

## **Who Does God Love? Does He Love YOU? How Do You Know?**

Does God love everybody? To understand the answer to that question, we must not lose sight of the fact that God's holiness is just as important an attribute as His love and it is His holiness that defines the nature of His love. He loves righteousness and the righteous (those who possess the righteousness of Christ). Just as He loves righteousness and the righteous, He likewise equally hates unrighteousness and the unrighteous.

Psalm 5:5-6 says: "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. 6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man." Similarly, Psalm 11:5-7 says: "The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. 6 Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. 7 For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright." God does not say He loves the sinner but hates the sin. If He loves all sinners unconditionally, then why did He pour out His wrath on Christ, when Christ "became sin" (2 Cor 5:21) for His people? Is God's wrath - which will be poured out on the unsaved in Hell - a demonstration of His love for those sinners? God's holiness demands that He only love those whose sins have been completely paid for by the propitiatory blood sacrifice of His holy, perfect and Divine Son. Do we know whom God loves? We will know if He loves us if and when He has "called [us] out of darkness into His marvellous light". 1 Peter 2:9. We will have a love for His word, and we will start to worship this "unknown God" in "Spirit and in truth".

The Bible says that before God converts a soul and gives a sinner a new heart, that person is His enemy: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." [Romans 5:10]

Do you think God loves you? Don't assume that He does just because things are going good for you or just because you survived some kind of serious accident or illness. Don't even assume God loves you because you prayed a prayer that you believe God answered. The Bible says that "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" [Matt. 5:45].

So why do people go around telling everybody that God loves them? Well, many people misinterpret the Bible. For instance, the Bible says that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" [John 3:16].

Obviously God does not hate people and love them at the same time. When the Bible says God loves the world, it is a reference to people of all nations, not every single individual in the world, as clarified here: "for thou wast slain, and

hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" [Rev. 5:9].

We know God loves us when He has converted our wicked sinful hearts, when He has made us into new creatures in Christ who hate all the sin in us and around us. We know God loves us when He gives us a burden to warn the lost sinners around us to flee the coming wrath of God - eternity in hell. We know God loves us when He gives us a love for Himself, for the Bible, and for other true believers. We know God loves us when He shows us that Jesus is eternal God, as His disciple Thomas discovered: "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." [John 20:26-29]