in them, and Thou in Me…; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me… that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.*

 Jn. 17:23, 26

1. It is the Love that God loves His Son with, and, in turn, the love that Jesus loves us with. Jn. 15:9b,

*As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.*

To know this Love therefore is to be a recipient of the Love of God and the Love of Christ for us.

Unless we know God and we know Christ we cannot know the true Love that God is – for ***God is Love.***

1. We must not only know the **A**ttribute of the Love of God but also His **A**cts that demonstrate that Love.

1. **Consider the Acts of the Love of God.**
2. God loves the **W**hole **W**orld to **S**ave the **S**inners in it – **W**hoever they may be! Jn. 3:16

*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,*

*that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

To know the love of God, therefore, one must be able to love the **W**orld of “**W**hosoever” and to Save them!

1. God loved Israel because He **S**overeignly chose to do so not because of their merits. Deut. 7:7-8
*The LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers.*

Can a person love Israel, and to be more precise, the Jew, solely just for who he is?

Contrast the Anti-Semitism Prevailing in the world today?

1. God **S**howed His Love to us by **S**ending His **S**on to be our **S**ubstitute to bear the **P**enalty of our **S**in.
2. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us,*

*and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* I Jn. 4:10

1. *God commendeth His love toward us, in that…* Rom. 5:6, 8, 10
2. *…While we were yet* ***S****inners, Christ died for us.*
3. *…When we were yet without* ***S****trength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*
4. *…When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His* ***S****on,*

 *much more, being reconciled, we shall be* ***S****aved by His life.*

*­*No one on earth or in time can ever bear the punishment of his or her own **S**in, or be the Sinless **S**ubstitute for those **S**tated above (i-iii) to manifest God’s Love for them to the extent of dying for them.

God’s Love is unique!

1. **Consider the Affirmation of what the Love of God is.**

 Here then is the **C**onclusion to **C**onfirm the above – the Text in its exact **C**ontext: I Jn. 4:8-10

1. The Text: *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*
2. The Context: ***In this was manifested the love of God*** *toward us, because that God* ***S****ent His only begotten* ***S****on into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God,*

 *but that He loved us, and sent His* ***S****on to be the propitiation for our* ***s****ins.*

The **V**alentine **L**ove that we “love” others with can never be the same as

the **V**erily **L**ove of God that makes us to know God.

1. It is only when we know God that we can love as God loves.

*We love him, because He first loved us.* I Jn. 4:19

1. Then we begin to love others: I Jn. 4:20, 21

*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother*

*whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*

*And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*

 On this Lord’s Day as we seek to Remember the Lord in His death for us,

 let us not only Love God but also the others who break bread and drink of the cup with us.

*The love of God is greater far Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star, And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win;*

 *His erring child He reconciled, And pardoned from his sin.* [F. M. Lehman](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/l/e/h/lehman_fm.htm)

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK. R. 575**

1. Here is a comment taken from **The Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Real (1 John).**

*God is love.* This does *not* mean that "love is God." And the fact that two people "love each other" does not mean that their love is necessarily holy. It has accurately been said that "love does not define God, but God defines love"... All that God *does* expresses all that God *is.*

Much that is called "love" in modern society bears no resemblance or relationship to the holy, spiritual love of God. Yet we see banners saying "God is love!" displayed at many festivals, particularly where young people are "doing their own thing"—as if one could dignify immorality by calling it "love."…

Love, therefore, is a valid test of true Christian faith. Since God is love, and we have claimed a personal relationship with God, we must of necessity reveal His love in how we live. A child of God has been "born of God," and therefore he shares God's divine nature. Since "God is love," Christians ought to love one another. The logic is unanswerable.

Do you have the Love of God? **REFLECT.**

1. Here is a sample of the numerous Valentine’s Love Poems taken from the Internet:

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**My First, My Last, My Valentine**

I've never imagined that there can be this day.
A day that love will find its way.
Out of my heart and into your soul.
These feelings I have are beyond my control.

All my life I have waited patiently.
For a goddess like you, so beautiful, so lovely.
Words can't express the way I feel.
These feelings towards you are all for real.

You are the reason why I go on.
Eternity can't separate this special bond.
This heart of mine is reserved for you.
Forever it is yours, this love is true.

I'll be your first and you'll be my last.
My world, my everything, till my time has past.
I will always love you until the end of time.
MY LOVE, MY SWEETHEART, MY VALENTINE!

Source: <http://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/my-first-my-last-my-valentine#ixzz3zkb5qo00>
#FamilyFriendPoems

Valentine Love is impressive at the beginning. Will it really last *until the end of time*?

Compare this with Paul’s classic description of **Love** in the Bible in **I Cor. 13:4-7, 13, HCSB**

*Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful,*

*Is not conceited, does not act improperly, is not selfish, is not provoked,*

*And does not keep a record of wrongs.*

*⌊Love⌋ finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth.*

*⌊It⌋ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

*Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

Which Love, do you think, will last till death parts the two in love? **REFLECT**

**Points To Ponder: *The Vast Love of God is Verily Love that embraces all eternally.***

 ***Valentine love may just be Lust for the moment that soon ends all.***