

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love, For Heaven's Sake!

The root problem in the Church today

Does the Bible support our Gospel-destroying 'God loves me soooo much' fixation?

Background

New Testament emphasis

ETERNAL:

God Is Love - 1John 4:8

OLD COVENANT:

Names of God

Angels Declarations in Heaven

OT Prophecies

NT Prophetic Words

John the Baptist

JESUS:

Jesus' first recorded words in ministry

Jesus' inaugural speech: Sermon on Mount

Jesus' teaching

Jesus was kindly with people

Jesus was kind to the sick, sad & needy

Jesus runs after people to help & guide them

Jesus and the Bible said about his work

Jesus' instructions to 70 disciples

John 3:16

The love the Father lavishes upon us

Does God love everyone?

Why did Jesus come - Biblically?

Unconditional love of God

Great Commission

NEW TESTAMENT:

Any New Testament Books About It?

Teachings/Paragraphs in New Testament

How many verses state God loves us?

Holy Spirit's work

Acts preaching

Paul's 'more important points of gospel'

Basic doctrines of Hebrews 6

POST BIBLICAL:

Early Church Fathers

Church History

Satan's Aims described in the Bible

Are there prophecies of coming such things?

Are we fulfilling these prophecies?



Dedicated to my beautiful wife Connie
Thank you
When I am often considered to be a devil
You know me truly, you know my heart
But when one dares to think I am a saint
You know I am truly ordinary
And you love me all the same

I am very grateful for those who helped me with this book with editing and suggestions: Marian Watson; Mike Perry; Terry Snell; Dennis Loewen. Thank you very much for your help.

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Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For
Heaven's Sake!
The root problem in the Church today
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Bible Quotations

I believe Scripture to be the inspired Word of God and hold it to be my final authority in all matters.

I have used a simple English translation for as many Scriptures as I can - I want as many people as possible to understand the simple truths. If you are too spiritual to tolerate a simple version, you may be too spiritual to read this book. I have also inserted clickable links so that you may compare with more literal translations online.

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ERV = Easy-to-Read Version

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ESV = English Standard Version

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KJV = King James Version

This is the 1769 King James Version of the Holy Bible.

INTRODUCTION

To the church in Melbourne and beyond:

You know how every church group, every club, every organization, every movement has a 'sacred cow'? A tenet, concept, an idea or something that they will blindly fight to protect?

That is what this book addresses - a 'sacred cow' in the modern Church, that will inevitably provoke strong reactions and indignant defending of the status quo, with barely a rational thought to guide.

On a number of occasions Jesus is recorded as prefacing an important teaching with 'To him that has an ear to hear what the Spirit says.' So too with this book, it is for those who have an open heart and 'an ear to hear.'

I do not write this for those who want to blindly defend the comfortable Christian existence. They will reject it. It is for those seeking answers as to why the Church is so shallow, self-centered and ineffective.

A friend questioned the value of writing this book. He said "*Your target market will ignore you and the converted already agree with you.*" He was right, and I already understood that. But, even though only one or two Christians I know agree, there are those in between, who sense that there is something more. It is to that growing few, that I fearfully I write this book.

So deep is the conditioning, that this book is written more as a text book, with lots of Scripture quoted, many examples and lots of quotations by Bible scholars.

This book is also a resource for those that want facts and figures from the Bible to effectively argue against this great delusion, with family, friends and believers wherever they be, just as Paul argued passionately for the truth:

Acts 19:8 *Then Paul went to the synagogue and preached boldly for the next three months, **arguing persuasively** about the Kingdom of God.* NLB

Our words can set free, or they can cut down. There is a time for both. Oh, for the wisdom to know when to do which. I had mixed feelings in writing this book. On the one hand, I love and grieve for the Church and I so much want to sound the alarm; on the other hand, writing all this can start to make one feel superior, and I hate that. Humbling myself before God and recognizing how weak and foolish I really am, is my daily practice. Thank God that I can now, for the most part, let it all go and resume my quieter, gentle self.

I offer to you, this work in humility and fear of God.

SECTION 1 THE CHURCH HAS A DEEP PROBLEM

CHAPTER 1. WE FOCUS ON GOD'S LOVE FAR TOO MUCH.

Who agrees with me that God loves us?

Who agrees with me that God has a great love for His children?

"I, Neil Baulch, declare on this day:

1st August 2016, that GOD LOVES US!"

It can rightly be said, that everything God does, is by and through love.

Please remember while you are reading through to the end of this book, that I clearly and definitely stated my firm belief that **God loves us.**

Now, this is my proposition:

We talk about, and focus on God's love for us, far more than Jesus did or the Bible does.

The Western Church is largely sick, impotent and dying, void of any real move of the Holy Spirit because of it.

We, the Western Church, **have grossly exaggerated how much God focuses on us, by a great over-emphasis on 'God's love for us'** which has done untold damage to the Western Church. (Sadly, this is increasingly true of the Asian and African Church too, those place to where we have exported our particular brand of Christianity, but I am particularly addressing the ringleaders - the Western Church.)

Or in other words:

Seeker-friendly preaching, loud, bright music and lots of programs, are not a sign that the Holy Spirit is in your church.

The general impression most Christians now have of Jesus' ministry, was that He went around preaching the love of God to all, being nice and helping everyone He met.

This is just plain wrong. If you bear with me, I will explain what I mean with a lot of evidence from Scripture.

The Bible has been hijacked by politically correct Church leadership and it is presented as a completely different document than the story and spirit of Christ.

So, let me lay out what I am going to do in this book, so you know where we are going:

1) In section 1:

I make the bold statement that we in the Western Church have a great overemphasis on God's love for us, which is wrong, sinful and destructive.

2) In section 2:

I lay out the overwhelming Biblical evidence for such a claim.

3) In section 3:

I mention just a few of the ways this is so destructive and suggest what we can do to correct this sin and error.

I also make the bold statement that if we do not expose, root out and destroy this error, the organizational or institutional Church will die spiritually.

It really is that serious.

However, the true Church will never die! It will get stronger, but I believe it will eventually be withdrawn from the institutional Churches.

The first objection I usually receive is that such a statement cannot possibly be true, because we **KNOW** God really loves us.

Yet, when I prove from Scripture that we do indeed hold a great over-emphasis on it, the next common objection I get is, 'What's the big deal, why make such a big thing out of it?'

The problem that we cannot perceive by a superficial consideration, is that we have effectively lost our knowledge of who our God really is. As bizarre as it sounds, generally, the Western Church now follow 'another', 'only nice' Jesus and a radically changed gospel that refuses to expose sin as Jesus did.

"Since Satan cannot
destroy the gospel,
he has too often
neutralized
its usefulness by
addition, subtraction,
or substitution."
– J.C. Ryle

A belief in a super-loving God, does indeed neutralize the usefulness of the gospel. By a subtle subtraction of God's justice and the addition of a false, imbalanced love of God, we effectively substitute the God of the Bible for a manufactured 'nice' god, loosely based on the Bible. That is going to sound extreme, but please bear with me.

And we see the effects of such a substitution, for instance, Universalism (none go to hell, all go to heaven) could only flourish as it is these days, in an environment that did not understand the holiness and justice of God.

It would sound **very extreme** if I were to say that **'This over-emphasis on God's love for us has been one of the most destructive forces in the Church, throughout history.'**

Hence, I say 'this is the root problem in the Church today.' Or alternatively, I could say that the root problem is that we 'do not really know the God of the Bible anymore.' I understand that this seems like an impossibility, but I ask that read all the way through to catch what I am saying. If you hear the untold, little-known evidence, that I doubt you have heard or thought about before, you may agree that these are not extreme statements at all.

This is something that will only come by revelation. Or to put it in the modern vernacular, one needs to be 'red pillled'. A new awakening. When that happens, everything will seem new (not unlike being born again), God seems new, the Bible and the Kingdom of God seems new. Even people and the world seems new.

This may be the simplest thought ever conveyed in a sermon or a book and yet probably the hardest to accept in this age in which we live.

In everything that I am going to say, all I am really saying is: **'Stop talking & preaching so much about how much God loves us.'**

It is doing great damage to the Kingdom of God.

Of the destructive traditions of men that Jesus condemned, that annul Scripture, this seems to be the most deceptive and widespread in the 'good' churches of today.

Let me prove to you, that:

Preaching 'God's love' is just 'Christian political correctness.'

Let's call it **'Christian Correctness'**

Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone) has been dethroned.

We now preach what could well be called the **'Sola Tenere' Gospel - 'God Only Tender'**. Or the **'Sola Affectus' gospel - 'Affectionate Feelings Alone'**. This has become the only way to describe and preach about our God, and supposedly the only way we can legitimately understand Him.

Some may assume that my strong views about this, must come from a strongly Calvinist position, but this is not true. I am not reformed in my theology at all, quite the opposite. I strongly believe in man's free will.

I do not propose these things from any particular theology, I read my Bible and take it as it reads, as best I can. Obviously, it is impossible not to be influenced by one's doctrinal beliefs, at least to some degree, but as best I can, I take Scripture as it is written.

When the Bible says Jesus was harsh, I accept that as it is; when Paul says they are 'useless' people; when Paul calls some 'dogs'; when mere favouritism is called evil; when Peter pronounces the death penalty for a lie; when one in the church who is acting sinfully is 'handed over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh'; I accept all these, as part of the Word of God, part of the Sola Scriptura. I do not make adjustments in my mind to weight the reading, to suit our 'Sola Affectus' (feelings alone gospel) basic assumptions or paradigms.

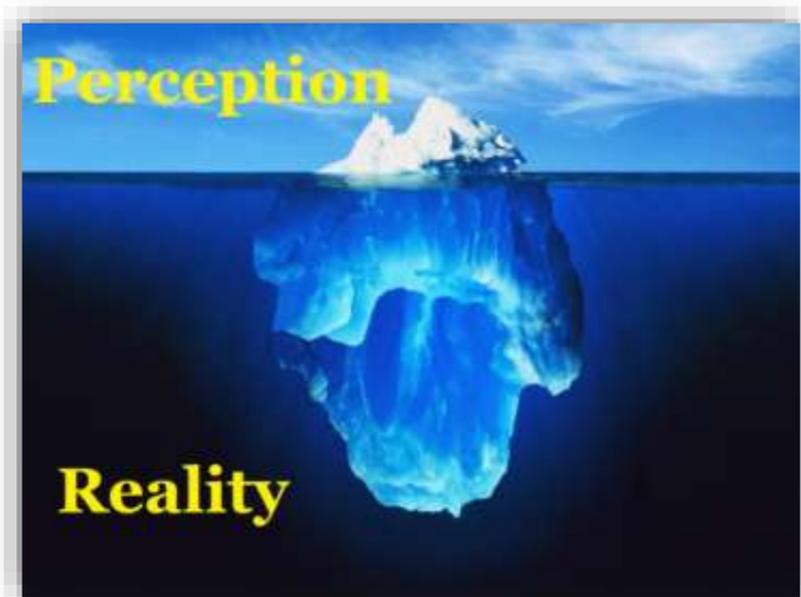
Today it seems, everything of God, Scripture and ministry **MUST** be interpreted through the 'Rosetta stone' of Sola Tenere, otherwise it will be condemned as far too harsh, and you will be condemned as well.

This book seeks to expose this destructive tradition of focusing so much on God's love, and suggests a much better way to think, live and minister. A way that pleases God, rather than tempting His judgment.

I should also say at this point, that there are some people that read the first chapter of this book, and tell me confidently that they understand where I am going with this and that they agree with everything I say. *sigh* I know that they do not, I have had debates with them over the years about these things. They understand just the popular criticism of the 'sugar-coated gospel' but they have little to no idea how deep this problem is.

For so many years as I have talked about these things, 'good' Christians will agree and say to me something like "Yes, there is too much of the sugar-coated gospel these days." They think that they understand exactly what I am talking about, but they only perceive a fraction of what I am talking about, and certainly not enough to set them free.

It is something like the typical iceberg illustration:



If you feel the same way after reading the first chapter, skip to the third section, chapter 35 and 36. Then see how deeply you agree with me. If you have trouble with those two chapters, then, you can come back to chapter 2 and read on to see what I am really saying before assuming you get it.

They really have no idea of the depth of the problem, they see the tip of the iceberg, but the massive size of the problem has not yet dawned on them.

A Simple Question:

What % of the NT verses do you think, state that God loves us? What is the frequency?
5%?

Very large conservative Pentecostal church	Baptist	Well known mission group
100%		
90%		
80%		80%
	70%	
60% x 2	60%	
	50%	
33%		30%
20%	20%	
15%	15% x 2	15%
10% x 2	10% x 4	10% x 3
	5% x 2	

How could Christians possibly believe that it is stated 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 percent?

We really do have a major problem.

Whenever I assert something hard that the Bible says, I get the typical objections, "But God loves us you know." I say, "Yes of course, but we do not hear what the Bible really says and who God really is, because we focus so much on God's love."

To which they give me a look of disgust, because after all, 'God's love is all the way through the Bible, you silly man.'

When people believe this over-emphasis, you can preach all sorts of good challenging messages and it makes no difference; it is like water off a duck's back. The wrong belief MUST be exposed, insightfully deconstructed, broken, smashed....then, your general teaching will again have an effect. More about that later.

Now, even non-Christians believe this over-emphasis on God's love for people too, because we have been telling them this for a very long time.

So, I have a question for you.

If we believe that we reach people with 'the love of God' as we constantly hear, rather than preaching sin and repentance, why are they not flocking into our churches?

We have done a very good job of telling the world that God loves them, and if our theory is correct, there ought to be a direct correlation with crowds coming to Christ in recent years. They are not. [Statistics](#)¹ for the 10 years between 2001-2011 show that in Australia, the

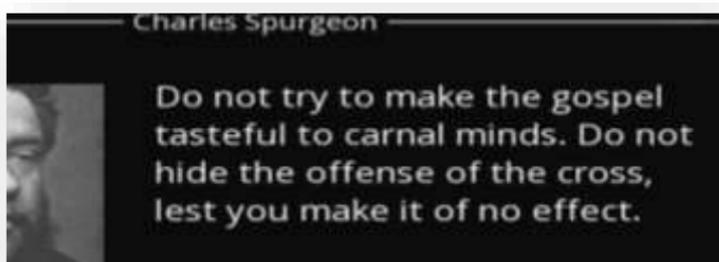
¹ <https://cra.org.au/products-page/pointers/pointers-vol-23-1-for-downloading/>

evangelical and Pentecostal denominations are maintaining their numbers. However, if you remove the numbers of new immigrants joining the church as they come to Australia, the church is in significant decline.

Now, you may then say, "But we need to get them into a personal relationship with us so they really know God's love." That would be a rather silly diversion, but if you did, then I would say, "Why is it that so many who do come into the church, repent, get baptized but months later, they have drifted away from Christ, back into the world, forsaking the 'gathering of yourselves together?'"

Truth is, we have dumbed it down to make it more appealing and less offensive, but then found that we have made it impotent.

Yes, we the 'good' Christians have made the message of the Great Omnipotent God to be impotent.



What is not properly understood now, in the world and in the Church, is that God hates sin with a vengeance, hell is frighteningly real and God is going to send billions of people to hell. Even 'good' people, who live a good moral life.

How dangerous is hell?:

Matt. 13:50 into the place of fire. There the people will cry and grind their teeth with pain."

ERV

Matt. 24:51 That servant will then be punished and thrown out with the ones who only pretended to serve their master. There they will cry and grit their teeth in pain.

CEV

Matt. 25:31 Then Jesus said, "Those people will be punished forever. But the ones who pleased God will have eternal life."

CEV

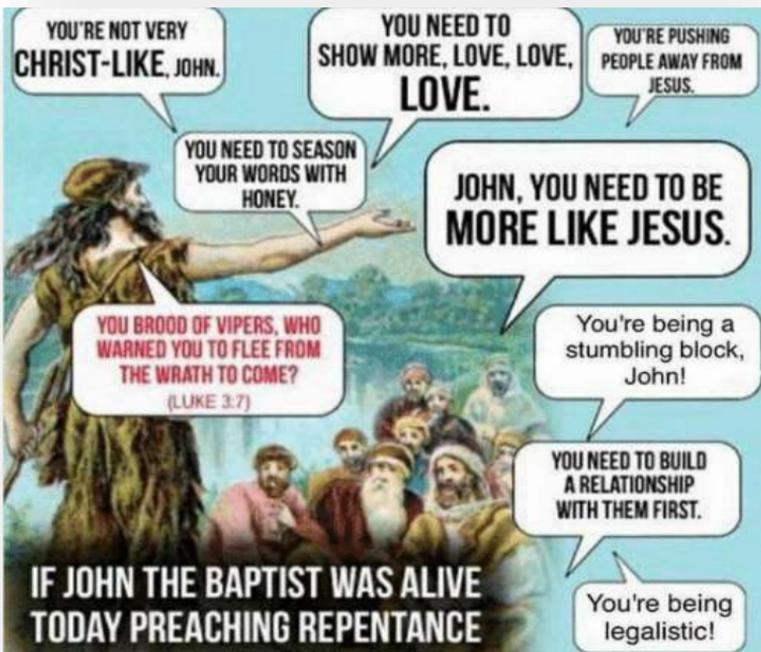
This is just a few times that Matthew records these strong words of Jesus, there are many more in the NT.

The world already knows about God's great love, so much so, that **they now use it as a tool against us** whenever one tries to share the 'full' gospel message with them. In self defense, they will say something like "You are judging me, and your God is not very loving, so I will not accept your God."

They use it as a weapon against the true Gospel and against the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. And we gave it to them. Willingly. Without reservation.

Oh, and that's not all, we Christians do the same thing. "You are judging me, you are not very loving, so I do not have to accept anything you say." Not even the truth.

Does this meme seem accurate to you?



How well does that fit with Isaiah's words below?:

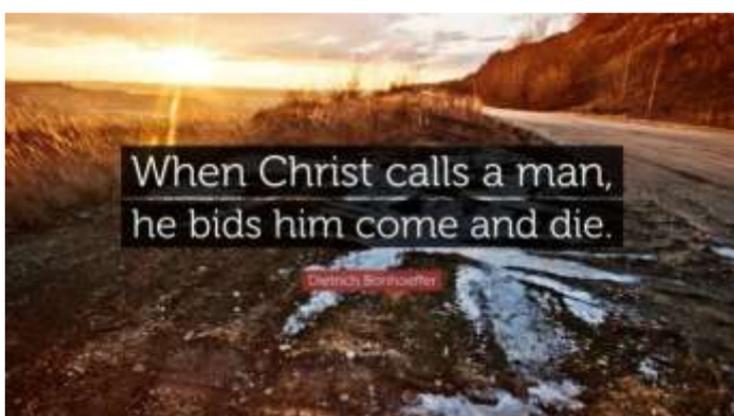
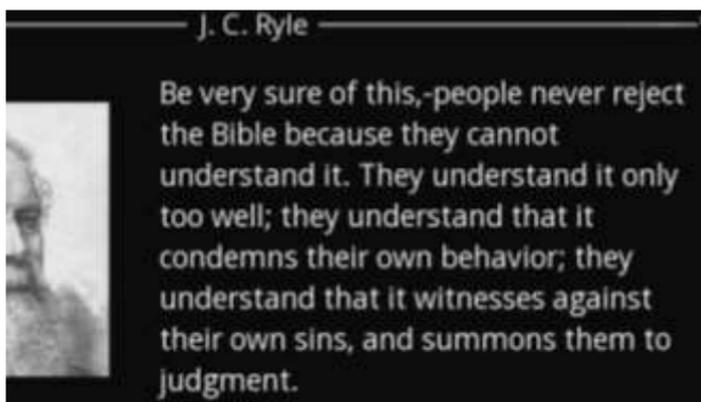
God gave this message to Isaiah for the distant future, **for us:**

Isa 30:8 *Now write this on a sign so that all people can see it, and write this in a book. Write these things for a future time. This will be far, far in the future:*

9 *These people are like children who refuse to obey. They lie and refuse to listen to the LORD'S teachings.*

10 *They tell the prophets, "Don't see dreams about things we should do. Don't tell us the truth. Say nice things to us and make us feel good. See only good things for us."*

11 Stop seeing things that will really happen. Get out of our way. Stop telling us about the Holy One of Israel." ERV



I might not agree with everything which **Søren Kierkegaard** says, but this is profound:

"The matter is quite simple. The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly. "

Provocations: Spiritual Writings of Kierkegaard

Where did we get this great emphasis on focusing on God's great love for us? We preach about, talk about it, we silence arguments with it, and discussions about it. We demand that all Christians keep this focus, we interpret Scripture by it, even against other Scripture that tells us that Jesus is a wrathful Judge too.

What does the New Testament show us?

I thought about all the **relevant areas** to survey for clear statements of such things and this is what I came up with.

Let's look at the facts and take a closer look at these following areas to see where God has such a high emphasis on communicating His love to us.

Where Does God Show Any Emphasis On Speaking About His Love For Us?:

ETERNAL:

- God Is Love - 1John 4:8. Really?

OLD COVENANT:

- Are there any **Names of God** about love?
- What do the **Angels** say about God?
- Are there **OT Prophecies** about His love?
- Do any **NT Prophecies** proclaim this love?
- Did **John the Baptist** teach God's love?

JESUS:

- Jesus' first recorded words** in ministry.
- Jesus' inaugural speech: **Sermon on Mount**
- Was Jesus' **teaching** only kindly?
- Was Jesus **only kindly to people** in general?
- Was Jesus **only kindly to the sick & needy**?
- Did Jesus **run after people** to help them?
- What was Jesus **to teach and do**?
- Jesus' **evangelistic instructions** to the 70
- Does **John 3:16** support our over-emphasis?
- What love does the Father **lavish** upon us?
- Does God love **everyone**?
- Did Jesus really **come to preach** God's love?
- Unconditional love** of God, how so?
- Is it in the **Great Commission** – Matt. 28?

NEW TESTAMENT:

- Any **New Testament books** about it?
- Any **teachings/paragraphs** in NT?
- How many **verses** clearly state God loves us?
- Does the **Holy Spirit** support this emphasis?
- Do the **apostles** preach God's love in **Acts**?
- Paul's '**more important points** of gospel'
- Is it in the **Basic doctrines of Hebrews 6**?

BACKGROUND OF NEW TESTAMENT:

- Does the NT **have too little an emphasis** on speaking of God's love, than what we need?

POST BIBLICAL:

- Did the **Early Church Fathers** teach it?
- Is it prominent through **Church History**?
- What is **Satan's** chief aim?
- Are there **prophecies of coming deception**?
- Are we **fulfilling these prophecies**?

I am NOT proposing some kind of 'theology by numbers' here, I am not proposing any theology, I am simply, from Scripture, exposing our 'great over emphasis' that affects our theology. It is not in the Bible. It affects our theology so subtly, but so greatly. **When humans refuse to believe good Bible-based arguments, only statistics remain unchangeable and impossible to deny.** And so, I present the abundant raw data and statistics, as recorded in Scripture - in the hope that this will pierce the fog and allow the light of Christ to shine through.

Those who push this over emphasis, want to keep it in the realm of 'the vague', keep it mystical and distant - 'Jesus just loves us' 'oh it's all through the NT just read it for yourself'; 'you are getting too intense, everyone knows that God loves us'; rather than keeping their arguments connected to an objective reading of Scripture, this is because then they are tied down to facts.

So, if you do not want facts, this book is **not** for you.

Just to give you an idea of how intense God really is, consider this:

1Pet. 1:16 That's why the Scriptures say, "**I am the holy God, and you must be holy too.**" CEV

Matt. 12:36 I promise you that on the day of judgment, **everyone will have to account for every careless word they have spoken.** CEV

Heb. 12:28we **must serve God with fear** and awe in a way that pleases him.

29 After all, **our God is a destructive fire.** GW

Even careless words will be important at judgment. That is very intense.

I challenge you to pray for an open heart to hear whatever it is that God wants to say to you.

I pray that anyone who has read up to this point, even if they reject the overall thesis of this book, will become painfully aware of how often we preached and talked about the love of God, over the coming months and years.



Let me pre-empt the accusations that I have heard so many times. I am accused of being 'judgmental' 'self-righteous' 'who do I think I am' etc.... let me say:

I am a nobody. I know it, and my wife knows it.
I have not achieved anything great in life.
I am more of a failure, than a great success.
But, I happened to see something that I need to tell you about.
I gazed at a picture of life, and I happened to look at the exact spot where I could see there was a problem.
I did not find this problem because I was trained to see it.
I did not find this problem because I am intelligent.
Nor because I am a very spiritual person.
And not because I was specially chosen.
No, only because I happened to see something about which I am compelled to make you aware.

Let's begin.

SECTION 2. OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE

CHAPTER 2. GOD IS LOVE - 1JOHN

4:8

***1John 4:8** God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him. . .*

***16** . . . God is love. If we keep on loving others, we will stay one in our hearts with God, and he will stay one with us. CEV*

First of all, let's get the immediate context in mind. Even though this passage is almost always given the title of 'God is love' in our Bibles, the context is about us not God. It is urging us to love one another - we must love each other because God is our great example of love. It was not primarily written to describe God's love. It certainly holds that profound truth in it, but that was not the main thing or idea John was trying to communicate.

Notice that it does not directly say "God loves you"? It states that God IS love and we are to copy Him. We assume that He refers to us, and that would be correct, but it is not clearly stated. One needs to be very careful not to build a great theological emphasis on an inference rather than a direct statement. Yet, this is the very thing we do with most of the references to God's love in the Bible, as I will lay out in the following chapters.

Because of this passage, we, in an era where 'being nice' is seen as the perfect Christian, have desired to make God the pinnacle of perfectness in the eyes of the world. This has caused us to elevate His aspect of love so much, that other aspects of His character are considerably devalued.

An example of this is where there is someone in sin in the church, but we say nothing because **supposedly**, God wants to show grace, and **supposedly** He wants us to 'love them out of their sin.'

The aspect of God's love has overruled direct commands like these :-

- 'rebuke a sinning brother' [Luke 17:3](#)
- 'expose sin' [Eph. 5:11](#)
- 'correct those who oppose teaching' [Tit. 1:9](#)
- 'leaders in sin must be corrected publicly' [1Tim. 5:20](#)

- 'shun those disobeying to shame them' [2Thess. 3:14](#)

This ought to be common sense. In any situation in life. When there is good discipline and authority present, there is little need to use it. Like a school teacher - the strict effective teachers have far less problems controlling the class than the other teachers.

Or parents who maintain a good level of discipline and authority, have far less testing of their authority.

Or a boss who maintains a good level of discipline and authority in the workplace, has better production and more disciplined staff.

As [R.C. Sproul puts it:](#)

"The worst thing that can happen to sinners is to be allowed to go on sinning without any divine restraints. At the end of the New Testament, in the book of Revelation when the description of the last judgment is set forth, God says, "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still" (Rev. 22:11). God gives people over to what they want. He abandons them to their sinful impulses and removes His restraints, saying in essence, "If you want to sin, go ahead and sin." This is what theologians call "judicial abandonment." God, in dispensing His just judgment, abandons the impenitent sinner forever."²

We are so blinded by this 'God is love'(we really mean 'tender' and only tender – Sola Tenere) gospel, we lose sight of basic common sense. So when we are told to 'rebuke a sinning brother' we do it, we do not excuse sin away by holding that somehow it is 'love' not to expose it.

Why do we elevate the aspect of God's love higher than His holiness? Why do we, by our repetitive declarations, portray God almost as a single faceted Being of love alone? Scripture does not, as explained here:

[The New International Commentary on the New Testament](#) - Dr I. Howard Marshall on 1John 4:8:

8...But it is the subordinate clause in this verse which carries the real emphasis and provides the theme for the next few sentences. "God is love" is rightly recognized as one of the high peaks of divine revelation in this Epistle. Logically the statement

² [The Just Shall Live By Faith](#) - Commentary on Romans, R.C. Sproul. Page 48.

stands parallel with "God is light" (1:5) and "God is spirit" (Jn. 4:24) as one of the three great Johannine expressions of the nature of God. **Some theologians give the impression that the present statement is superior to the other two, but there is no justification for doing this. We do wrong to exalt the love of God as His supreme feature just because it is more congenial to our thinking.** Nevertheless, it is true that "God is spirit" describes his metaphysical nature, while "God is light" and "God is love" deal with his character, especially as He has revealed himself to men. It has been noted that to speak of God as love is not to reduce God to the status of an abstract quality. The statement refers to his action. Yet it signifies more than "God loves," for its effect is to claim that 'all' God's action is loving. Since love is a personal activity, the statement stresses the personality of God to the fullest extent. At the same time, the immense gulf between God and men is expressed; of no man could it possibly be said that he 'is' love. Only God is completely loving.

There is no need to enter into a historical survey of the teaching of Scripture on this point. It would merely demonstrate that this statement is simply the clearest expression of a doctrine of the nature of God that is attested throughout its pages. Equally it would show that outside the pages of Scripture there is no comparable picture of God!

God is all-loving and, equally, all-holy (1:5). These two characteristics do not stand in opposition to one another but belong together and determine his actions. Consequently, it is not surprising that John does not stay on the level of abstract theological assertion but proceeds directly to speak of how God has showed his love.³ (Emphasis added)

Indeed.

It was John who correctly made this declaration that 'God is love'. **Jesus did not feel the need to state this truth during His ministry. But Jesus did feel it necessary to declare that He 'was the Truth':**

³ The New international Commentary On The New Testament. The Epistles Of John. I. Howard Marshall. Page 212-213.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am **the way**, and **the truth**, and **the life**. No one comes to the Father except through me. ESV

So we can also say that God is Truth or God is Life or God is the Way. They are all true.

This thought is going to be very challenging to many Christians, but only because we have created such a strong, misplaced tradition, about God and His extreme love for us.

An observation here that is helpful to explain why in the survey I mentioned earlier, some would quote as high as 70%, 80%, 90% and even 100%. As Dr Marshall says:

'Yet it signifies more than "God loves," for its effect is to claim that 'all' God's action is loving.'

I would totally agree that God does everything in love - 100%, **if I had indeed, asked** 'Which actions of God are in love?'

But I did not ask that question. I asked 'what **percentage** of the verses in the New Testament **state clearly** that God loves us.' I purposely emphasized to all participants that it was only about how many times, and to estimate a percentage of the New Testament verses which stated this clearly.

You see, even though I clarified clearly what I was asking, so many Christians cannot differentiate between, God loving us, and how we are to evangelize the lost.

We hear the word 'love', and run everything together as one simplistic truth - 'God Is love', 'love is God', all that matters is 'love'. We must love, we must be like God.

We do not define love as anything different from kindness and tenderness. What about 'tough love'? We do not even think about it. It's just trained belief to see everything 'nice' as love.

Even though our definition of love is now false - true love will warn people of judgment and discipline other with wrong belief.

For instance, when I say 'We must preach repentance, not God's love', I get instant



Rather than worry about who will be offended if you **tell the truth,** consider who will be misled, deceived, and destroyed if you don't.

reactions as though I am saying that God **has no** love. I said nothing of the sort, but we have an unnatural perspective on God and love, and we cannot tolerate any enquiry of how it is supposed to work. Words are fired and swords are drawn, to nip it in the bud. There must be no discussion that might have the remotest possibility of questioning our pet theology and deepest belief.

Someone says, "But we are to preach the gospel in love."

Of course, that's a strange thing to say. Of course, I would agree with that, and I have never heard anyone say otherwise. But when someone says "But we are to preach the gospel in love" what they really hear is 'We are to preach God's love to them in a lovely way.'

No, we are to preach the **gospel in true love**, not **preach the love of God**. And as Jesus showed 'love' includes 'tough love' too at times.

But as I have said, whenever we use the term 'love' in this context (well many contexts really), it is automatically assumed that we are to preach 'God's love'. And then by extension, to preach God's love is to preach it really nicely. Because after all, everyone knows that 'love is the most important thing in the world. God is love and *'...of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.'* ([Rom. 11:36](#)) Love is everything. If we 'love' someone, God is there. In all His power. Without doubt. Even if we said nothing about the gospel.

Wrong!

The word 'love' has become the great interchangeable word for God. And we use that great word invoking the fear of hell, in any situation or discussion, to silence anyone who may have, even just a little forthrightness.

This is why I say that we are deeply conditioned, even deceived, and our basic assumptions, our paradigms are deeply flawed.

[Kevin DeYoung](#), critiques a book where the statement 'God is Love' was the starting point & the fundamental truth of God, and he says:

'For example, why should the statement "God is love" be given priority over John's other "definitional" statements that God is light (1 John 1:5) or God is spirit (John 4:24)? And what about the "definition" in Hebrews 12:29 that "God is a consuming fire" or

the repeated assertion that God is "holy, holy, holy"?'⁴ (Emphasis added)

Kevin DeYoung, senior pastor of University Reformed Church (PCA) in East Lansing, Michigan

Dr Smalley says in the **Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 51 - 1, 2, 3John:**

*(b) To assert comprehensively that "**God is love**" does **not ignore or exclude the other attributes of his being to which the Bible as a whole bears witness: notably his justice and his truth** (cf. Ps 89:14; Deut 32:4; Rom 3:21-2; John 17:17). **God's judgment (his wrath), for example, is just as much a reality as his love** (cf. Isa 54:8; Rev 6:12-7). **But theologically these cannot be opposed to each other. Such characteristics of God as his justice and his truth must ultimately be related to his essential nature as love, and may in the end be perceived in terms of his loving nature** (see further, Stott, 160-61). Such teaching belongs, indeed, to 1 John itself, where we read of God's holiness (1:5), justice (1:9) and truth (5:20). (Emphasis added)*

Stephen S. Smalley (Ph.D., Cambridge) is an internationally recognized Johannine scholar and Dean Emeritus of Chester Cathedral, England.

Further commentary by various scholars is listed in the ⁱⁱEnd notes.

So, even for the amateur Bible student (using free resources⁵) we find with a little investigation, that contrary to popular belief, that 'God is love' is **not THE all-defining statement of God**. It must not be the single facet of God that we elevate above all else. And worse, we should not be using it as a weapon, against talk of the other attributes of God that are difficult to accept. Nor using it against any Christian who appeals to other truths that we find less than comfortable.

Human nature will always favour and emphasize the nice things over the less appealing. That is why we must interpret Scripture with Scripture and 'work out our salvation with fear and trembling'⁶ rather than drifting into a false tradition of men in our understanding.

CONCLUSION:

⁴<https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/kevindeyoung/2010/11/19/augustine-volf-and-bad-arguments-getting-worse/>

⁵ Many free Bible study resources can be found at <http://biblehub.com/> or download [eSword](#) to your computer.

⁶ [Philippians 2:12](#)

☒ God Is Love 1John 4:8 = **not the emphasis we thought.**



Typically, whenever I discuss these things with Christians and even pastors, with the clear Biblical evidence, they will react and say something like "Are you saying that God does not love us?"

It's an obvious over-reaction in order to protect this precious, tradition of men.

Any time the 'high' emphasis on God's love for us is questioned, the automatic reaction is to falsely hear that God's love itself, is in question.

No, if I question the over emphasis, I am not questioning the principle and the truth of God's love for us.

Again, I will categorically state that God has a great love for us. It can rightly be said that everything God does, is through love. All I am saying is that **we talk about and focus on God's love for us far more than the Bible does. This has had a devastating effect on the Church.**

When you sugar-coat the Gospel to make it more appealing, you remove the God of the Bible from it and replace it with 'a god' of man and bondage.



Recently, while I was discussing this with a pastor, it became a little heated and finally in frustration he reacted with:

"It does not matter if you can show me that the Bible does not say that God does love us that much, I am convinced it is true, because that is how God works."

Do you see what he did here?

In other words, 'I am totally convinced that God loves us so much (because of our tradition about that), that even if you prove from the Bible that we have a great over-emphasis on it, I will not accept it.'

As Marian a dear friend says 'Some people's minds are like concrete – thoroughly mixed, and firmly set.'

And this is a pastor who, unlike so many, focuses more on challenging people, rather than preaching all the 'nice things'. Yet he believes in 'God loves us soooo much' which compromises his perspective, waters down his challenges, and does not truly challenge the congregation.

It has become an **unshakable belief**, even though this emphasis is not in the Bible.

In another heated debate, a brother, who is now retired and who passionately laboured in ministry most of his life:

"I don't care if the Bible never states that God loves us, we know He does love us so much, because it is in everything He does."

With our current worldview putting an over-emphasis on God's love, his statement even sounds like a very spiritual statement, even profound, **but it is not**.

Again, he too is saying, that the Bible itself is not my authority, my traditions are more important. **My traditions determine what the Bible emphasizes**.

Yet we say that we believe the Bible to be the Word **OF** God, and it is our **FINAL** authority.

Well, only if it complies with our traditions it seems.

Another pastor from a more Reformed position, during a discussion reacted with this:



2

2 When we study a book of the Bible, a basic practice of a good exegete, is to look for the key words - which words are used most as they help us to identify a particular emphasis, what it is that God is wanting to tell us.

That's just part of basic Bible study.

Note the superior arrogance.

Why do pastors interpret the Bible, and who God is, by the popular traditions of today; and by what they 'sort of, kind of remember' the Bible says, rather than **what is IN the Bible, printed in black and white**. They do not allow the actual teaching and words in the Bible to formulate their theology and beliefs. They allow 'popular current Church thought' to determine their theology.

They did not take that view because of **what** the Bible reveals in plain writing; they took that view because it is our dominant Church perspective - one of our current traditions of men.

Or to put it another way, the Bible does not instruct or even infer that we should preach or build such an over-emphasis on 'God's love for us'. But we know better than the Bible and **we think that our traditions are more spiritual than the Bible**.

We boldly declare that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and that we follow it. But we do NOT follow the inerrant Word of God, when it conflicts with our pet doctrines of men.

No, these false doctrines are **idols** that must be forsaken.

How can I describe proper emphasis?

I will try.....

I myself, feel very loved by God.

I also feel very humbled by God's greatness.

I know that I am unworthy.

(So, please do not try to convince me that I am so special because God loves me.)

I feel very loved by our Holy God.

I also feel very sinful many times.

Sometimes when I meditate on His holiness, fear rises up within me. This is good for 'fear is the beginning of wisdom.' But, I am not crushed, for I know He died for our sin.

Oh what a wonderful grace, therefore, I remain very humble .

I feel very loved by our Father God.

I also feel like a servant, slave and soldier in the Captain's Army.

I also am afraid of sinning against the Holy God.

Yet, I feel confident in coming into His Presence to tell Him my deepest thoughts.

So when I ask what percentage of the NT specifically states that God loves us, I am attempting to identify how important this was to God, and how much we should focus or emphasize this in our teaching and evangelism.

Once I arrive, I am careful to be very humble.
Yes, I feel very loved by God, while I am walking in
deep humility before Him.
Oh how I love God.

We must hold both truths at the same time, both are
just as real as the other.

Consider this:

Heb 12:28we **must serve God with fear** and
awe in a way that pleases him.

29 After all, **our God is a destructive fire.** GW

John Newton understood this well when he said:

**" I am a great sinner, Jesus is a greater
Saviour!"**

Mary who was 'highly favoured' by God had a far better
understanding and attitude than we today:

Luke 1:28 *The angel went to her and said,
"Greetings, **you who are highly favored!** The Lord
is with you."*...

*...38 "**I am the Lord's servant,**" Mary answered.
"May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel
left her.* NIV

Today, we feel highly favoured and boast of our
specialness. The idea of being a mere servant barely
enters our mind.

CHAPTER 3. NAMES OF GOD

There are many names and titles of God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit used throughout the Bible.

And notice, that the **Holy Spirit** is not called the **Loving Spirit**. If God's love were the prime aspect of God to focus on, it would be, but it is not, so don't.

Surely it stands to reason that if love was so extremely important above all other attributes of God, then there must be some names or titles of God that reveal this great love for us.

Check out this list on the BlueLetterBible website of 480 names - [NAMES, TITLES AND CHARACTERS OF JESUS CHRIST](#).⁸ You can verify this for yourself.

480 names yet, there is nothing, except for this one obscure reference in the list:

Pro 17:17 *A friend loves at all times, and a relative is born to help in adversity.* NET

'A Friend that loveth at all times.'

Here are just a few of the Names & Titles that are often used:-

- Elohim : God the Omnipotent
- El-Elyon : the Most High God
- El-Roi : the God that sees
- El-Shaddai : God Almighty, God all sufficient
- El-Olam : God the Everlasting
- El-Bethel : God of the House of God
- El-Gibbor : the Mighty or Great God
- Elohim-Elyon : God, the Most High
- Elohim-Saboath : God of Hosts. Omnipotent.
- Immanu-El : God with us
- Jehovah-Elohim : Lord God, Redeemer-Creator
- Adonai-Jehovah-Saboath : Master of Hosts
- Jehovah-Jireh : the Lord will provide
- Jehovah-Rapha : the Lord that heals
- Jehovah-Nissi : the Lord my Banner or Standard
- Jehovah-Kanna : the Lord who is jealous
- Jehovah-Mekaddeskum : the Lord sanctifies
- Jehovah-Shalom : the Lord our Peace
- Jehovah-Shaphat : the Lord is Judge
- Jehovah-Saboath : the Lord of Hosts
- Jehovah-Elyon : the Lord Most High
- Jehovah-Raah (or Roi) : the Lord my Shepherd

⁸ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/parallel/paral19.cfm>

- Jehovah-Hosenu : the Lord our Maker
- Jehovah-Gibborm : the Lord is Mighty
- Jehovah-Tsidkenu : the Lord our Righteousness
- Jehovah-Shammah : the Lord is Ever-present
- Ancient of Days
- The Life
- **God of Love** and Peace (2 Cor 13:11)
- Advocate
- Faithful and True
- Lion of the Tribe of Judah
- Victorious One
- Deliverer
- Bread of Life
- Son of the Most High
- I Am
- Judge
- Risen Lord
- Supreme Creator Over All
- Redeemer
- Messiah
- Light of the World
- Savior
- Lamb of God
- One Who Sets Free
- Mighty One
- The Word
- Alpha and Omega
- Lord of All
- The Resurrection
- Chief Cornerstone
- Good Shepherd
- Holy Servant
- The Way
- The Truth
- Bridegroom
- King of Kings
- Sacrifice for Our Sins
- Our Hope
- Great High Priest
- Mediator
- Author and Perfecter of Our Faith
- True Vine
- Almighty One
- Head of the Church
- The Door
- Prince of Peace
- Son of Man
- Beloved Son of God
- Wonderful Counselor

- Mighty God
- Everlasting Father

Rather than names like 'God of Love' being repeated in many forms, most of God's names and titles are more about God's power, rulership and holiness.

Both Paul & Peter call Jesus a 'Rock of Offence.'

Romans 9:33 as it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a **stone of stumbling**, and a **rock of offense**; and the one who believes in Him will never be put to shame." BSB

1 Peter 2:8 and, "A **stone of stumbling** and a **rock of offense**." They stumble because they disobey the word—and to this they were appointed. BSB

And Jesus declared that He came to bring a sword and much conflict.

So, the Father places as the Founder of Christianity, a 'rock of offence' who brings 'a sword', but we insist on the sentimental idea that He is only about kindly love and kindly grace?

How can it be that if the love of God for us is so important, and so prominent, that there are no names or titles that **specifically and clearly** declare this?

Did the All-knowing God make a mistake when inspiring the Bible writers? Or have we mere humans make a grave error in judgment?

Are we too, 'the blind leading the blind?'

Interestingly, Jesus introduces the title 'Father' to God and instructs us to address God as Father.

Love for us is implied in so many ways and places in the Bible, but there is no great emphasis and dwelling on it. It is something that we now hollowly claim there is, and exalt as high Biblical revelation.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Names Of God = show **no emphasis on His love for us, certainly the concept is there, but in no way can it be said to be an emphasis anything like what we live by.**

Again, yes God love us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other attributes and realities of God.

CHAPTER 4. ANGELS DECLARATIONS IN HEAVEN

Have you ever thought about the importance of what the angels cry out over the throne of God?

As has been pointed out by others, the angels shout, **not** 'love' but 'holy':

Isaiah's Vision of the Lord:

Isa 6:1 . . . I had a vision of the LORD. He was on his throne high above, and his robe filled the temple.

2 Flaming creatures with six wings each were flying over him. They covered their faces with two of their wings and their bodies with two more. They used the other two wings for flying,

3 as they shouted, "**Holy, holy, holy, LORD All-Powerful!** The earth is filled with your glory." CEV

And more than that, the angels shout it three times. Biblically as in our culture, to state something multiple times is to add emphasis to that thought. We DO NOT get that with the idea of God loving us in the Bible.

And of course it is repeated by John in Revelation:

Rev 4:8 Each of the four living creatures had six wings, and their bodies were covered with eyes. Day and night they never stopped singing, "**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord**, the all-powerful God, who was and is and is coming!" CEV

This RepentanceCry.com meme puts it profoundly:



CONCLUSION:

Angels Declarations = **no thought at all of God's love.**

CHAPTER 5. OT PROPHECIES CONCERNING MESSIAH

There are over 300 prophecies in the OT which have been fulfilled concerning the coming Messiah.

You can check out lists of Messianic prophecies on the internet :-

- [353 Prophecies](#) Listing
- [365 Prophecies](#) Listing
- [Bible.org listing of Prophecies](#)

None of them say anything about Messiah teaching of God's great love for us.

Showing love is implied, but not stated; nor is there any emphasis implied.

And most certainly nothing like the notion that we have built.

These prophecies fall into the following general categories:

ascension	gift giver	lineage	rejected
attested to	glorified	mediator	rewarder
birth	glory	messenger	ruler
character	healer	Messiah	servant
compassion	holy	miracles	shepherd
conflict	hope giver	name	suffer
cross	human	place	surrendered
divinity	innocent	priest	teacher
empowered	judge	priesthood	timing
event	king	prophet	type
faithful	kingdom	punished	misunderstood
Gentile	last supper	pure	
Saviour	liberator	redemptive	

Not one about God's love for us.

One speaks of compassion only:

The Lord's Chosen Servant

[Isa. 42:1](#) Here is my servant! I have made him strong. He is my chosen one; I am pleased with him. I have given him my Spirit, and he will bring justice to the nations.

Isa 42:2 He won't shout or yell or call out in the streets.

Isa 42:3 He won't break off a bent reed or put out a dying flame, but he will make sure that justice is done.

*Isa 42:4 **He won't quit or give up until he brings justice everywhere on earth**, and people in foreign nations long for his teaching. CEV*

Again, love might be implied but it is not stated as though it were above all other aspects of God's mission.

The 3 lists of prophecies mentioned above, can be found here⁹

CONCLUSION:

☒ OT Prophecies = **no clear mention, certainly no particular emphasis.**

9

<http://www.accordingtothescriptures.org/prophecy/353prophecies.html>

<https://www.bibleprobe.com/365messianicprophecies.htm>

<https://bible.org/article/messianic-prophecies>

CHAPTER 6. NT PROPHECIES OF COMING MESSIAH

Let's look for this high emphasis on His love toward us in the prophecies concerning Jesus in the New Testament:

The angels announcing the arrival of the Messiah said nothing of him having a ministry of love from God, but rather, saving us from sins:

Through Mary: [Luke 1:46-55](#)

His mercy is mentioned:

Luke 1:54 *He has helped his servant Israel, remembering his mercy,* NET

But nothing about telling of God's love. Some words about mercy to those who fear Him, scattering the proud, lifting the lowly and bringing down the mighty, feeding the hungry and withholding from the rich.

Through Zechariah: [Luke 1:67-78:](#)

Luke 1:67 *Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.....⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High. For you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, ⁷⁷ to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins.⁷⁸ Because of our God's tender mercy the dawn will break upon us from on high.* NET

Nothing about him showing God's love there either. Only saving his people and forgiveness of sins.

To Mary:

Luke 1:32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David.
³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end. NET

To Joseph:

Matt. 1:21 *She will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.* NET

To the Shepherds:

Luke 2:11 Today your Savior is born in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord.

12 This will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."

NET

Simeon's Prophecy: [Luke 2:29-35](#)

Luke 2:29 "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

30 For my eyes have seen your salvation,

31 which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

*34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: **"This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, 35 so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."** NET*

Nothing there either.

Through Anna: [Luke 2:36-38](#)

Luke 2:36 There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher.....38....she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

NET

Nothing there either.

Of course, we know that God does all things through His love, but at that time they did not comprehend a 'God of love' and doing all things in love. So, if they did not understand it, and it was so important to tell people, why was it not mentioned in any of these prophetic or angelic messages?

CONCLUSION:

NT Prophetic Words = **no high emphasis on His love to us in the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah in the New Testament**

Again, yes God loves us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

CHAPTER 7. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S PREACHING

What are the first recorded words of John the Baptist's ministry?:

Matt. 3:1 *In those days John the Baptist came into the wilderness of Judea proclaiming,
2 "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.**"
3 For he is the one about whom Isaiah the prophet had spoken: "The voice of one shouting in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make his paths straight.' "*

What did John preach?:

John 1:23 *John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "**I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'**" ...
... 29The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "**Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**"*

John preached repentance not God's love:

Luke 3:3 *He (John) went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of **repentance for the forgiveness of sins**, 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:
"A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord;
make straight paths for Him.'
5 Every valley shall be filled in,
and every mountain and hill made low.
The crooked ways shall be made straight,
and the rough ways smooth.
6 And all mankind will see God's salvation."
7 Then John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "**You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore produce fruit worthy of repentance.**
And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. 9 **The axe lies ready at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.**"*

Calling them to repentance and not, "Hey guys, it would be good if you could maybe see your way to apologizing to God for sin."

Nothing like what our 'good' churches say these days - "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life, just confess your sin and God will give you an abundant life."

No, it was: "*You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore produce fruit worthy of repentance.9 The axe lies ready at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.*"

Nothing recorded about 'God's great love for us'. If it is soooo important as we make it out to be, it would have been recorded surely.

In fact, quite the contrary.

'God has a wonderful plan for your life!'

We want to make it sound so attractive to entice people in. We make church '**interesting**' to get them and to keep them coming.

We are to preach Christ and Christ crucified, repentance to the unbeliever:



"Come and die."

Think about it: if they need to be kept 'interested' they are not the kind followers that Jesus wants, they have not counted the cost of giving up all for the great cause of God. Jesus clearly stated that prospective followers are to 'count the cost' of following Him, and they must 'take up their cross daily.'

And if your retort is typical of what I get from Christians, (and pastors), 'You want to make it boring for people, that will drive them away. Who would want to come to that kind of a Church?'

This is clearly a subjective over reaction, I did not say to make it boring.

If you have a church that attempts to make it 'more exciting' it is NOT a church, it is some kind of lawless Christian club, where true lukewarmness is the law while you have a bit of fun together.

No, I said 'do the work of the ministry as the Bible sets out'. Do not try to make it so very interesting for them. Those who have indeed counted the cost will stay, they will be truly and genuinely interested.

The Bible does not say 'make it interesting to keep them in'. It says 'challenge one another as long as it is still called today' and 'rebuke a sinning brother' and 'shun those disobeying to shame them' and to preach the true Word. Then they will stay interested, pure, motivated, disciplined, fruitful, spiritual and grow to be mature.

They would then understand the mission we are on, and be one with us, rather than needing some 'child minding' activities to keep them happy.

Christians are to find the Gospel interesting, to find the Kingdom work of God interesting. If not, they are not serious. They are to find God and His Cause for themselves in Scripture and prayer, in perseverance. And, when they do truly find God, they will welcome discipline when it is needed to help them keep focused.

CONCLUSION:

☒ John the Baptist's ministry = no talk of a ministry of preaching God's love - it is not even mentioned.

Again, yes God loves us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

See how Scripture does not show an emphasis on God's love for us, unlike what we 'sort of, kind of, remember' it does.

CHAPTER 8. JESUS' FIRST WORDS OF HIS MINISTRY

What were the first recorded words of Jesus' ministry?:

Matt. 4:1 *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.....12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been imprisoned, he went into Galilee.....17 From that time Jesus began to preach **this message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."*** NET

- 1) Nothing about God loves you soooo much
- 2) Jesus preached 'repentance' not love, but we preach 'love' a shy away from 'repentance'.

Now, I am sure that Jesus preached about many things, but it is summed up as preaching 'repentance from that time.' Summed up as repentance because that was the emphasis of all that He was saying. Everything He was teaching, was filtered through the prism of repentance from sin and coming back to God fully.

But for us, everything is preached through the prism of 'God loves you so much.'

Brothers and sisters, listen to me. **What we preach and speak, IS the wrong message because, it is either about God loving, ever-encouraging us, ever-caring for us; or, has that basic belief undergirding every other subject. It's a wrong emphasis.**

What we preach and speak has largely destroyed the proper understanding in the Western Church, of the Holy God of the Bible, who hates sin with a passion.

And some of **Jesus' final words** to the Church were about 'repenting' too. And with a threat or a condition:

Rev. 2:5 Consider how far you have fallen! **Repent** and do the things you did at first. **If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.** NIV

Most believers would dislike my use of the word 'threat' of God, as though God would never be so vindictive. Just as many reject the thought that God could hate a man, because that would make Him vindictive and man-like.

Why is it that we cannot conceive of God as issuing a threat or announcing a severe consequence, in perfect

harmony with truth; a hatred of sin and a love of righteousness?

Back to the necessity of preaching repentance.

We MUST lose the 'hyper-love' gospel if we want to be obedient to God - don't anger God by talking/preaching this over-emphasis.

We must start talking/preaching like Jesus did, like Peter's message on the day of Pentecost, and 3,000 were saved. We today are just as culpable of having Jesus crucified as the crowds that Peter preached that day some 2000 years ago.

Jesus preached repentance. John the Baptist preached repentance. The apostles preached repentance, but we preach a 'good life' and 'benefits'.

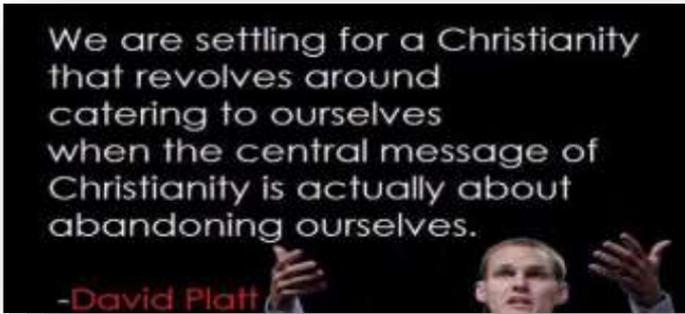
Abundant life = enjoying life to the max?

Below is a page from a teen devotional from the 1990's that came into our home. Consider the 'hip' message that leads the teen reader away from pure dedication to God and on to a fun life:

'Abundant life = enjoying life to the max as God intended.'



A strong focus on an abundant life - 'enjoying life to the max as God intended' with little explanation of what that means, obviously will play to the selfish sinful nature of man.



We were told to 'repent of our sin' - our rebellious hard hearts - deny yourself - and give up all for God.

Jesus also said that we would be persecuted, beaten and even killed, as part of His 'abundant life.'

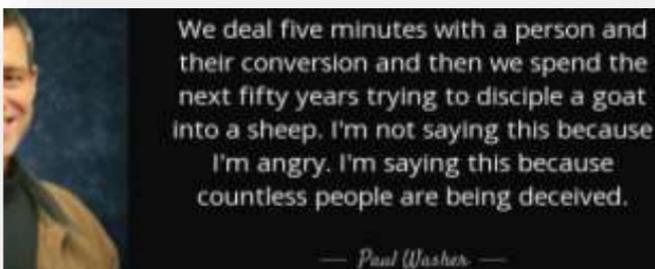
The abundant life that Jesus speaks of, is primarily spiritual peace - knowing that God has provided the full sacrifice for sin - we have been saved from hell. And that we can now walk on a new spiritual level - in Christ, a new power over sin to be victorious over sin, and peace of mind that, though we may be beaten or killed, we shall go to heaven.

We have unwittingly dumbed down what true Christianity is, by our well intentioned desire to get more people in. God does not need that kind of help.

This does not work, it cannot work for God's glory.

Unless you teach what Jesus taught and focus on what He focused on - repentance, dying to self, suffering for the Kingdom, holiness, defeating sin, sacrificial living, self-sacrificing loving of God and others - then we do not attract disciples. We attract people who want a good life. There was no point in getting those people in, they will not help in true ministry, they are not saved anyway - they did not 'deny themselves' they repeated a formula prayer to get a better life.

Paul Washer hit the nail on the head when he said:



Hundreds of thousands have come into the church by repenting to the 'loving god' but not to the Holy God. They worship the 'loving god' but would not tolerate the Holy God. The Holy God demands that they truly change and become holy.

They are not true believers. He is Lord of all, or not Lord at all. How dare we dumb down God's requirements.

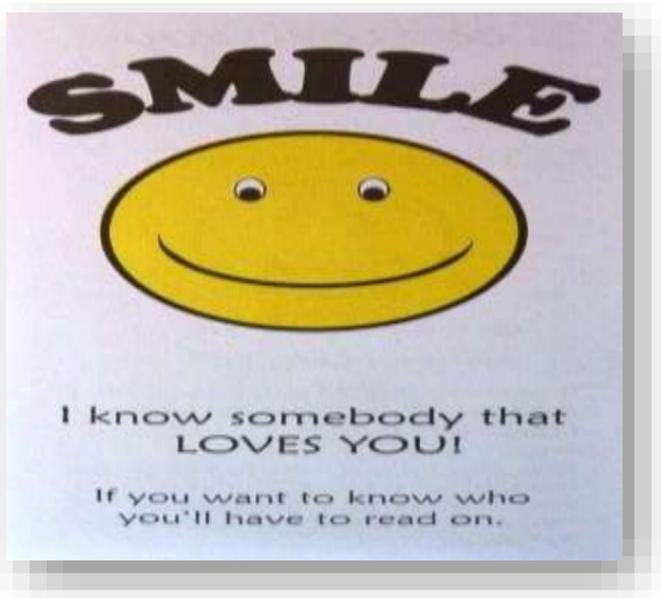
Consider the wise words of Francis Schaeffer:

So often people think that Christianity is only something soft, only a kind of gooey love that loves evil equally with good. This is not the biblical position. The holiness of God is to be exhibited simultaneously with love. We must be careful, therefore, not to say that what is wrong is right, whether it is in the area of doctrine or of life, in our own group or another. What is wrong is wrong anywhere, and we have a responsibility in that situation to say that what is wrong, is wrong.¹⁰

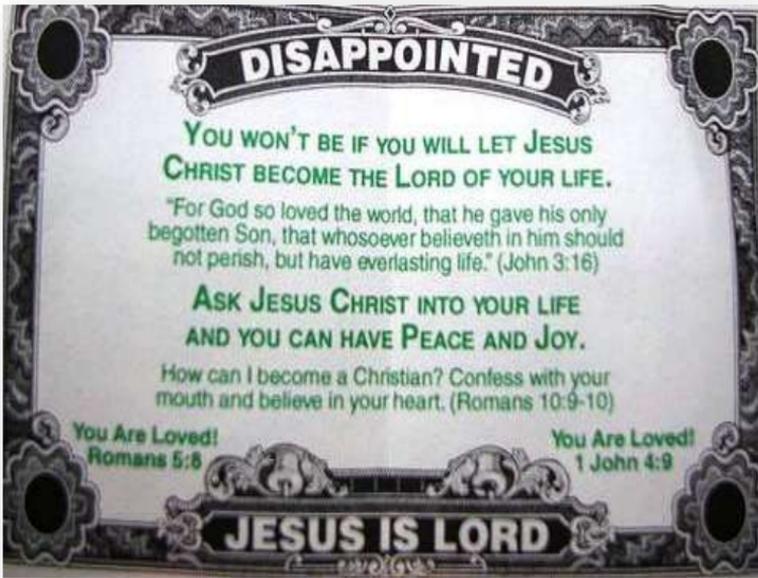
If we think that we should be talking/preaching the 'wonderful love of God to save the world' we do not understand the Gospel, or God, or even mankind. And we certainly do not understand the sin nature of man.

Below are some gospel tract partial covers I just found online.

I do not personally know the creators and I am not condemning their tracts as evil, I simply show them as examples of the common focus on God's love in today's evangelism:



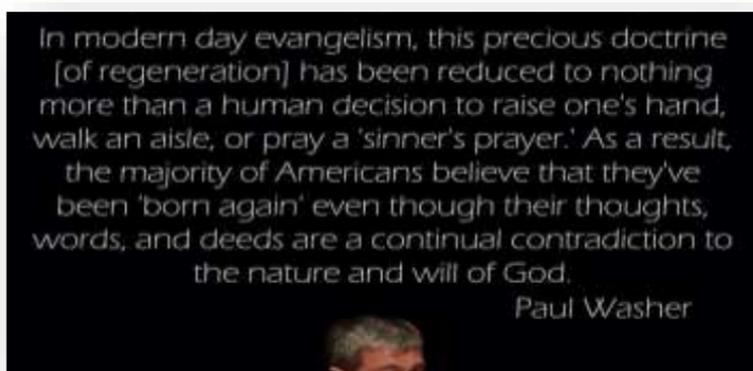
¹⁰ [The Mark of a Christian](#). Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1996.



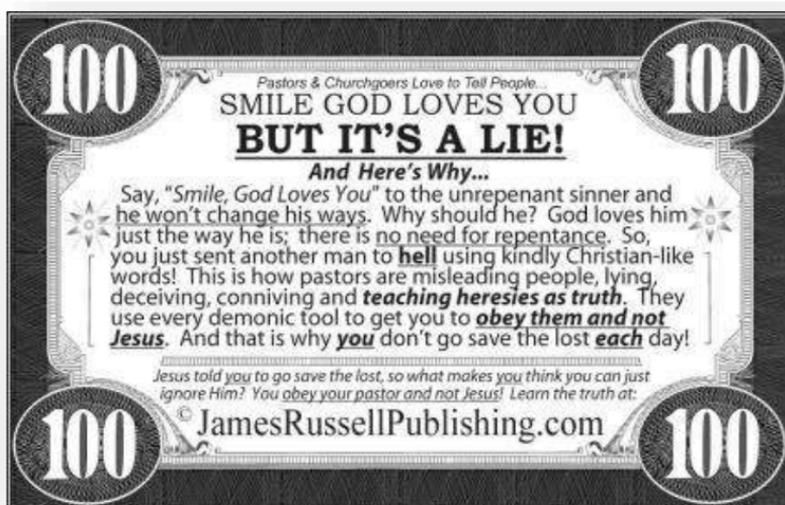
We want revival, we pray for revival, **but preaching 'God's love' will not bring revival.** The Holy Spirit brings revival by 'convicting men of sin'. **That is why we were told to preach repentance.**

There are evangelistic tracts that do have a better focus, but they are not that common.

Paul Washer incisively exposes the real problem:



The writer of this one below, understands the principle, but it seems to be too harsh for general use. I believe that most pastors and believers are not deliberately lying, but rather they are unaware, unstudied, lacking in passion and devotion, resulting in a hardness of heart. They need a sharp challenge. They are not scheming sharks that need condemning. However, Jesus may deem this appropriate for some of our church leaders – 'our teachers of the Law and our priests':



This one I quite like by a friend of mine, John:



You can view the PowerPoint presentation of The 2 Kingdoms: [HERE](#)¹¹

A good evangelistic tract would be one that follows the basic principles of Jesus' talk with the rich young ruler. Things like:

- Points him to the law, and his own sin
- Corrects his wrong thinking – “why do you call me good?”
- Shows him the level of commitment to God required – “sell all and give to poor”

A good tract needs to bring the person face-to-face with their vile sin. So if they are convicted, they can be brought to the point of brokenness and genuine repentance.

It needs to tell a person to ask for mercy from God.

It needs to emphasize ‘faithfulness’ not just momentary ‘faith’. Faith + Works, for the rest of one’s life.

[Martyn Lloyd-Jones](#) says:

*“It is not surprising that the cross has been discounted by modern theologians; **it is because they have started with the love of God without His holiness.**”¹²*

[R.C. Sproul](#) says:

*“The failure of modern evangelicalism is **the failure to understand the holiness of God.**”¹³*

Exactly, we do not even know God now.

When you think about it, from our post modern standards, Jesus really was quite cold and uncaring about this seeker, the rich young ruler.

We have moved away from what Jesus actually said, in order to say things that appear to 'reach' a modern generation, from what we 'sort of, kind of remember the Scripture says. Humans are made by God, in the image of God. As has been said 'There is a God-shaped vacuum in all of us that only God can fill.' The deepest yearning for God is built in. We do not need to find 'better' ways of telling the Truth than what Jesus instructed us. God made us, I think He knows best, what we need to hear in order to save us, don't you?

¹¹ <http://acts-alive-mission-australia.com.au/do-invisible-kingdoms-exist/>

¹² <https://billmuehlenberg.com/2014/11/12/hating-sin-loving-holiness/>

¹³ *ibid*

But I have so-called mature Christians and pastors, tell me that this approach would drive people away. Do they really think Jesus was so clueless? Or is it that they cannot even understand the basics of what they read of what Jesus said and did, because of our Sola Affectus gospel?

If you choose to call preaching the unpleasant truth in the Bible 'driving people away' from the church, then **by your definition, Jesus 'drove people away' from the church.**

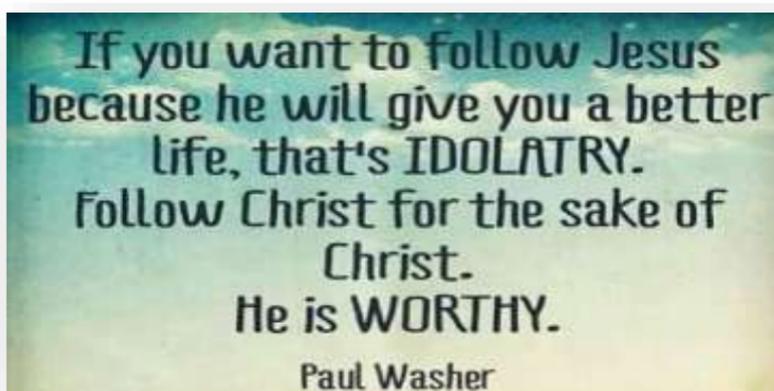
In the tradition of Jesus, by our reckoning, we need to be 'driving more people away' from the church. Preach the offense of the cross and only the genuine seekers will come in, and the non-genuine members will reject the message.

Why do we resist telling the plain truth so much? Largely because we just cannot let go of the 'business type model' of running the Church - getting people in, is success. And also, because they are afraid of preaching anything different from what the church in general preaches and what the crowd demands and wants.

No! Jesus preached the eternal truth of God, and if a person rejected the message, they rejected God. That one 'judged himself as unworthy of the gospel'. Jesus and the apostles did not run after them, they moved on. Others were convicted and responded with total repentance and were truly saved.

How many today would say "Oh, that's not loving?"

Oh, come on, you think that you are somehow more compassionate and realistic than Jesus?



A person needs to be clearly shown how their sin deeply offends a holy God. How evil their sin really is before God.

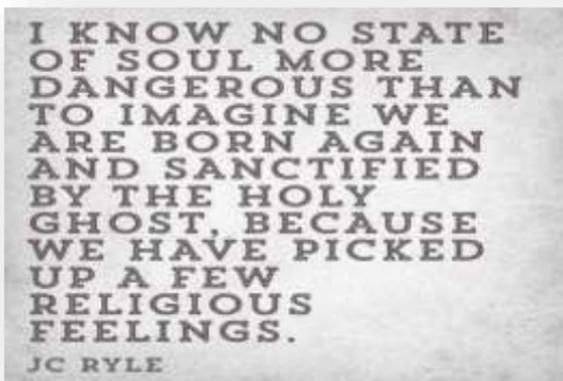
Think about how we try to show a child the seriousness of their offense, or a criminal the seriousness of their

crime, so they will feel sorry for what they have done and desire to change.

Consider the words of C.S. Lewis:

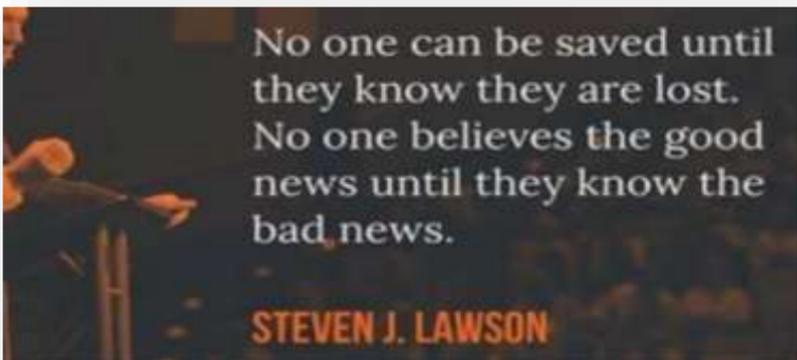
“Fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: he is a rebel who must lay down his arms.” Mere Christianity

We need to show people the seriousness of sin, otherwise, why do they feel the need to repent?



I KNOW NO STATE
OF SOUL MORE
DANGEROUS THAN
TO IMAGINE WE
ARE BORN AGAIN
AND SANCTIFIED
BY THE HOLY
GHOST, BECAUSE
WE HAVE PICKED
UP A FEW
RELIGIOUS
FEELINGS.
JC RYLE

If you show them how evil their sin is, to a Holy God, the Holy Spirit has something to work with and can convict them of this great evil. Then they can truly and deeply repent and be saved. This, rather than just 'choosing a better lifestyle' that includes a 'nice' Jesus and going to church.



No one can be saved until
they know they are lost.
No one believes the good
news until they know the
bad news.
STEVEN J. LAWSON

This is really very basic, but we confuse it all by importing the foolish traditions of the world and make them our own traditions of men. 'God loves us soooo much and has a wonderful plan for your life', has seriously annulled the Scriptures in so many ways.

If we are going to effectively preach repentance, how can it work if we do not show them the seriousness of their evil sin?

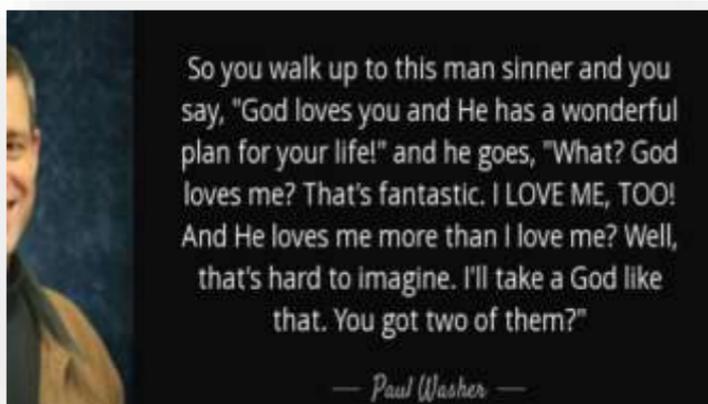
Consider what Jesus said of the world:

John 7:7 *The satan's world definitely cannot hate you, but **Me it hates**, because I give Witness about it **that man works of it is continuously evil**. TPW*

So, the world hates Christ and the Truth, because it is continuously seeking evil, yet we believe that we ought to preach love, rather than repentance.

If you try to speak love to a self-willed child, you will get yourself another slap in the face. No, you discipline the child. Rebellion requires exposing and a call to repentance.

I am reminded of something Paul Washer said:



This sounds profoundly applicable for this age.

As Rev. Alex White, a dear brother in the Lord, and a long retired Baptist pastor, who ran a series in our church on teaching the teachers, said:

*Preaching the gospel is likened to sowing good seed.
Preaching law is the preparation of the soil.*

Alex preached with the greatest sense of clarity I have ever heard in Australia. I may not agree with his strong Reform theology¹⁴, but he was way ahead in his

¹⁴ Reformed theology – You will find that so many of the quotes I add, are by Calvinists. While I cannot accept predestination and other TULIP points, Calvinists seem to have a far better understanding of the sovereignty of God than those who hold free will theology. We Arminians could learn a lot from them. True, some Calvinists are really very proud, but, most Arminians are ignorant of the importance of the theology of God's wrath. Just a thought.

understanding of God than all the others. In his later years, which is when I have known him, his ideas were largely, just tolerated, because people believed him to be stuck in the past. What a tragedy. God sends someone along with the truth for that hour, but our hard hearts do not receive him.

Here are some other profound points he made:

*Matt 13:3-9; 18-23 Parable of the sower.
Preaching the gospel is likened to sowing good seed.
Preaching law is the preparation of the soil.*

Jer. 4:3 "Break your unplowed ground and do not sow among the thorns."

The problem with all three soil types in the parable of the sower, was inadequate soil preparation.

Jer. 23:28-29 "My Word - like a hammer - breaks rock into pieces."

Luther :-

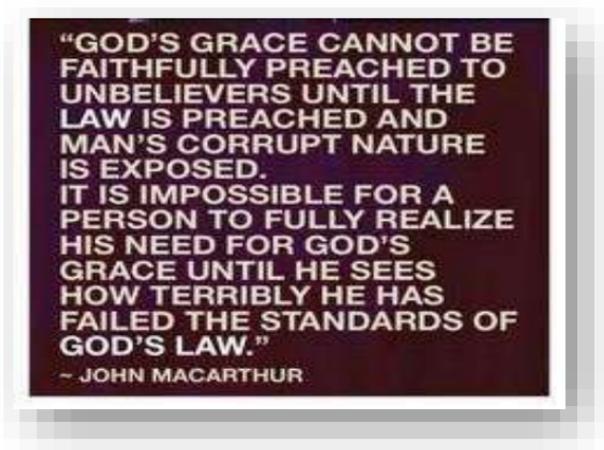
'The law serves the purpose of a hammer, the hammer of death, the thundering of hell and the lightning of God's wrath that beateth to powder the obstinate and senseless hypocrites. For as long as the opinion of righteousness abideth in man, so long there abideth in him also pride, presumption, security, hatred of God, contempt of His grace and mercy, ignorance of the promises and of Christ. The preaching of free remission of sins through Christ cannot enter into the heart of such a one!'

A sledge hammer is not necessary in every case.

Sufficient law is required to produce a broken and contrite heart, true repentance and total repudiation of one's own righteousness.

These insights are gems in this age.

MacArthur also:



But because we do not understand these principles, having been robbed by the 'Gospel of Grace, and only grace,' we accuse anyone who preaches this way as 'preaching a worm theology' or 'stuck in the past' or 'too legalistic'.

Dr. Bob Utley.

Retired professor of Hermeneutics: [Course 2023 on properly interpreting Romans 1-3](#) :

You've got to see what this word means to the writers of the New Testament. It's crucial. We understand that.

Okay. The second one is references to God's wrath.

Oh my goodness, people say God is love.

He just loves everybody. He says, wait a minute.

Look at the number of places in Romans 1 through 3 for the wrath of God, the judgment of God.

*This is a major thing. **There is no good news until there's bad news.** That'll sink in.*

This judgment is a major theme. Remember we talked about how people select just one truth, God is love. Yeah, but he's also angry.

Here is the anger. He's dealt with himself, but there's still consequences. (emphasis added)

And Spurgeon:



And John Wesley ([Expositor's Bible Commentary Romans 2](#)):

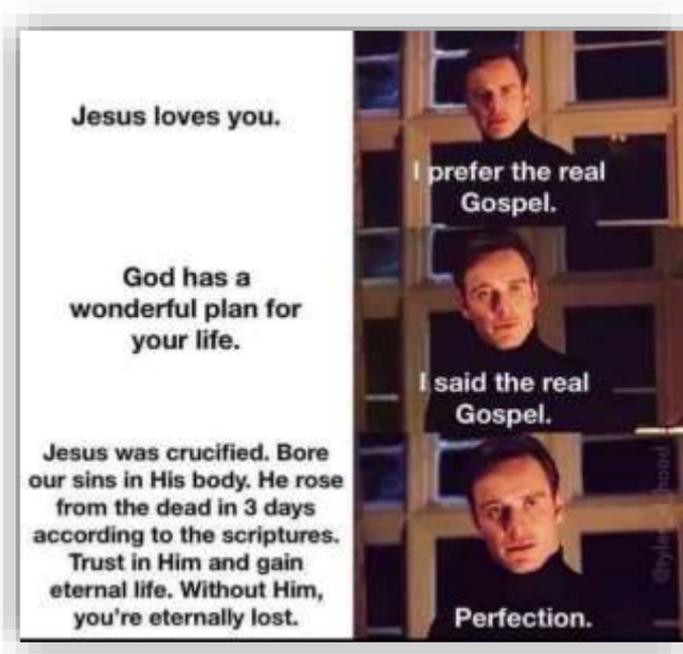
It was, I believe, a precept of John Wesley's to his evangelists, in unfolding their message, to speak first in general of the love of God to man; then, with all possible energy, and so as to search conscience to its depths, to preach the law of holiness; and then, and not till then, to uplift the glories of the Gospel of pardon, and of life. Intentionally or not, his directions follow the lines of the Epistle to the Romans.

Great. Preach first that God loves them, momentarily, then 'with all possible energy, preach the law of holiness.

A decision to follow Christ, is a decision to die. But we preach a package of personal benefits - love, healing, self-esteem, blessing,.....as though this is somehow the gospel of Jesus Christ. Oh what foolishness.

Observe this meme posted on FaceBook by a dear brother. It is on the way to being biblically correct but not quite there. The meme, rightly refutes the unbiblical 'God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life' but does not first establish: 'Do you realise how sinful you really are.'

It offers a Saviour without clearly showing the desperate need for a Saviour from sin.



Observe the focus of these Facebook posts below, by Jack (not his real name). A dear brother in the Lord, Jack is a passionate evangelist and I love his heart:

Love like Jesus. Care
like Jesus. Be selfless like
Jesus. Forgive like Jesus.
Encourage like Jesus.
Serve like Jesus. Be
patient like Jesus.

So, I posted this underneath it:

Amen. And also :-

- Expose sin in people like Jesus.
- Confront false leaders like Jesus
- Condemn Pharisees like Jesus
- Challenge others on like Jesus
- Judge people like Jesus
- Preach about hell like Jesus
- Preach repentance not love like Jesus
- Smash traditions of men like Jesus
- Talk about God's love like
- Be fearless against political correctness like Jesus
- etc.....

A week or two later he posted this:

GOD IS BIGGER THAN
YOUR PAST
YOUR DEPRESSION.
YOUR PAIN.
YOUR HATE
YOUR ANGER
YOUR DOUBT
YOUR FEAR
YOUR SHAME
YOUR EATING DISORDER.
YOUR SELF HARM
YOUR ANXIETY
YOUR LONELINESS.
YOUR SCARS
THIS WORLD.

So I posted this underneath it:

Amen.

And God is also bigger than :-

- your sin (so overcome your sin, stop making excuses for it)
- your self-centredness (so get over yourself and focus on God)
- your angry outbursts (so stop them and be holy)
- your prosperity gospel (so stop claiming it as true)
- your comfort (so forget about yourself for a change, take up your cross/sacrifice yourself daily)
- your bad attitudes (so change, Jesus is supposed to be your Lord)
- your shallow view of God (so lose the 'God loves me soooo much belief, forget about yourself for 5 minutes)
- your church (so forsake the pride of thinking you really have 'it' and be very, very humble)
- your desires (so stop always thinking about what you want God to do for you)
- your tears repentance (so go and actually change, that's real repentance)
- etc.....

Oh how great Is our Great Glorious Creator Holy God.

And then I wrote to Jack:

Jack dear brother, why do we Christians most always post things about how much God loves us, cares for us, protects us.....always the feel good gospel.....

But rarely post things about His demands that we be holy, defeat sin in our lives, suffer without complaint. Not just talk, but actually keep each other accountable in these things. And what about God's great vengeance, anger, His demands on us to die to self daily, to be broken, to give up all.....

Are we still little, frightened children?

What is wrong with us?

Why is it soooo hard to let go of feeling privileged, special, always needing to be patted on the back, never offending anyone as Jesus offended people with the truth for the Kingdom. Always demanding encouragement, care and niceness from God and others.

When will we get over ourselves and serve only God and focus only on Him rather than me, me, me?

"Oh Lord break us free from this self-focused Christianity, always wanting and getting attention for our pitiful little hurts, frustrations and wants. Help us to grow up and 'set our face toward' the things that Jesus did and taught, not being concerned what the masses of politically correct Christians around us, say about us. Please break us free from these traditions of men that we might please You. Break me, Lord that I, and all who read this, might know who You really are, and what You want from me. Make us truly selflessly missional in our work and not just a self-focused club; make us speak the Truth that even we hate, stop us preaching 'your love' and preach repentance as Jesus did, make us useful for your Kingdom work. Amen"

Jack was not offended, thanked me for the focus correction. The 2nd time however he could not take it and told me I should show love. ☹

Again, something profound from Alex White:

He tells of how many years ago his godly wife Ellen, said to him one day "**You are preaching ABOUT the gospel, instead of preaching the gospel.**"

Meaning that he was preaching to the mind, not the heart.

He was deeply shocked. He knew that such a challenge from his godly-minded wife, was not to be ignored. The cut was deep and drove him to seek God in brokenness. He told us that he refocused his ministry and never lost that focus again.

But, this is the very focus that has been lost by the Church at large in the Western world:

"You are preaching ABOUT the gospel, instead of preaching the gospel." Ellen White

This is something that will only come by revelation. And that will only come when we are on our knees, broken before God.

Alex rightly decried the 'morals essays' we preach saying:

'Secondary truths in isolation are nothing but moral essays.'

What are we preaching? Morality, sociology, psychology, politics, and feel-good religion.

But, a Christianity where we do not focus on God's love and care, is quite alien to us. It is extremely difficult for us to conceive of a Christianity without this over-emphasis - I mean 'how would it even work?'

And that is why many, or maybe even most people will immediately react with something like "Well I know that my God loves me even if yours does not."

Sigh

This is an obvious over reaction to the threat of our Christian 'spiritual gravy train' being exposed.

I said no such thing! They take God for a fool, thinking they can use that kind of silly logic.

Yes, God loves us, but our focus needs to be properly balanced.

I serve God. God does not serve me.

In serving God we want to serve as an effective soldier. We work for(serve) God. 'Work' is not a dirty word and to use it does not mean that you are automatically trying to earn salvation through works. James, John and Peter make it clear that there is no salvation without works, because works are the evidence of genuine salvation.

We work at defeating sin in our lives, making disciples, worshipping God, etc...

There are discouraging times when we need some kind-hearted encouragement to help get us back to 'the cause'. And there are odd occasions when we are devastated and need healing of sorts, to get us back up and running:

2 Corinthians 4:8 We are *hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;*

9 persecuted, but not abandoned; *struck down, but not destroyed.*

10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that His life may also be revealed in our mortal body. NIV

So yes, there it is. God does want to encourage and heal us. WHEN IT IS MAJOR! Not for every little hurt and disappointment.

Again, do we live as 'frightened little children?' Or do we want to grow up and become useful to the God who not only created us, but then, by some unbelievable miracle, came and died for us too?

Are we 'emotional invalids' who need constant reassurance just to remain as a survivor?

By some magical Houdini act, **we have transformed the Western Church into an 'escapist cult' that protects everyone's feelings from God and from His Word.** Our new Church could rightly be called 'Christian Escapism.'

The postmodern Western Church is a shadow of what it once was – a weak, timid version far removed from the Church of Peter, Paul, James and John. It has become an institution for those fearful of conflict; a place to hide away from troubles and surround ourselves with people who will (must) be nice to us.

We now have our own 'hedge of protection' against the full import of God's commands, much like the Pharisees and teachers of the Law had constructed. The Pharisees, you know, the ones that Jesus condemned so strongly - "You hypocrites. . . blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel."

Like a bunch of modern snowflakes, we have turned the Western Church into a huge 'safe place'. We had not right. We created a great protective cocoon where the

true, liberating Word of God is not allowed to get in, because it may upset someone.

Something like Berkeley, University of California - they recently put on counselors for any of the liberal and progressive students who might be traumatized by having a conservative speaker at the university.

Do we really want to keep the modern church as a 'therapy club'? Or do we want to return to a truly missional Church. And when I say 'missional' I am not exclusively speaking of soul winning, but rather **the mentality of a people who understand that they are here to serve God with all of their lives, not to be served by God.** People with missional thinking, understand that they are but 'passing through' this world and right now, they must 'be about their Father's business.'

Think about how poorly we lead the church. Jesus and the apostles preached in a challenging way that stirred people up to move on in maturity and ministry.

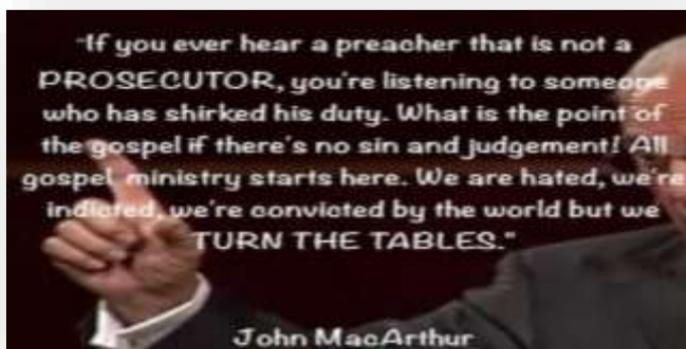
We however, are constantly preaching to the people at the lowest point in the congregation - those hurt, or discouraged.

We are so concerned about 'the hurting' and 'the discouraged' that we constantly have them in mind. It causes us to preach about how God cares, or how God wants to encourage you, or do not be fearful for God is with you.

And even when we preach about faith, or perseverance, we keep it 'not too challenging' for fear of upsetting the discouraged and hurt.

Why? That's just foolishness. It is merely catering to the lowest common denominator. It prevents us from truly challenging the stronger to do better as the Bible commands us to. We **must** strongly challenge the congregation to move them on, as Jesus and the apostles did, and we can take care of any upset individuals later. Or before. And if they do get upset and leave, we know they did that to Jesus too. So, let it go.

Consider MacArthur's words:



Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

Do not rob the church, do not dumb down Biblical teaching for a few. Every week. 'You will always have the poor with you' so do not keep feeding everyone with hurt people's food. Set them free to grow.

The lowest-common-denominator preaching WILL NOT grow the church.

True believers want to be challenged, they want someone to help them battle against their own sinful nature. But you refuse to help them by catering to the needy, most of whom do not want to grow up.

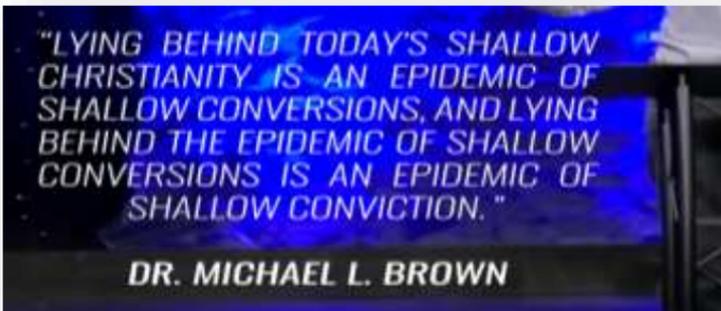
No! It is time to return to what Jesus taught with the emphasis Jesus had.

Preaching and teaching that which befits a soldier in an army engaged in warfare - preaching that properly befits a great cause - the greatest Cause of all time.

Do you have a great cause, or are you, your own great cause? Is your church your little kingdom to build?

Those who wish to complain over every little scratch, must move out of the way and let the true soldiers get on with their great 'God Cause.'

And if that sounds harsh, it is only because you have forgotten that we were called to **die to self and live for God**. That was what Jesus commanded.



Yes, Dr Brown how true.

We are a people of little true conviction of the glorious Leader, Father God and Judge we serve.

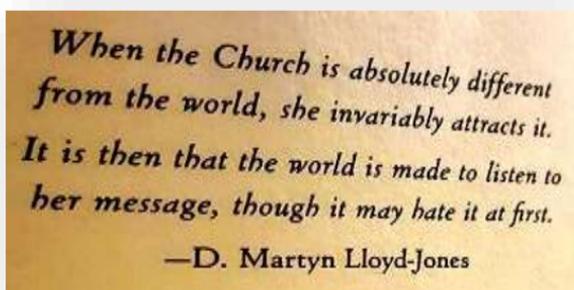
As Martin Luther King declared something along the lines of; "**If you have nothing worth dying for, you have nothing worth living for.**"

And Western Christians live as though there is nothing to die for. We try to save our lives, our comfort, our standard of living, our time...

We gave up the great convictions of dying for the great Cause and now want to be pampered. And then we preach that kind of pampering to the world hoping to get them in.

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

And we wonder why young people are leaving the Church in droves. They want something that has real substance, something to really believe in, something worth dying for. And if they do not find it in the Church, they will attach themselves to a false cause that appears to have real meaning, like the Greenie movement, eradicating poverty, protection of horses, Black Lives Matter, socialist ideals or even to Daesh (ISIS).



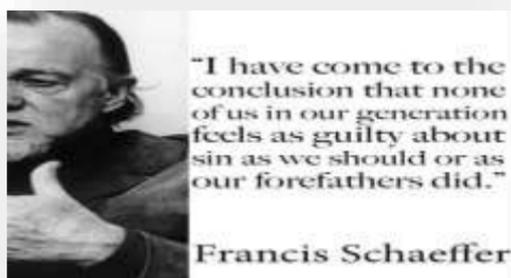
For decades we have tried it our way - preaching God's love and it just ain't working. Let's get back to God's original plan. Let us be the radicals of today, speaking truth to the world like Jesus. Speaking repentance to the world like Jesus.

We like to pretend that we are counter-culture in the way we follow Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, and in loving in a whole new way. We say we are going to 'shake the world for Jesus.' WHAT? We cannot even shake our own church – we are too frightened of what might happen, what people might say.



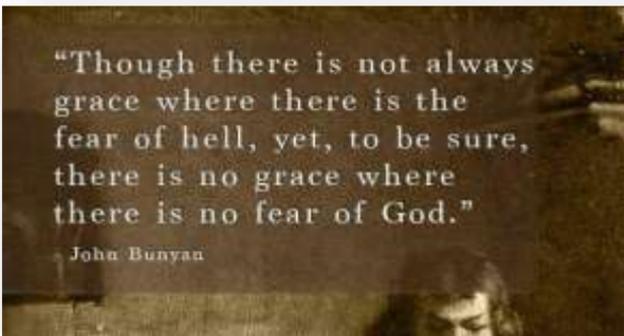
Yes, Fulton Sheen is correct. These ones yearn for meaning and we give them watered-down sentimental dribble. We are far, far more concerned about quantity than quality. God is concerned with quality. **A holy people.** A people who have died to themselves, and fully focused on Him.

Yes, certainly we are a people of little true conviction of the glorious Judge and Father God we serve.



Oh yes, we have been working on this 'guiltless' Christianity for decades and now have it firmly in place. Feeling guilty (conviction) was for the old-timers, those stuck in the past. We today on the other hand, have evolved beyond such unpleasant feelings, into a 'relationship' with God because He loves us so much. How can we even feel guilty for our sin, when we feel so special to God? It is different now. We don't sin any more, we have something much less offensive, we have a 'little problem' and we preach a 'positive' gospel to fix it.

Woe betide anyone who sounds the alarm. If one does bring a warning, he IS 'judged' and condemned as a sinner of the worst kind, and everyone knows it. Everyone is legitimized to judge him, for he must be silenced and made to feel like he is no Christian at all, and most certainly not like Jesus.



Matt. 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach this message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."* NET

Rev. 2:5 Consider how far you have fallen! **Repent** and do the things you did at first. **If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.** NIV

If we were to indeed preach 'God's love' in the true sense of the word 'love' we would not have a problem for God's love includes discipline and justice and extreme holiness. True love could never excuse sin.

If as we say 'sin' is 'missing the mark' then yes it is sin to preach so much about God's love.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Jesus' first words = nothing about God's great love for us.

CHAPTER 9. JESUS' INAUGURAL SERMON ON THE MOUNT

You would think that when Jesus presents His first major teaching, His great inaugural speech, He will set forth the most important aspects. Surely He would not leave out anything that was so foundationally important.

Yet, most all of the sermon on the mount, is Jesus telling us we need to :-

- put God first
- obey God's commands
- obedience brings a blessing
- love & serve one another

And He begins this momentous inaugural address, by telling us how lowly we must be - 'poor in spirit' - literally, **crouched up against the door in recognition of our utter helplessness and dependence on God.**

Matthew 5-7 Sermon on the Mount:

5:3-12 - The Beatitudes - obedience brings a blessing.

5:13-16 - Salt and Light - being useful or useless to God.

5:17-20 - Jesus fulfilled the Law.

5:21-26 - Anger and Murder, the dangers of.

5:27-30 - Lust and Adultery, is sin.

5:31-32 - Divorce and Remarriage

5:33-37 - Oaths

5:38-42 - Eye for an Eye

5:43-48 - Love your enemies

6:1-4 - Give to the Needy

6:5-15 - How to Pray

6:16-18 - How to Fast

6:19-24 - Treasures in Heaven

6:25-34 - Do not worry

7:1-6 - Do not judge hypocritically

7:7-12 - Ask, Seek, Knock

7:13-14 - The Narrow Gate

7:15-23 - False Prophets

7:24-27 - The Wise Builder

Lots of commands and wisdom but nothing of 'God loves you'.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus' inaugural speech: Sermon on the Mount = no emphasis on God's love for us whatsoever.

CHAPTER 10. JESUS' TEACHING

What did Jesus emphasize in His teaching?

I did an internet search on this to save myself having to go through all the words of Jesus again and I was pleased to find a paper by James E. White PhD. on this very question called [*What did Jesus Teach*](#)¹⁵.

He attended a pastor's conference where a speaker had asserted, without documentation, that Jesus taught mostly about marriage, parenting and finances. James was troubled by this, went home to read through all the teachings of Jesus and document his findings.

I highly recommend that you read this short insightful article.

He identified these top ten subjects addressed in the teaching of Jesus in the four Gospel accounts :-

1. *Kingdom of God* - - - - - 10.51%
2. *Jesus' identity and mission* - - - - - 8.53%
3. *Fate of Jerusalem & rejecters of Jesus* - 7.87%
4. *Second coming* - - - - - 5.22%
5. *Hypocrisy* - - - - - 4.82%
6. *Predictions* - - - - - 4.43%
7. *Judgment and hell* - - - - - 4.03%
8. *Persecution* - - - - - 3.57%
9. *Prayer* - - - - - 3.17%
10. *Eternal life and salvation* - - - - - 3.04%

How could 'God's love for us' be an emphasis for Jesus if it is not even in the top ten? More than that, it comes way, way after other harsh things listed - the very things we despise and do not want to teach. Like, repentance, judgment, hell and persecution - you know, those things that we refuse to preach because they do not sound 'loving' and because 'it might scare away the seekers.'

At number one in White's list is the 'Kingdom of God' or where Jesus was teaching about the things of God from the point of view of the Kingdom where God rules. Not God's love, but how things are in His Kingdom. The rulership of God, where He is Lord and King and we obey Him.

For a moment, I want to divert, to look at typically why pastors preach like this so often:

'...a speaker had asserted, without documentation, that Jesus taught mostly about marriage, parenting and finances...'

¹⁵ <http://www.orcuttchristian.org/What%20did%20Jesus%20Teach.pdf>

We have our ways of looking at things (traditions of men) and we do not want to be contrarian, so we decide what to preach about, from what we 'sort of, kind of,' remember the Bible says, and then go looking for Scripture to back up our thesis.

Like the proverbial Bible student that says to his professor, "I know what I want to say but I cannot find a verse for it."

Think about that for a moment.

We are not to preach our ideas with a few Scriptures added to back it up - legitimizing your message, your belief.

We are called to be studying God's Word so very intentionally, that from the multitude of Scriptures, we find that the character and workings of God jump out at us so profoundly that we cannot ignore it. The deeper realities of Christ found while spending plenty of time drawing close to God in His Word and prayer, becoming overwhelmed by His anointing, and we preach Christ, and Him crucified. We need to preach what Scripture demands as we study it in humility and awe.

Back to the subject of this chapter.

If we carefully take note of the written words of the NT rather than what we 'sort of, kind of' remember, we will find that Jesus did not teach 'mostly about marriage, parenting and finances.'

Not even about God's love for us.

Yet I hear this type of statement so often - "But Jesus taught about God's love for us." We somehow do not feel the need to verify our assertions. Because of our popular traditions of belief, we are legitimized to declare them. **It is something that we really want to believe.**

In fact, there is NO record that Jesus publicly taught that God loves us, anywhere in the Bible. John 3:16 was not a public teaching. We shall look into that verse in a separate chapter later.

Let's go a step further. If we look at all the words of Jesus in the NT, including the book of Revelation, we find that Jesus spoke more about hell than anyone else, more about hell than heaven, and more about hell than any other subject in the whole of the New Testament. I have not verified this myself, but some prominent teachers have:

Leon Morris:

*"He [Jesus] spoke more often about hell than he did about heaven. We cannot get around this fact."*¹⁶

Chuck Missler:

'Jesus spoke more about hell than any other subject..' 'It is significant that Jesus spoke much more about "Hell" than He did about Heaven.'

*The ratio of references is about 5 to 1.*¹⁷

David Pawson:

'Most of the teaching we have on hell comes from Jesus, not from Peter, not from Paul, not from John, and there's nothing in the Old Testament about hell.

It all comes from the lips of Jesus and when somebody asks me 'how can a God of love send anyone to hell' I say "Jesus knew more about God's love than anybody else and yet he believed that could happen, and I am not prepared to call him a liar.

*Not only does all our information about hell come from the lips of Jesus, almost all of it comes only in Matthew's gospel.'*¹⁸

Kevin J Conner:

It should be remembered that it was the Lord Jesus Himself who spoke more of this final hell than all other Bible writers. We consider why Jesus used this terrible place with its two major features to symbolize the final state of the wicked in the final hell which God prepared for the Devil and his angels.....

*.....Thus the Lord Jesus, the One of infinite love and compassion, spoke more of Hell because He is the one who came to save mankind from this terrible place.....'*¹⁹

Mark Driscoll:

*"Jesus said more about hell than about any other topic. Amazingly, 13 percent of his sayings are about hell and judgment ..."*²⁰

Robert Jeffress:

*"Of the 1,850 verses in the New Testament that record Jesus' words, 13 percent of them deal with the subject of eternal judgment and hell. In fact, Jesus spoke more frequently about hell than He did about heaven."*²¹

D.A. Carson:

¹⁶ *The Dreadful Harvest* - Leon Morris CHRISTIANITY TODAY, May 27, 1991

¹⁷ <http://www.khouse.org/articles/2003/491/> Dr Chuck Missler

¹⁸ *Unlocking The New Testament series* - Matt. David Pawson

¹⁹ *The Foundations of the Christian Doctrine* - page 305. Kevin J Conner

²⁰ [6 Questions on Hell](#) - Mark Driscoll

²¹ [HOW CAN I KNOW?](#) - Robert Jeffress

*"... he [Jesus] himself speaks twice as often of hell as of heaven."*²²

John MacArthur:

*"Jesus talked more about hell than He did about heaven in order to warn men of its reality."*²³

*"Jesus spoke more about hell than any other one else in the Bible. In fact, He spoke more about hell than everybody else in the Bible combined."*²⁴

Rick Warren:

*"Obviously I do believe in hell. Jesus spoke more about hell than heaven."*²⁵

Jerry Falwell:

*"Jesus said more about Hell than Heaven."*²⁶

Q) And why did Jesus preach more about hell that much?

A) **Because He loved people!**

Not with the sappy, weak 'love' we talk about and even demand, but the true love where hell requires us to actually warn people. It's not judging, it is loving.

When we do not preach repentance and hell, we do NOT love people as Jesus did.

This is contrary from the current popular opinion of foolish people who claim that it is not nice, or it's 'hating on them'. Jesus proves the very opposite.

Jesus **IS** love; and He spoke much of hell and judgment.

However, there is an interesting observation one can gain from Scripture about this. Jesus taught about hell to the Jews. They were believers in God. Yet, the disciples who preached to the gentiles, the unbelievers, did not say a lot about hell as is observed through the book of Acts and the Letters.

I think the lesson to learn from this, is perhaps that we should not say a lot about hell to unbelievers, but rather to the believers. This might seem strange, but I did not write the Bible, I only try to follow it.

We hate to talk about judgment to unbelievers, because not only does it sound harsh, it makes us sound like a 'weird' too.

²² [Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and His Confrontation with the World](#)

²³ [The Ultimate Religious Decision](#) - John MacArthur

²⁴ [The Truth About Hell](#) - John MacArthur

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=813&v=AVzbh_dLq3s

²⁵ [interview with John Piper](#) - Rick Warren

²⁶ [Heaven and Hell](#) - Jerry Falwell

We are owned and commissioned by God, how dare we, the ambassadors of the King - the servant spokesmen of the Almighty God - modify the message to suit our likes.

It gets worse; when one does declare the reality of hell to the world, it sounds weird to them, we are a little embarrassed to hear it, and **we assume that it was a bad witness.** We think it makes God and Christianity look bad.



What? Speaking to the world as Jesus did, is a bad witness?

“Oh Lord how can we be so compromised?”

We really think that we can win the world by talking just like them, rather than like Paul?

Jesus has words for people like that; **“Blind fools!”**

If you truly love people, tell them to repent for God is holy, and that hell is a place of terror. If you do not love people that much - or love yourself more than they - you will focus on telling them that God loves them so much. Don't claim to love people if you refuse to warn them about hell.

When I pastored a country church, a farmer didn't like the sermons I preached on hell. He said, Preach about the meek and lowly Jesus. I said, That's where I got my information about hell.

(Vance Havner)

izquotes.com

Only the carnal will say that preaching about hell is not good.

When God speaks harsh things to us, we may be convicted and get truly saved. But, we are also comforted that God is still with us and is speaking to us.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Jesus' Teaching = No, Jesus had no emphasis on telling of God's love for us in His teaching.

CHAPTER 11. WAS JESUS MOSTLY TENDER & KIND?

In discussions, debates, comments and preaching, I observe the constant shallow declaration 'Well, Jesus loved people and was kind to them' as a rebuttal to any talk of hell, judgment or even serious holy living.

Again and again I hear Christians state or infer that Jesus was 'kindly' to people. This is just ignorance of what Scripture tells us, and nothing like Jesus of the Bible. This is a completely romanticized version of the biblical Jesus and it is false. It is 'another Jesus' that Paul warned the Galatian church about.

Preachers even preach that Jesus went about doing good and loving people, as though that says it all.

Q. How many harsh things can you remember Jesus saying?

A. few - right? Like saying 'you brood of vipers' 'hypocrites'...

Q. Now, how many warm, kindly things can you remember that Jesus said?

Hardly even one - right?

It is a false belief - a mere tradition of men.

Jesus not only taught hard things, he practiced them too:

Luke 17:9 *"He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? 10 So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, **'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.'**"* NASB

Here, Jesus practices this concept with Peter:

John 21:22 *Jesus replied, "If I want him to live until I come back, **what concern is that of yours?** You follow me!"* Net Bible

In other words "Mind your own business Peter!"

Pulpit Commentary:

*'.....it was very natural that Peter should put to the Lord the question here recorded. Yet Jesus not merely declined to comply with this request, **he even rebuked the questioner** for his curiosity.....'*

Word Pictures in the New Testament - Robertson:

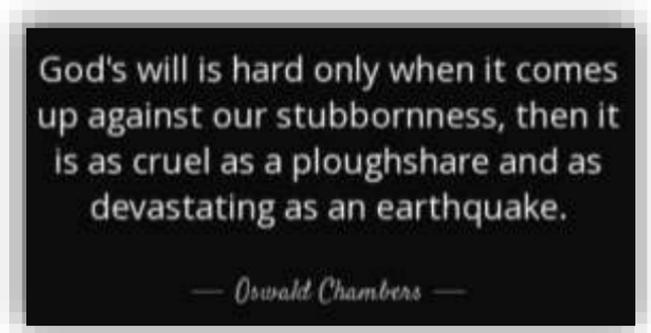
*What is that to thee? (ti pros se). **A sharp rebuke to Peter's keen curiosity.***

Follow thou me (su moi akolouthei). "Do thou me keep on following." That lesson Peter needed.

Explanatory Notes on Bible RT Ice:

*'If I want him to live until I come? Jesus is saying: "**It's none of your business what the future holds for others. You follow me, and let the others take care of themselves!**"'*

You see how I can say that 'God/Jesus is not very nice by our standards.' Because our standard is so skewed, we do not have the Kingdom of Heaven in mind.



Jesus was intense by our standards, but that is only because sin is so serious and hell so terrible. To truly love with God's infinite love, was to be clear and blunt. Often.

Singer and musician Keith Green, was an intense character and it was said that he would kill the life of a party whenever he turned up.

We all know someone like that and we prefer if they do not come to our party. Hmmm, or even our church.

Yet, when you read of Jesus through the gospel accounts, that is exactly what we see.

Jesus seemed to be contrary.

Jesus seemed to fuss about little things.

Jesus seemed to kill the life of the party.

And why? Because 'wrong thinking' is the root of wrong believing and wrong living. Truth and right thinking were so very important to Jesus.

However, even though we read of what Jesus did and said in the New Testament, we still believe that Jesus was only really 'nice and loving', going around helping everyone and accepting all as they were.

This has serious consequences; by overly focusing on God's great love for us, we feel so 'protected' and lose sight of just how evil sin is and how terrible hell will be.

Jesus was NOT politically correct.

When Church leaders and Christians push politically correct ideas about Jesus being so kindly, over

correction or truth, they are making out that Jesus acted in a different way than described in the Bible. They are either ignorant of the Jesus described in the Bible, or they are lying for their own reasons.

Just one of those reasons is to 'get more people into their Church.'

Jon, a long time Christian friend actually wrote the following during a discussion with me:

*'His love is for their spiritual sanitary[sic](I think he meant sanctity) not in the physical admonishment, Jesus is always love first discipline second. God is full of love and mercy kindness - **We don't serve the God of the old testament, Jesus laid down His life so we don't have to. The angry disciplinary side of God see's us through the "eyes" of Jesus, we are loved and accepted and saved warts and all through Jesus. The people who don't bow their knee to Jesus aren't so lucky, **it is they who have to face the God of the old testament, no shedding of blood for them. It's Jesus - Jesus is the key, or the sunglasses!***** (Emphasis added)

Such deception. A divided God?

This is a false belief, that is usually not verbalized, because we know it's wrong, but it is what we do believe and live by. That 1) God has actually changed 2) that Jesus is 'only nice' and will not be hard on us at any time.

Many will refute this and say 'I don't believe that the God of the Old Testament is different from Jesus of the New Testament.' **Yes you do! it is exposed by your adherence to the 'nice' Jesus, you just have not admitted this double-think as yet.**

This is a foolish and very dangerous Sola Affectus gospel, yet this is what the thinking of the Church has devolved into.

Tell me, why wouldn't God be angry with the Church, when our traditions of men, annul Scripture?

God certainly was angry with Moses and Aaron, but somehow how He could never be angry with you or me? Jesus was angry with his disciples, but never with you and me?

We too, have oral traditions that rival the very Word of God, just as Israel did. If God does not judge us, He would have to apologize to ancient Israel.

2 Chron 12:7 "...The people of Judah are truly sorry for their sins, and so I won't let Shishak

*completely destroy them. But because **I am still angry**, & he will conquer and rule them... CEV*

Israel did not have the Holy Spirit as we do, but we re-write the Bible and preach a Jesus who is only nice – Sola Affectus. You really think God is never angry with us?

Hmm, it is very like extra-biblical writings – the Talmud for the Jews; the Book of Mormon for the Latter Day Saints; the Watch Tower Publication for the Jehovah's Witnesses. These 'other' writings and traditions become authoritative, and they draw people away from the Word of God.

The enemy wants to divert our attention from the real Word of God, with comforting pet doctrines and they work very nicely for him.

So on one hand, we think and live as though 'we do not serve the God of the Old Testament' and yet in a different conversation we glibly spout '***Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.***' [Heb. 13:8](#) KJV

The God of the Old Testament IS the God of the New Testament. It sounds too obvious, but it needs to be verbalized and proved again for a postmodern generation.

During the New Covenant period, when God executed Ananias and Sapphira, that, IS the 'God of the Old Testament.' (Acts 5)

How can your picture of the kindly Jesus, be reconciled with the Jesus who executed Ananias & Sapphira to death, for a little lie?

The truth is, Jesus cannot be 'most only kindly', AND be the One who executes people.

This is the great deception and dilemma of the Church today - who will you choose? The True Jesus of the Bible, or the remodeled, remanufactured, rebranded, remarketed (re-crucified) Jesus of the postmodern Church?

And when Paul, lead by the Holy Spirit, commands the erring Corinthian church; '***So when you meet together and the power of the Lord Jesus is with you, I will be there too. You must then hand that man over to Satan. His body will be destroyed, but his spirit will be saved when the Lord Jesus returns.***' [1Cor. 5:4-5](#) CEV

That's the 'God of the Old Testament' too.

But that particular God, would not be allowed into our modern Church.

And when Jesus told his disciples that; '*... you will be arrested and punished. You will be tried in your meeting places and put in jail. **Because of me** you will be placed on trial before kings and governors. 13 But this will be your chance to tell about your faith.. 16 You will be betrayed by your own parents, brothers, family, and friends. **Some of you will even be killed.** 17 Because of me, you will be hated by everyone.*' [Luke 21:12](#) CEV

What an extraordinary expectation. That is the 'God of the Old Testament' too.

Yet we say that 'Yes, Jesus will be harsh when He comes again, but not now.'

Jesus is harsh now at times, as well as at the end:

[2Tim. 4:1](#) *In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and **in view of his appearing and his kingdom**, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; **correct, rebuke** and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.* NIV

Or to put it in a simple way: '**Considering that Christ will come as a tough judge in the future, correct and rebuke people now, in order that they be ready for Him when he does come.**'

What do we have now? A snowflake Western Church that is almost completely NOT ready to meet a tough Judge.

After Paul commands the Corinthian Church to deliver a member over to Satan; he reiterates what we all know, but refuse to do:

[1Cor. 5:2](#) You are proud, **when you ought to feel bad enough to chase away anyone** who acts like that...

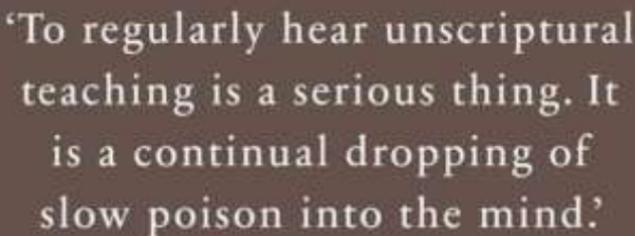
6 Stop being proud! *Don't you know how a little yeast can spread through the whole batch of dough?*

7 Get rid of the old yeast! *Then you will be like fresh bread made without yeast, and that is what you are. Our Passover lamb is Christ, who has already been sacrificed.* CEV

Remove false teachings and sin from among us? No, no, no! **We remove those who expose the false teaching and sin in the midst.** And why? Our pride. We are too arrogant to simply run God's Church His way. We force our 'new improved, human version' onto His Church.

We see the parallel in the culture of Western countries now – i.e. in England the Muslim child-sex trafficking gangs have been virtually ignored, even protected by the police department, politicians and media. But, one who reports on these inconvenient facts, is jailed – Tommy Robinson.

That's political correctness gone mad. But we modern Christians have added to that, we have '**Christian Correctness**' which is even more insidious. **We falsely back it up with Scripture,** deceiving the believers and insulting the Great Creator God.



'To regularly hear unscriptural teaching is a serious thing. It is a continual dropping of slow poison into the mind.'

J C Ryle

Yes, we are 'hearing unscriptural teaching' and we have been poisoned.

Continuing on with the God of the OT in the NT.

Jesus is the God of the Old Testament and He said:

Matt. 13:50 *Then those evil people will be thrown into a flaming furnace, where they will cry and grit their teeth in pain.* CEV

This too is the God of the Old Testament:

2John 1:9 *Don't keep changing what you were taught about Christ, **or else God will no longer be with you.** But if you hold firmly to what you were taught, both the Father and the Son will be with you.* CEV

This too is the God of the OT revealed in the NT:

Hebrews 12:28 *...We should do this with respect and **fear,** 29 because our **God is like a fire that can destroy us.*** ERV

We read these verses but do not hear them - 'seeing without seeing and hearing without hearing.'

When we finally do truly get to know the God of the Bible, we will realize that the God of the Old Testament is everywhere through the New Testament. We just could not see it before.

Oh, the Biblical illiteracy and spiritual blindness of Christians today, and I am speaking of pastors too.

How can we keep a clear view of who God really is in this age, when the politically correct assault is so strong? It requires us to be keenly searching Scripture, and to keep revising our understanding in order 'not to be conformed to this world'. But we don't - we think we already know all about it, even while it is being taken from us and we rely on what we 'sort of' 'kind of' remember the Bible says.

Jerome, a Church Father was right:

*'If the man who does not know Scripture does not know the power and wisdom of God, then ignorance of Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.'*²⁷

Jerome, A.D. 340-420

Another observation, from a 16th century Christian mystic who understood the principle, but unfortunately swayed into mysticism:

Theresa of Avila:

All troubles of the Church, all the evils in the world, flow from this source: that men do not by clear and sound knowledge and serious consideration penetrate into the truths of Sacred Scripture.

Attributed to Theresa of Avila, A.D. 1515-1582

We have often been exhorted to consider 'What Would Jesus Do?' WWJD, in the difficult situations we face in life? That is good. The problem being; if you DO NOT know what Jesus would do because you do not perceive Him correctly from Scripture, how can you 'do what Jesus would do?'

You cannot. You cannot please God.

We have asked the question WWJD and then drawn the answer from a false image of Jesus to determine what He would do. That's why the Western Church is largely living in deception about so many things now. If we reviewed from the Bible what Jesus actually did, it would be clear how wrong we are.

Apart from all the healing and deliverance that Jesus performed, what are some of the other things He did?

²⁷ <https://www.museumofthebible.org/book/minutes/51>

Answer? Jesus drove people out of the temple with a whip for wrong thinking and practices; He would do the same to us. Jesus scolded people for the sin in their lives; He would do the same with us. Jesus berated His followers for having a hard heart or a lack of faith; He would do the same with us today.

These are things Jesus did in His love. So we observe that 'love' as Jesus saw it was seemingly the opposite from what we think today.

If Jesus is most always 'only nice' in your mind, it is impossible to do what Jesus did so often – expose sin where and when you see it, while declaring Kingdom truths that offend and make you sound weird.

Jesus only survived about three years of speaking God's truth. Currently, Christians could survive a 1000 years quite safely.

Christians are now so conditioned by all the 'God loves us soooo much' dribble, that they really do believe that Jesus was only ever kindly with people.

What? Are we saying that Jesus values your feelings over truth - the truth that comes from the very being of God and is eternal?

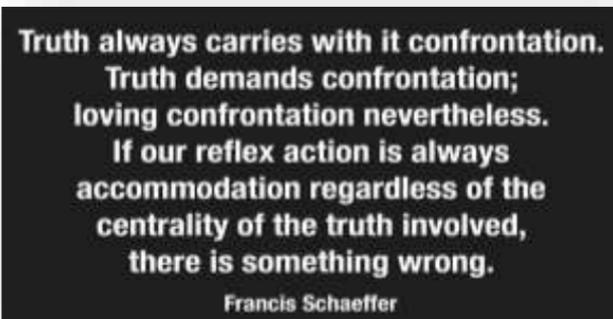
And pastors, those who have any awareness of this, are too afraid to burst the bubble, for fear of losing members and friends, or being seen to be 'too hard.'

Let's go back to the simple, clear Scripture about "God never changing":

Heb. 13:8 *Jesus Christ never changes! He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

9 *Don't be fooled by any kind of strange teachings...* CEV

So, having quoted that God does not change, we then go on and believe *strange teachings*.... About many things including that God is only loving/kindly to us?



Truth always carries with it confrontation.
Truth demands confrontation;
loving confrontation nevertheless.
If our reflex action is always
accommodation regardless of the
centrality of the truth involved,
there is something wrong.
Francis Schaeffer

Let's look at some examples of these subjective beliefs.

For instance, this occurred while I was writing this book, and is a typical conversation and a good example of the common current thinking:

During a church service the pastor made some comments that someone took exception to, and they walked out of the service. After the church service, I was discussing this reaction, sin in general and the biblical illiteracy in the greater church with a brother. Let's call him Fred. He has been a very active Christian, organizing ministry events for many years and has a lot of experience. I made some comments about a high profile pastor and leader here in Melbourne, let's call him Tyson, who is prominent and somewhat liberal; the kind who rarely speaks of sin, and certainly will not confront sinful lifestyles that are greatly opposed to Scripture.

Fred replied:

"Oh no, he just has a different way of saying things. It's best not to offend people and cause them to walk away. If they come into the Church, they will learn over time and God will change them. It would be better if our pastor had not said what he did to cause that person to leave while he was preaching. The best way to reach people is like Phillip spoke about (a testimony) in the church service - by showing people love. It is better not to ram the teaching down their throat, but present Jesus to them."

I felt grieved at this foolishness coming from the mouth of a supposedly mature, experienced believer.

In the following discussion where we talked about many things, I mentioned that Paul commanded Timothy to 'make them believe correct doctrine' and that he would 'punish them' if they did not believe it.

He looked at me in disbelief and asked, "Where in the Bible does it say that?" He really had no memory of anything even remotely like that.

I was more grieved. How can a mature, experienced believer, not know and understand such a basic concept? Because we fixate on God loving us soooo much.

So I emailed Fred later that day:

Hi Fred,

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

I have been troubled after speaking with you at church today. I grieve over the state of the Church and so few truly understand the problem and the deep false conditioning.

It was good to get to know you better and see what a strong heart you have for the Lord.

I am going to be straight and blunt with you and I hope you will be with me. I want to really, really know God and if I am missing something, I must know about it.

Now, I started off by saying (with a smile) "Can you correct Tyson's theology (liberal theology) when you see him?"

You said "Oh no, they just have a different way of saying things. It's best not to offend people (coming into the church) and cause them to walk away. They come into the Church and they will learn over time. It would be better if our pastor had not said what he did that caused the person to leave while he was preaching.

The best way to reach people is like Phillip spoke about during the church service - by showing people love.

It is better not to ram the teaching down their throat but present Jesus to them."

You agreed with me that a very high percentage of the Church today in Australia are not actually a true Christian.

You did not believe me when I said that Paul said to 'make them believe correct doctrine' and that he would 'punish them' if they did not believe it.

I said that a major problem is that we have a fixation on 'God's love' and we have dumbed down the teaching of Jesus so much, that we do not even preach the true gospel now. We preach a feel good 'God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life, he will heal all your problems and will take care of you.....'

This is calling people to idolatry - all the things they will get, it's all about them. This is not preaching a truly saving message that brings in 'disciples' who take up their cross daily, are missional and keen to make more disciples.

You objected as though I was speaking of a 'harsh' gospel preaching, too strong, and not what the Bible commands of us which is supposedly, preaching God's love to get people saved and to help mature those in the Church.

I quoted some basic facts about what the Bible actually says about God's love, like the fact that the NT says little about God's love for us while harsh things are said, things that you would say 'we should not say that because it would push people away'. And that nowhere in the book of Acts is it recorded that the apostles preached 'God loves you' to either Christians or non Christians. But then you changed what you were saying and told me that you did not preach about God's love, contradicting what you had said earlier.

Of course God loves us, that is not in question. What is in question is the huge, over-emphasis we now put on it - we are fixated on it.

Having realized that maybe we should not preach God's love so much, you then said that you did not do that.

But then, you used a diversionary tactic by asking if 'I was perfect, no, so how can I judge?' Which is irrelevant to the discussion.

So, was John the Baptist wrong to preach repentance even though he was not perfect? Was Paul wrong? Or John, James, Peter? Or Martin Luther, Charles Wesley, CH Spurgeon, CT Studd.....?

You see how it is an irrelevant question and detracting from the issue?

This is why I want to challenge you to consider that we do indeed have a fixation on preaching 'God's love' rather than repentance - obey the God who created you.

We need to be delivered of this fixation so that the Gospel can be preached correctly. We need to have the veil of conditioning, even deception lifted.

Take note how often Christians will go back to God's love, and Jesus not being judgmental etc... in your discussions and in church.

Notice how people in the Church need to have this affirmed in order for them to function as a Christian - it is a drug of dependence, but we keep on administering it and think we are doing what God wants us to do.

The reason we have sooooo many unsaved in the Church now, is because we did not preach the true self-sacrificing gospel in the first place like Jesus did:

- [Luke 9:23](#) And he said to them all, "If you want to come with me, **you must forget yourself, take up your cross every day, and follow me.**

This is the verse I was referring to about Paul from the Bible in Basic English version:

- [2Cor. 10:2](#) (Yes, I make my request to you, so that when I am with you I may not have to **make use of the authority which may be needed against some to whom we seem to be walking after the flesh.**

(ETR Version - I plan to be very bold against those people when I come. I hope I will not need to use that same boldness with you.)

3 For though we may be living in the flesh, we are not fighting after the way of the flesh

4 For the arms with which we are fighting are not those of the flesh, but are strong before God for the destruction of high places;

5 Putting an end to reasonings, and every high thing which is lifted up against the knowledge of God, and causing every thought to come under the authority of Christ;

6 **Being ready to give punishment to whatever is against his authority,** after you have made it clear that you are completely under his control. **(ETR Version - We are ready to punish anyone there who does not obey, but first we want you to be fully obedient.)**

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

7 Give attention to the things which are before you. If any man seems to himself to be Christ's, let him keep in mind that we are as much Christ's as he is.

8 For though I might take pride in our authority which the Lord gave for building you up, and not for your destruction, it will not be a cause of shame to me:

9 That I may not seem to have the desire of causing you fear by my letters.

10 For his letters, they say, **have weight and are strong**; but in body he is feeble, and his way of talking has little force.

(ETR Version - **"Paul's letters are powerful and sound important, but when he is with us, he is weak and the worst speaker you have ever heard."**)

11 Let those who say this keep in mind that, what **we are in word by letters when we are away, so will we be in act when we are present**.

(ETR Version - **Those people should know this: When we are there with you, we will show the same power that we show now in our letters.**)

It cannot be made any clearer that this, so why are we so weak and pathetic?:

- [1 Tim. 5:20](#) As for those (elders) who persist in sin, **rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.**

But you say we should not offend anyone, causing them to leave?

Another instance:

- [1 Cor. 4:21](#) What do you prefer? Shall I come to you **with a rod of discipline**, or shall I come in love and with a gentle spirit?

Another instance:

- [2Cor. 7:8](#) I don't feel bad anymore, even **though my letter hurt your feelings**. I did feel bad at first, but I don't now. **I know that the letter hurt you** for a while.

9 Now I am happy, but not because **I hurt your feelings**. It is because **God used your hurt feelings to make you turn back to him**, and none of you were harmed by us. CEV

Another:

- [2 Cor. 2:9](#) Another reason I wrote you was to see **if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything**. NIV

Another:

- [2 Thes. 3:14](#) Take special note of anyone who **does not obey our instruction in this letter**. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed. NIV

More:

- [Gal. 1:8](#) But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, **he is to be accursed!** 9As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

- [Gal 2:11](#) But when Peter came to Antioch, **I had to oppose him to his face, for what he did was very wrong.**..... 14 When I saw

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all....

- [Phil. 3:2](#) **Watch out for those dogs, those people who do evil,** those mutilators who say you must be circumcised to be saved.

- [Acts 13:10](#) Then he said, "**You son of the devil,** full of every sort of deceit and fraud, and enemy of all that is good!

- [Rom. 11:22](#) **Notice how God is both kind and severe.** He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness.

- [1Cor. 5:5](#) I have decided to **deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh,** that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

You know why you have not noticed these Scriptures and think that I am too harsh? Simply because, as I said to you 'we are so busy preaching the nice things and some neutral things that we lose focus on how important the harsh things are. We cannot even use them in our Christian walk or ministry. If we relegate them to the 'too harsh' basket, why would we ever really preach them. We only preach half the Word of God, which is a false word and a false gospel. This is very, very serious, but we say "Oh they just have a different way of preaching it."

But you say we should not be too direct in our preaching, we just love them and somehow in time, they will change.

How? Why would sinful people who love their 'God-given benefits and comforts' give them up without clear, straight teaching on it? There is no incentive.

Since when was it ok to fill the Church with fake Christians? That is our foolish Pharisaical tradition.

Christianity is not a **happy club for little children**, where we are not to offend anyone! We MUST offend people with the truth, or we are NOT preaching the true gospel and Word of God.

[1 Cor. 14:20](#) Brothers and sisters, **stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults.**

Jesus not only stated that 'you are either for me or against me' but that is how he approached all his teaching and most of his interaction with people.

Yet what you advocated, what we believe and act is the opposite - the current belief is that if we turn some away because we said something that offended them, we somehow did it wrong and not something Jesus would do.

It is just another false tradition of men that we hold to, just like the Pharisees whom Jesus condemned.

No, we have made the Church a haven for Pharisaical, so-called Christians and they drag everyone else down.

The clear, straight preachers are not allowed to preach anymore, because the pretend Christians filling the Church will not let them - they might leave.

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God wants to take the Church back, and He will - a great shaking is coming to the Church. If we refuse to do things God's way, He will do it His way, and we must not stand in His way brother.

If the truth be told, we do not even know God any more, because we only believe in a single faceted God - love.

Love you brother, let me know what you think.

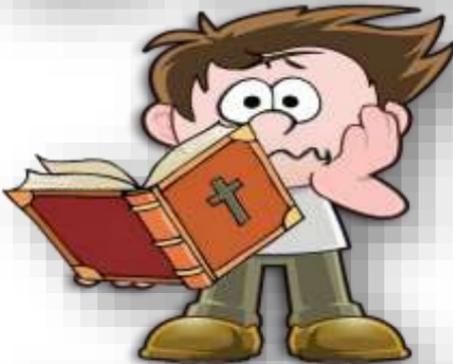
*God is so good,
Neil*

Do you see how even seniors in the faith are 'Biblically illiterate' because our traditions blind us to the unpleasant Scriptures. Everything is read through the distortion of 'God loves us sooooo much'(read: God is only nice.)

The results of this, is that **we then discern everything, not by what the Bible actually says, but by how we 'sort of, kind of remember what the Bible says.'** Most Christians are like Fred, they don't know what the Bible says, they only know what it 'kind of' says, we are constantly judging things by **'how we sort of, kind of remember' what the Bible says** but we are so very wrong in so many things. We are blind.

And then we teach others the wrong things. Just like Jesus said of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law - *'Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.'* [Matt. 15:14](#)

THAT MOMENT..



You realise that what you have been taught the Bible says, is not what the Bible says

How terrible for the Church to be in such a state. Is there any hope for the Western Church?

When Fred said:

'It's best not to offend people and cause them to walk away. If they come into the Church, they will learn over time and God will change them. . .'

And

'It is better not to ram the teaching down their throat but present Jesus to them.'

How can one reconcile that with Scripture which says:

[Eph. 5:11](#) *Have no part in the things that people in darkness do, which produce nothing good. **Instead, tell everyone how wrong those things are.* ERV**

[Psalm 7:11](#) *God is a good judge. He **always condemns evil.* ERV**

And our God told us that we are the salt of the earth. Not only that, but He said if we lose our savor, we are useless.

So, being the salt of the earth as God commanded, is ramming the truth down their neck by our traditions?

Guess who is wrong, so very wrong?

And if I may be so bold as to echo Jesus' conclusion for those followers who have lost their savor – **a great many of us are useless to the Kingdom of God and all we are 'good for is to be thrown out and walked on.'** (**[Matt. 5:13](#) CEV**)

If you are offended by that, you show that you still do not truly know God, His Kingdom call on us, His missional commands, His missional expectations or His values.

Another example:

Dan, a Christian blogger, in an article where he refutes the statement that Jesus **speaks more about hell than any other subject**:

'.....Continuing to promote that falsehood severely undermines Christ's true message—which is the love of God and neighbor that Jesus himself called The Greatest Commandment.

Turning Jesus' gospel of love into a “gospel” of fear, damnation and punishment is either alarmingly ignorant or intentionally manipulative. Either way,

it's very bad news indeed, and needs to stop.....'²⁸

Dan

It didn't matter how much I appealed to Scripture, I was met with the same old insistence that 'Jesus was only caring with people - he loved people'.

So again, telling the truth by God's standards is now a '***gospel of fear***' by our standards and traditions?

This is so typically subjective of the progressive liberals, but it has flooded the evangelical churches too.

Another person in the discussion replied:

*'.....your Jesus isn't the Jesus of the gospels.
He's someone to fear.
You've made god in your own image.'*

I have been accused of this many times, just as others have, when they speak biblical truths.

No, it is he that has 'made a god' of his liking.'

How can one break through such blind conditioning?

I decided that 'facts don't lie' and I needed to go through the interactions Jesus had, in all four gospel accounts, and count up how many times He was kindly and how many times He was less than nice.

In the light of clear proof, maybe Christians would stop their robotic claims - recycling the popular view - and listen attentively to the Word of God.

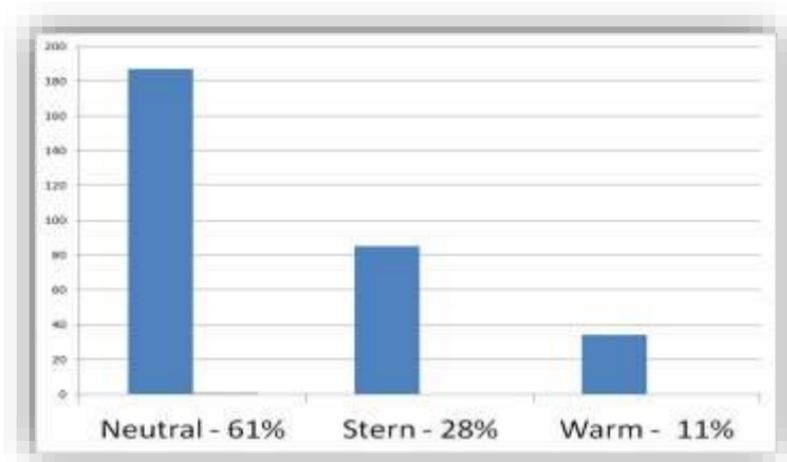
I looked at every single instance of an interaction Jesus had with people, in all four gospel accounts. I wanted to know how often Jesus was kindly or tender; over and against how often He was stern.

This is the result:

I found that Jesus was stern much more often than he was nice - more than double.

Only **11%** of His interactions were warm, while **28%** were stern or otherwise, leaving 61% as neutral interactions or not giving enough information to tell otherwise:

²⁸ <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/unfundamentalistchristians/2015/01/did-jesus-speak-more-about-hell-than-about-heaven/>



For the record; I did not try to isolate where it may have been the same instance reported on twice by different writers. I did this because it is impossible with some instances to know if it was the same occasion or another. I then decided to accept all instances as being what God wanted in His Word to communicate whatever He did.

How can 89% (neutral & stern) of Jesus' interaction with people, equate to Jesus supposedly being 'only kind and tender-hearted with people?'

We imagine that Jesus was always kindly and it was only on rare occasions He was not. And on those rare occasions He had a good reason to be harsh, because the person being addressed was so wrong. So, that instance of Jesus being hard, somehow, does not really count in the overall, so our belief that Jesus was mostly kindly, remains intact.

Oh! How blind we are! We do not even know the God we serve. We claim to be the keepers of the 'true knowledge of God and the Bible' but we are really quite biblically illiterate – again, our bold claims are based on 'sort of, kind of' remembering what the Bible says rather than what the Bible does actually say in black and white.

And tragically, this applies to so many pastors too.

But the quoting of Scriptures where Jesus was harsh or stern, does not easily silence us into thinking more deeply about these things. No, we are determined to protect our pet doctrine, we search for an excuse for any of His harsh words, and we find a loophole - "**Jesus was only like that to the proud Pharisees, priests and teachers of the law not the general people**" we say, as though this now answers all. (Later, I will prove statistically, that this statement is in fact false.)

So, we just contradicted ourselves. Jesus was not always 'kindly' in his interactions. **In fact, the record shows**

Jesus was often hard or 'unkindly' and was not often kindly as I just showed statistically.

We automatically imagine that when Jesus spoke He was doing it in a tender way: when Jesus says 'do not worry' we imagine it being said tenderly 'Don't worry(I am with you)'. But these things were usually said in a challenging or confrontive way. "Do not worry(it is only because you have hard hearts that you worry, now stop it)."

Jesus did both ways, but we demand only the nice way to be fact.

I would go so far as to say that, **anyone who claims that 'God is nice' has never truly met Him.**

In seeing, they cannot see how the Bible clearly describes God.

God is called many things, but 'nice' is so shallow, so as to be false.

Even the 'kindly' instances, are mostly indirect rather than someone feeling very loved and warm:

[Matt. 9:36](#) *When he saw the crowds, he felt sorry for them. They were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.* CEV

Let's look at a few instances with the Jewish leaders and while we go through these, think about how today, anyone saying such things would be called, **hateful**, unloving, un-Christian and not being like Christ:

[Mark 12:38](#) *Jesus also taught: "Beware of these teachers of religious law! For they like to parade around in flowing robes and receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces.*

39 And how they love the seats of honor in the synagogues and the head table at banquets.

40 Yet they shamelessly cheat widows out of their property and then pretend to be pious by making long prayers in public. Because of this, they will be more severely punished." NLT

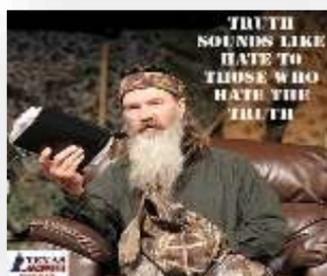
[Matt. 12:39](#) *But Jesus replied: You want a sign because **you are evil** and won't believe! But the only sign you will get is the sign of the prophet Jonah.* CEV

But, we say, you should never say someone is evil, the most we can say is "You are acting in an sinful way", not

" IT'S UNPOPULAR TO TAKE
A STRONG STAND
ON ANYTHING THESE DAYS,
EXCEPT TOLERANCE "

John PIPER

evil itself. Because that will harm their self-esteem and drive them away from our church and away from God.



Yes, saints will be called hateful for speaking the truth (in not-so-evident love) but that is only because we hate the truth.

To love is to warn of danger.

We now live in a world where **normal, need-to-know facts offend people.**

And we hate being offended, so to remove any offense, those facts must be relegated to the 'unacceptable bin' and classed as wrong.

Therefore, they are no longer acceptable facts.

Therefore, **facts that offend cease to be facts.**

Wrong!

We cannot change facts however much we deny, whine and pout, and we will be reminded of that when we stand before the Holy God.

Jesus loved so much that He warned and warned and warned again. Even though it was to cost Him His life.

Yet, Jesus commanded them to:

[John 13:34](#) "But I am giving you a new command. You must love each other, just as I have loved you." CEV

'Love one another as I have loved you'? If we truly loved each other as Jesus loved His disciples, they would be some harsh words of rebuke and challenge for each other. Of course, this would be to protect each other from deception, sin and wavering in our commitment. Oh dear, the whole Western church would be crippled with perceived hurt and trauma.

All because, we use the word 'love' so subjectively now. We do not understand the word 'love' in its fullness as God sets it forth.

As John MacArthur puts it:

"Love has been redefined as a broad tolerance that overlooks sin and embraces good and evil alike. That's not love; it's apathy."

Or as A. W. Tozer said:

"Much of our difficulty as seeking Christians stems from our unwillingness to take God as He is and adjust our lives accordingly. We insist on trying to modify Him and bring Him nearer to our own image."

Or as D. A. Carson says in the book, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love Of God*:

[T]his widely disseminated belief in the love of God is set with increasing frequency in some matrix other than biblical theology....²⁹

I do not think what the Bible says about the love of God can long survive at the forefront of our thinking if it is abstracted from the sovereignty of God, the wrath of God, the providence of God, or the personhood of God—to mention only a few non-negotiable elements of basic Christianity. The result, of course, is that the love of God in our culture has been purged of anything the culture finds uncomfortable. The love of God has been sanitized, democratized, and above all, sentimentalized.³⁰

Continuing on, what about Paul, was he mostly kind and gentle?:

Act 20:31 *Be on your guard! Remember how **day and night for three years I kept warning you with tears in my eyes.***



²⁹ *The Difficult Doctrine Of The Love Of God*. 2000, p. 9.

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³⁰ *The Difficult Doctrine Of The Love Of God*. 2000. P. 11.

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What else do you think the writer to the Hebrews meant when he wrote"

Heb 10:24 *and let us consider one another to provoke to love and to good works....* MKJB

It's is a strong Greek word used here, some translations use the weaker 'encourage' to translate it, but others use the word '**stir up**' which is a better translation scholars tell us.

Yet if we do this, we will be accused of 'stirring up trouble.'

We have to get over that accusation and do our job.

If you are not considered a stirrer, you are most likely not doing the job you were called to do and that which Jesus died for.

Yes, Jesus loved enough to warn and speak the truth boldly:

Matt. 16:3 *And in the morning, foul weather today; for the sky is red and gloomy. Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky, but you cannot see the signs of the times!*

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign..... MKJV

Matt. 21:31 *Which one of the sons obeyed his father? "The older one," the chief priests and leaders answered. Then Jesus told them: You can be sure that tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you ever will! CEV*

Matt. 21:43 *I tell you that God's kingdom will be taken from you and given to people who will do what he demands.* CEV

Demand? But this also is problematic for us. No, Jesus would never 'demand' surely. We need to get back to the basics and realize that God Is God, we are not. We ought to obey the Holy God without complaining.

Basically, we need to grow up. Who do we think we are?

Matt. 22:18 *But Jesus realized their evil intentions and said, "Hypocrites! Why are you testing me?"*

Net

Mark 7:6 *Jesus replied: You are nothing but show-offs! The prophet Isaiah was right when he wrote that God had said, "All of you praise me with your words, but you never really think about me.*

CEV

Matt. 23:13, 14 *...."How terrible for you,*

teachers of the Law and Pharisees! You hypocrites! You lock the door to the Kingdom of heaven in people's faces.....

15 **"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! You hypocrites!**win one convert; and ... make him twice as **deserving of going to hell as you yourselves are!**

16 **"How terrible for you, blind guides!....**

17 **Blind fools!....**

19 **How blind you are!....**

23 "How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! **You hypocrites!**.....you neglect to obey the really important teachings of the Law.....

24 **Blind guides!....**

25"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! **You hypocrites!** You clean the outside of your cup and plate, while the inside is full of what you have gotten by violence and selfishness.

26 **Blind Pharisee!** Clean what is inside the cup first, and then the outside will be clean too!

27 "How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! **You hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look fine on the outside but are full of bones and decaying corpses on the inside.**

28...**on the outside you appear good to everybody, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and sins.**

29 "How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! **You hypocrites!** 33 **You snakes and children of snakes! How do you expect to escape from being condemned to hell?.....**

35 As a result, the punishment for the murder of all innocent people will fall on you.....

36 I tell you indeed: the punishment for all these murders will fall on the people of this day! GNB

What a terrible thing to say to the Jews:

27 "How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! **You hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look fine on the outside but are full of bones and decaying corpses on the inside.** GNB

That they were like unclean, dead, decaying bones. Today, that would be seen as excessive, even being nasty and totally self-righteous.

Question. Now, I'm serious, please explain, where Jesus is showing love in any these instances? Because it's there, but not by our definition of God's 'love'.

Q) Where is the love of Jesus in the above instances?

Your current usage of the word 'love' cannot explain that. This is a good way to test your meaning of the word 'love'. If your word 'love' cannot be used to explain these harsh things Jesus said, **your meaning is false**. And the Bible meaning is true.

Again, our post-modern theology does not have an answer to that question. We are not theologically equipped to even answer such a simple question honestly.

A) His love has much higher priorities than what we dwell on, it was for the Father, the Kingdom and for Truth.

Yes, Jesus loves Truth more than He loves us, for to love Truth, is to love God. And to blur biblical truth is to show a form of contempt for God.

This puts it all back into perspective does it not?:



When Jesus instructed his disciples to:

[Luke 9:5](#) If people won't welcome you, leave the town and **shake the dust from your feet as a warning to them.**"

Well, by our sentimental standard, that is not a very nice thing to do. Why are we so focused on 'being nice' when the far, far more important thing, is to do everything God's way because His truth is so very important?

How shocking for us to contemplate.

You have to agree, that most of us, with very few exceptions, would think or tell Jesus, that He was :-

- not being Christ-like
- not being very loving
- too judgmental
- not modeling Christ
- not Christian
- unloving
- who do you think you are?
- not 'of us'
- deeply lacking any real empathy or concern for a perishing people
- where's the love in something like that?
- certainly not a Christian
- should keep his unloving views to Himself
- not very helpful
- that was completely unnecessary

Modeling Jesus - there is so much said about 'modeling Jesus' these days; do you pastors want to model Jesus more accurately?

Then don't ever preach 'God loves you'. Right!

Only speak of it to an individual or maybe a small private group, if there really is a need for it.

Be like Jesus and spur your people on to growing in God, the mission and holiness, defeating sin in their lives, enduring hardships without the need for 'counseling', and so on.

It Even Seems Jesus Made A Point Of Not Showing A Lot Of Love Until The End

Have you ever wondered what Jesus meant at the end of his earthly ministry, when he said:

'And now he longed to show them
the full measure of his love' - Jesus

It's as though that kind of a concept had previously not entered His mind or theirs, for all the time that had been together. Jesus focused on the extremely important mission of repentance toward God and making mature disciples. Why would anyone want to compromise it with a lot of self-centered talk of God's love for them. Jesus would not want to turn the disciples inward looking and risk becoming self-centered people, sabotaging his own cause. But now, Jesus wants to show that he really did love them by washing their feet.

Let's take a closer look:

Easy-to-Read Version:

John 13:1 *It was almost time for the Jewish Passover festival. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go back to the Father. Jesus had always loved the people in the world who were his. Now was the time he showed them his love the most.* ERV

New Living translation:

John 13:1 *Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end.^[a]* NLT

(a. **13:1** *Or he showed them the full extent of his love.*)

This is how just a few of the scholars explain it:

The New International Commentary Of The New Testament – The Gospel According To John - Leon Morris:

John 13:1

This leads John to a characteristic emphasis on the love Jesus had for His own. They were in the world and he had loved them there. "He loved them unto the end" does not give the meaning as well as "now he showed how utterly he loved them" (Rieu; similarly Knox, NEB). The whole verse with its emphasis on love may be meant to set the tone for the lengthy section it heads. Up till now Jesus has had a ministry to men in general. From this point He concentrates on those He loves intimately. Page 614

The Companion Bible (E. W. Bullinger):

end = furthest extent, referring not so much to a period of time, the end of His life, as to His readiness to descend to the humblest service in their behalf.

Word Studies in the New Testament (M. R. Vincent):

He loved (ἠγάπησεν)

Notice that John uses the word indicating the discriminating affection: the love of choice and selection. See on Joh 5:20.

Unto the end (εἰς τέλος)

Interpretations differ. The rendering of the A.V. and Rev. is of doubtful authority. The passages cited in support of this, Mat 10:22; Mat 24:13; Mar 13:13, may all be rendered to the uttermost. Moreover, other formulas are used where the meaning to the end is unquestionable. In Rev 2:26, the only other instance in John's writings where τέλος is used in

an adverbial phrase the expression is ἄχρι τέλους, unto the end. Similarly Heb 6:11. In Heb 3:6, Heb 3:14, μέχρι τέλους, unto the end. The phrase may mean at last, and so is rendered by many here, as Meyer, Lange, Thayer (Lex.). "At last He loved them;" that is, showed them the last proof of His love. This is the most probable rendering in Luk 18:5, on which see note. It may also mean to the uttermost, completely. So Westcott and Godet. But I am inclined, with Meyer, to shrink from the "inappropriate gradation" which is thus implied, as though Jesus' love now reached a higher degree than before (ἀγαπήσας). Hence I prefer the rendering at last, or finally He loved them, taking ἠγάπησεν, loved, in the sense of the manifestation of His love. This sense frequently attaches to the verb. See, for instance, 1Jn 4:10 ("love viewed in its historic manifestation" Westcott), and compare Joh 3:16; Eph 2:4; Eph 5:2, Eph 5:25; 2Th 2:16; Rev 3:9.

A Popular Commentary on the New Testament:

Third, the feelings of the heart of Jesus,—love, not the mere love of friendship, but a solemn, deep, divine love. Thus indeed He had always loved 'His own,' but His love now gains additional intensity; He loved them 'to the full.' The expression does not mean 'to the end,' for which another phrase is always used (Heb 3:6; Heb 3:14; Heb 6:11; Rev 2:26). It is best explained by 1Th 2:16, 'to the uttermost:' the love of Jesus now reaches its highest point.

The Pulpit Commentary:

*Jesus **having loved his own**, his very own, whom the Father had given him, **who were** and would continue **in the world**, and have tribulation there (see Joh 15:18-20; Joh 16:1-4, Joh 16:33; Joh 17:11, Joh 17:14, Joh 17:18), and all the more so because of his departure and the cessation of his earthly manifestation and ministry. Here the sentence ends with the climactic expression, **He loved them utterly**; i.e. he manifested, and that before the Paschal Lamb should be slain for them, his absolute, extreme, unutterable love. Archdeacon Watkins has made an interesting suggestion, that εἰς τέλος represents, in Greek, the Hebrew idiom of the repetition of the action of the verb; whereas the **LXX**. often presents this Hebraism in literal Greek, as Gen 20:17, yet in Amo 9:8 a similar reduplication is Grecized by the phrase εἰς τέλος;*

and that what St. John, a Hebrew writing in Greek, meant by the use of it was simply, "He loved them with a fullness of love." This usage is confirmed by 1Th 2:16, by later Greek and by classical usage. It probably means in Luk 18:5 "at last," but not necessarily so even there. Margin of Revised version gives "to the uttermost."

Word Pictures in the New Testament (A. T. Robertson):

His own which were in the world (tous idious tous en tōi kosmōi). His own disciples (Joh 17:6, Joh 17:9, Joh 17:11), those left in the world when he goes to the Father, not the Jews as in Joh 1:11. See Act 4:23; 1Ti 5:8 for the idiom. John pictures here the outgoing of Christ's very heart's love (chs. John 13-17) towards these men whom he had chosen and whom he loved "unto the end" (eis telos) as in Mat 10:22; Luk 18:15, but here as in 1Th 2:16 rather "to the uttermost." The culmination of the crisis ("his hour") naturally drew out the fulness of Christ's love for them as is shown in these great chapters (John 13-17).

THE NET BIBLE Notes:

³ **tn** Or "he now loved them completely," or "he now loved them to the uttermost" (see Joh 19:30). All of Joh 13:1 is a single sentence in Greek, although in English this would be unacceptably awkward. At the end of the verse the idiom εἰς τέλος (eis telos) was translated literally as "to the end" and the modern equivalents given in the note above, because there is an important lexical link between this passage and Joh 19:30, τετέλεσται (tetelestai, "It is ended").

sn The full extent of Jesus' love for his disciples is not merely seen in his humble service to them in washing their feet (the most common interpretation of the passage). The full extent of his love for them is demonstrated in his sacrificial death for them on the cross. The footwashing episode which follows then becomes a prophetic act, or acting out beforehand, of his upcoming death on their behalf. The message for the disciples was that they were to love one another not just in humble, self-effacing service, but were to be willing to die for one another. At least one of them got this message eventually, though none understood it at the time (see 1Jo 3:16).

Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 36: John:

Translation

1. It was just before the Passover festival;^a Jesus, in full awareness that his hour had come that he should pass from this world to the Father, although he had always loved his own who were in the world, **now showed his love for them to the limit...**

Notes

a. The relation of this temporal clause to the other verbs in the sentence has puzzled exegetes. Bultmann, e.g. , thought that to relate it to ἀγαπήσας ... ἠγάπησεν would be absurd—as though one could date the love of Jesus in this way! He therefore restricted the clause to limit εἰδώς....: "Since Jesus, before the feast of the passover, knew that his hour had come" (463). On the contrary the time statement of vv 1a and 2a most naturally provides the context for the discourses of chaps. 13-17 and especially to the event about to be described; ἀγαπήσας relates to the whole ministry of Jesus, ἠγάπησεν to the footwashing. Grossouw, taking εἰς τέλος as meaning **"to the limit,"** rather than "to the end," renders ἠγάπησεν ... as, "he gave them the perfect love token" ("A Note on Joh 13:1-3, " 128).

Commentary:

Verse 1. The "hour" of Jesus was that for which he came into this world (12:27); the hour wherein God would glorify Jesus and Jesus would glorify God through a death for the world's salvation (12:24-26); the hour of judgment for the world and defeat of the devil and of the exaltation of Jesus to exercise the divine sovereignty (12:31-32); hence the hour of his 'crossing over' from this world to the Father's side (17:5). Such is the context wherein he shows to his own his "love to the limit." Inasmuch as "his own" include all who belong to him, this demonstration of love embraces them as well as those who immediately received this ministry of love.

Expositions of Holy Scripture (Alexander Maclaren):

Many good commentators prefer to read the last words of my text, **'He loved them unto the uttermost'** rather than 'unto the end'-so taking them to express the depth and degree rather than the permanence and perpetuity of our Lord's love. And that seems to me to be by far the worthier and **the nobler meaning, as well as the one which is borne out by the usual signification of the**

expression in other Greek authors. It is much to know that the emotions of these last moments did not interrupt Christ's love. It is even more to know that in some sense they perfected it, giving even a greater vitality to its tenderness, and a more precious sweetness to its manifestations. So understood, the words explain for us why it was that in the sanctity of the upper chamber there ensued the marvellous act of the foot-washing, the marvellous discourses which follow, and the climax of all, that High-priestly prayer. They give utterance to a love which Christ's consciousness at that solemn hour tended to shapen and to deepen.

The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges:

unto the end] *The end of His life is the common interpretation, which may be right Comp. Mat 10:22; Mat 24:13, where the same Greek expression is translated as it is here; and 1Th 2:16, where it is translated 'to the uttermost.'* In Luk 18:5 'continual coming' is literally 'coming to the end.' In all these passages the meaning may either be 'at the last, finally,' or, 'to the uttermost, utterly.' **To the uttermost is perhaps to be preferred here.** Comp. the LXX. of Amo 9:8; Psa 12:1.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary:

Joh 13:1 *The full Johannine account of the Passion begins at this point. The new stage of the conflict between belief and unbelief is marked by a chronological reference to the main feast of the year and by relation to the progress of the program of Jesus' life. John alludes to the nearness of the Passover as if to remind his reader that Jesus had been introduced by John the Baptist as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Joh 1:29). As the first Passover had been the turning point in the redemption of the people of God, so the Cross would be the opening of a new era for believers. John connects this with the manifestation of Jesus' love for his disciples. "To the fullest extent" is a better rendering of the original *eis telos* than KJV "unto the end." It does not mean that Jesus continued to love his disciples only up to the end of his career but that his love has no limits. "His own" refers to his disciples, of whom he had said that they were given him by the Father (Joh 10:29). Jesus had accepted the responsibility for them and was obliged to instruct and protect them (Joh 17:6).*

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers:

He loved them unto the end—It has been usual to explain these words of the continuance of our Lord's love—"Having loved His own, He continued to love them until the last moment." This is, of course, true, but is a truth so certain and necessary from every conception of our Lord's character as St. John has portrayed it, that we may doubt whether he would in this formal way state it. And though the phrase rendered "unto the end" sometimes means "finally"—as, e.g., in the New Testament, Luke 18:5, and 1Thessalonians 2:16 (see Notes)—the sense, "unto the end" is very rare, and the general meaning is, "in the fullest degree," "up to the limit." ***It thus answers exactly to our "extremely."***

What seems not to have been noted is that the whole sentence may be a common Hebrew idiom in Greek dress. It belongs to the simple syntax of a primitive people to express intensity by repetition. The Vale of Sodom was "pits, pits of bitumen" (Genesis 14:10). Esau asked Jacob to feed him with "that red, red, thing" (Genesis 25:30). The intensity of the verbal idea was expressed in like manner by a simple form of the verb which brought the thought before the mind, and then by the special form which denoted the action. This is sometimes preserved in the English, as, e.g., in Genesis 20:17—"That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed" (I will bless thee abundantly, and will multiply thy seed exceedingly). Sometimes it is not. We have, e.g., in Amos 9:8, "I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord," where the Hebrew is literally, "Destroying I will not destroy . . ." (Vulgate, *conter ens non conter am*). In these passages the English exactly follows the Greek—i.e., the Greek in the passage of Genesis repeats the words as the Hebrew does, and in that of Amos, expresses the intensity by an adverbial phrase (**εἰς τέλος**). Now that phrase is exactly the same as the one used by St. John here, and which is rendered "unto the end." St. John was a Jew writing in Greek. May we not naturally expect a Hebrew thought in Greek form? He thinks of the intensity of our Lord's love, and speaks of it in the simple expressiveness of the old Hebrew phrase, "**Loving, he loved them with fulness of love.**" (Comp. John 12:13.) This is not given as an amended rendering, because authority has been sought for it without success; but it is offered, as an explanation, to the reader's judgment. The student will find in

Schleusner's Lexicon Veteris Testamenti other instances which support this view.

Dr Peter Petts Commentary:

Whether we translate 'loved them to the end' i.e. His love did not waver, or 'loved them to the uttermost' i.e. showed His love even more fully, the meaning is the same. His love flowed out to them in depth. (Both are equally possible, compare 1Th 2:16, and indeed the double meaning is probably intentional)

Jesus did not just love the disciples to the end, he wanted to show them that despite his characteristic intensity and sternness during their time together, he really did love genuinely love them too. This was to be utterly proven in their minds as they later came to realise what his crucifixion was all about.

The foot-washing was very personal, while the crucifixion was very public, but they both were a deep expression of their Teacher's love.

No, like Jesus I do not want to talk about the love of God with people and that He has a wonderful plan for their lives. I really want to share the plan of God with them - the Gospel - God is holy and though they are stuck in hell-deserving sin, Jesus died for their sin and was resurrected back to life and they need to ask for God's mercy and repent. He is fully capable of saving them.

And so, in the example of Jesus, I say to you, let us repent of our hard hearts, our false sentimental declarations and our Pharisaical attitudes.

Now, for those who want to incorrectly insist that, 'But that was Jesus, He was God and we should never do that' consider these:

John the Baptist:

Luke 3:7 Crowds of people came out to be baptized, but John said to them, "**You bunch of snakes!** Who warned you to run from the coming judgment?" CEV

Paul:

2Cor. 7:8 *I don't feel bad anymore, even though **my letter hurt your feelings**. I did feel bad at first, but I don't now. I know that the letter hurt you for a while.*

9 Now I am happy, but not because I hurt your feelings. It is because God used your hurt feelings to make you turn back to him, and none of you were harmed by us. CEV

Yet we are so shocked if someone intentionally offends a person for the Kingdom's sake. How unloving, we say, how judgmental, I don't think that person could even be a real Christian.

Gal. 5:12 I wish that everyone who is upsetting you would not only get circumcised, **but would cut off much more!** CEV

Well, that was uncalled for Paul, that is not love.

Gal. 1:8 **Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an angel from heaven, who preaches a different kind of Good News than the one we preached to you. 9** I say again what we have said before: If anyone preaches any other Good News than the one you welcomed, **let that person be cursed.**

Gal. 2:14 But when I saw that they were not really obeying the truth that is in the good news, I corrected Peter in front of everyone and said: Peter, you are a Jew, but you live like a Gentile. So how can you force Gentiles to live like Jews? CEV

We do not even see these things, even after fifty years of reading it.

What did Paul do?:

- 1) strongly confront Peter, and he did it,
- 2) in front of everybody. And not only that, he then went on and,
- 3) wrote about it to the church all over Galatia. And worse, Paul instructed the churches to,
- 4) circulate his letters around to all the other churches³¹.

Paul highly valued truth and sought to protect the Church, just like Jesus.

Paul truly loved the Galatians, unlike our pastors, who think 'being nice' and 'not upsetting' someone is love.

Consider this pastors (and anyone who wants the truth). As you know, we have three books in the NT that we call the Pastoral Letters – 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus.

³¹ **Col 4:16** After this letter has been read to your people, be sure to have it read in the church at Laodicea. And you should read the letter that I have sent to them. CEV

Let us have a quick look at the some of the so-called 'unkind' 'unChristian' 'un-Christ-like' 'unhelpful' things that Paul **actually told pastors to do**:

1Tim. 1:3 ...stay there in Ephesus **so that you may command** certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer NIV

1Tim. 4:11 **Command** and teach these things. NIV

1Tim. 5:6 But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. . . 13 Besides, they get into the habit of being idle... **busybodies who talk nonsense**, saying things they ought not to. NIV

1Tim. 5:20 But those elders who are sinning **you are to reprove before everyone**, so that the others may take warning. NIV

1Tim. 6:3 If anyone teaches otherwise...4 **they are conceited and understand nothing...** NIV

1Tim. 6:17 **Command** those who are...18 **Command** them to do good, to be rich in good deeds... NIV

2 Tim. 2:14 Keep reminding God's people of these things. **Warn them** before God...17...Among them are **Hymenaeus and Philetus**, NIV

2 Tim. 4:2 Preach the word...**correct, rebuke** and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. NIV

Titus 1:10...especially those of the circumcision group. 11 **They must be silenced**...13 This saying is true. Therefore **rebuke them sharply**, so that they will be sound in the faith NIV

Morgan, G. Campbell. Commentary:

The reason for the severity is that the highest purposes of love may be realized.³²

But we say, it is NOT love or loving, to do these things. On the contrary, here, it is true love – it is God's kind of love to rebuke sharply.

³² <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/gcm/titus-1.html>

Titus 2:15 ...Encourage and **rebuke with all authority**. Do not let anyone despise you. NIV

Titus 3:10 **Warn** a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, **have nothing to do with them**. NIV

How does that compare with your pastoring?

Yet we self-righteously correct Paul, "Tsk, tsk, tsk, that is NOT the right way to handle it!"

Now, let's go back to looking at some of the harsh things that Paul said to various people through Scripture.

Phil. 3:2 **Watch out for those dogs**, those people who do evil, those mutilators who say you must be circumcised to be saved. NLT

Acts 13:10 and said, "**You son of the devil! You are a liar, a crook, and an enemy of everything that is right**. When will you stop speaking against the true ways of the Lord?

11 **The Lord is going to punish you** by making you completely blind for a while." Suddenly the man's eyes were covered by a dark mist, and he went around trying to get someone to lead him by the hand. CEV

1Cor. 5:5 **You must then hand that man over to Satan. His body will be destroyed**, but his spirit will be saved when the Lord Jesus returns. CEV

1Cor. 16:22 **I pray that God will put a curse on everyone who doesn't love the Lord**. And may the Lord come soon. CEV

2Cor. 13:2 During my second visit I warned you that **I would punish you and anyone else who doesn't stop sinning**. I am far away from you now, but I give you the same warning.

3 This should prove to you that I am speaking for Christ. **When he corrects you, he won't be weak**. He will be powerful! CEV

1Tim. 1:20 Two of them are Hymenaeus and Alexander. **I have given these men over to the power of Satan**, so they will learn not to oppose God. CEV

Tit. 1:9 They must stick to the true message they were taught, so that their good teaching can help

others and correct everyone who opposes it. CEV

Tit. 1:12 It is like one of their own prophets once said, "**The people of Crete always tell lies. They are greedy and lazy like wild animals.**"

13 That surely is a true saying. **And you should be hard on such people,** so you can help them grow stronger in their faith. CEV

Wow, Paul was not very Christ-like was he?

Oh wait a minute, yes he was.

What a weak insipid virtually useless form of Christianity we have developed with our superior spirituality, superior knowledge of God and His Word. Oh how we need to repent of our hard hearts and our pride. We need to be broken before God, humbling ourselves at the foot of the cross, in true 'poor in spirit' fashion.

Tit. 1:15 *Everything is pure for someone whose heart is pure. But nothing is pure for an unbeliever with a dirty mind. That person's mind and conscience are destroyed.*

16 *Such people claim to know God, but their actions prove that they really don't. **They are disgusting. They won't obey God, and they are too worthless to do anything good.*** CEV

Worthless? But my pastor says 'we are all so special to God.'

And Paul says it again:

2Thess. 3:2 *Pray that we may be kept **safe from worthless and evil people.** After all, not everyone has faith.* CEV

1Tit. 5:6 *A widow who thinks only about having a good time is already dead, even though she is still alive.* CEV

1Ti 5:20 *But if any of the leaders should keep on sinning, **they must be corrected in front of the whole group,** as a warning to everyone else.* CEV

What? Not only did Paul do it as we saw in Galatians, but he tells a pastor to do it as well.

But don't we say it should never be done publicly?

Act 13:46 *But Paul and Barnabas bravely said: We had to tell God's message to you before we told it to anyone else. But you rejected the message! **This***

proves that you don't deserve eternal life. Now we are going to the Gentiles.....⁵¹ Paul and Barnabas **shook the dust from that place off their feet** and went on to the city of Iconium.

What? They 'judged them as unworthy of the gospel'? **That sounds extremely judgmental to us** and they 'shook the dust off their feet'. How rude and unchristlike.

No, we would certainly not have Paul & Barnabas (the Encourager) as our missionaries, we do not want anyone so rude and judgmental, driving people away from Christ.

In fact, we would not even have Jesus as our visiting preacher let alone our pastor. Jesus would empty our church and we all know that would be 'just plain wrong, it is not the way to do things.'

Peter:

2 Peter 2:22 They prove the truth of this proverb: "**A dog returns to its vomit.**" And another says, "**A washed pig returns to the mud.**" NLT

Remember how Peter, when he was feeling protective of God's plans, rebuked Jesus, but Jesus, '...He rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" He said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."'

How sad it is that so many times, **we, who are Christians rebuke Jesus, when He speaks through someone, and we truly 'do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men' also.** God is going to have His way in the Church whether we choose to agree with Him or not. Surely, it is best not to get in His way.

We have preached, talked, affirmed, demanded, talked, encouraged, talked, given great honour to, talked..... about how much God loves us, how much Jesus loves us and wants to encourage us, that we have a great overemphasis on it. We lost the FACT, that there are FAR MORE verses in the NT that show the directness, sternness, harshness and 'negativity' of Christ, and the seeming aloofness of Jesus.



And what about the 'Apostle of Love' - John:

1John 3:10 *You can tell God's children **from the devil's children**, because those who belong to the devil refuse to do right or to love each other.* CEV

2John 1:10 *If people won't agree to this teaching, don't welcome them into your home **or even greet them**.* CEV

Well that's not very nice John, we thought you were a loving person, we even call you the 'Apostle of Love.'

No, it is we who have redefined the word 'love' to mean something so different from what God means. It is we who have turned powerful, dynamic love, into a man-pleasing, weak, sentimental feeling of little eternal value.

We really do need to teach what our Lord and Master wants, and as strong as He wants it, when He wants it that way. We need to learn what true Kingdom imperatives are, we need to grow up.

James:

Jas. 2:20 ***Does some stupid person** want proof that faith without deeds is useless?* CEV

Yes, sadly there are many stupid people today also. Those who claim and live by the idea that they are saved by faith without the evidence of works. Mere works can save no one, but salvation ALWAYS produces holiness, devotion and works.

Stephen:

Acts 7:51 ***You stubborn and hardheaded people!** You are always fighting against the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors did.* CEV

Yes, the Bible makes it abundantly clear, that it was not only Jesus who was harsh on people for the Kingdom sake.

Gal. 1:10 *I am not trying to please people. I want to please God. Do you think I am trying to please people? If I were doing that, I would not be a servant of Christ.* CEV

Even though Paul clearly says he is not trying to please people, that is what we do. He even goes so far as to say "I could not be a servant of Christ if I were a man-pleaser." But we have made an art out of 'pleasing people.'

So, why the harsh words, by Jesus and the apostles, and why by so many?

Because Truth, matters that much! God's creation is extremely important to Him. Hell is extreme punishment that lasts for eternity upon eternity. The stakes are very, very high and TRUE love would act this way at times.

We had better not get in the way of God's unfolding plan.

This kind of blind foolish 'sentimentalism' and 'Christian correctness' masquerading as 'higher spiritual truth', is destroying the Church and the Gospel for millions of people around the world.

Then let's clearly establish this - Jesus was not always kindly, sometimes He was harsh with people too. So stop pretending that He was so 'cuddly kind.'

For one who understands God, they know that there is no conflict between God's love and His wrath - you cannot have one without the other.

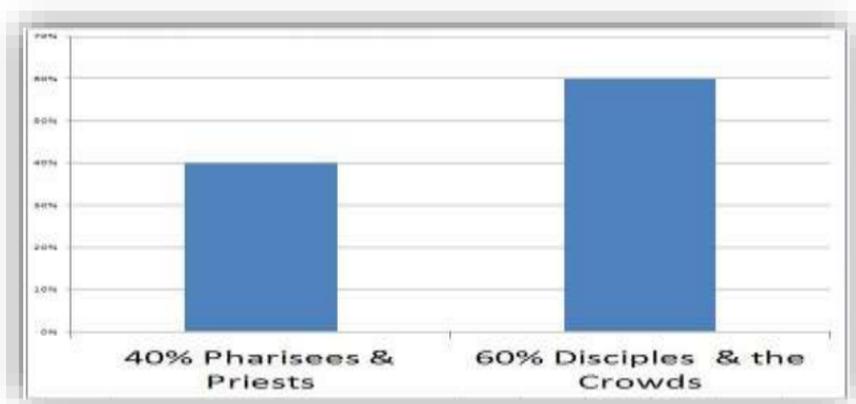
Having shown how Jesus was not really so 'nice' as we make out, let's have a look at the other part of that objection:

"Jesus was only like that to the proud Pharisees, priests and teachers of the law **not the general people.**"

We make these bold assertions **in almost complete ignorance of the facts.** Sadly, we feel so very righteous when we do, because as I have already stated, this 'God loves us soooo much' is now THE hallowed standard by which to measure all doctrine, practices, God and the Bible.

Again, here we are going to learn what the Bible actually says, rather than what we sort of, kind of remember it says, by looking into more of my research:

When we look at all the 28% stern/harsh instances of Jesus interacting with people, we find that Jesus is documented as being stern/harsh more often with the



people in general, rather than with the Jewish leaders.

Here are some instances:

To the multitudes:

[Luke 12:54](#) Jesus also said to the crowds....

56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky, but how can you not know how to interpret the present time?

Net Bible

hypocrites -[EW Bullinger Companion Bible](#):

*Theodotion's rendering of Job_34:30, and Job_36:13, and Aquila and Theod. in Job_15:34, and by Aquila, Syria., and Theod. in Pro_11:9, Isa_33:14, and Septuagint in Isa_32:6, **show that the word had come to mean not merely "false pretence", but positive impiety or wickedness.***³³

[The Expository Notes of Dr. Constable](#):

*It was not that they could not see that He was the Messiah, but they did not want to see it in spite of the evidence.*³⁴

To cities that did not believe Him:

Matt. 11:20 Then Jesus began to **criticize openly the cities** in which he had done many of his miracles, because they did not repent.

21 **"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!** If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

³³ [Companion Bible - Luke 12:56](#)

³⁴ <https://www.studylight.org/commentary/luke/12-56.html>

22 *But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you!*

23 *And you, **Capernaum**, will you be exalted to heaven? **No, you will be thrown down to Hades!** For if the miracles done among you had been done in Sodom, it would have continued to this day.*

24 *But I tell you, it will be more bearable for the region of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you!*" Net Bible

To a person in the crowd offering to help:

Luke 9:60 *But Jesus told him, "Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead! Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God."* NLT

To another offering to help:

Luke 9:62 *But Jesus told him, "Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."*

Exposes the woman at the well - a stranger:

John 4:17 *The woman answered, "I don't have a husband." "That's right," Jesus replied, "you're telling the truth. You don't have a husband. You have already been married five times, and the man you are now living with isn't your husband."* CEV

Jesus said of unbelievers:

Matt. 7:6 **Don't give to dogs** what belongs to God. They will only turn and attack you. **Don't throw pearls down in front of pigs.** They will trample all over them. CEV

To a man asking a simple question about inheritance:

Luke 12:19 *Then I'll say to myself, 'You have stored up enough good things to last for years to come. Live it up! Eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.' "*

20 *But God said to him, "**You fool!** Tonight you will die. Then who will get what you have stored up?"*

CEV

To the **crowds** and the Pharisees:

Matt. 12:34 **You are a bunch of evil snakes,** so how can you say anything good? Your words show what is in your hearts. CEV

To the **crowd**, Scribes and Pharisees:

Matt. 12:39 *But Jesus replied: **You want a sign because you are evil** and won't believe! But the only sign you will get is the sign of the prophet Jonah.* CEV

To the disciples:

Matt. 15:15 *But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us."*

16 *Jesus said, "Even after all this, **are you still so foolish?**"* NET

Pulpit Commentary:

Verse 16. - Are ye also yet without understanding? Even yet: *adhuc*. In spite of all that has passed - my teaching, my life, my miracles - do you not understand in what real purity consists? Often had Jesus to complain of the dullness of his disciples' intelligence, the slow appreciation of his meaning, the indifference to the spiritual side of his acts and doctrine.

Ellicott's Commentary:

(16) Are ye also yet without understanding?—The pronoun is emphatic: "Ye, My disciples, who have heard from My lips the spiritual nature of My kingdom, are ye too, like the Pharisees, still such backward scholars?"

To Peter who was trying to help:

Mark 8:33 But when Jesus turned and saw the disciples, he corrected Peter. He said to him, "Satan, get away from me! You are thinking like everyone else and not like God." CEV

To the disciples and crowd:

Luke 9:41 And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and bear with you? bring hither thy son. RV

"How unbelieving and wrong you people are! . . . How long do I have to put up with you?" GNB

"You unbelieving and corrupt generation! . . . and put up with you?"

GWT

"O generation, unsteadfast and perverse . . . and suffer you?"

YLV

To the disciples:

Mark 10:14 When Jesus saw this, **he became angry** and said, "Let the children come to me! Don't try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God." CEV

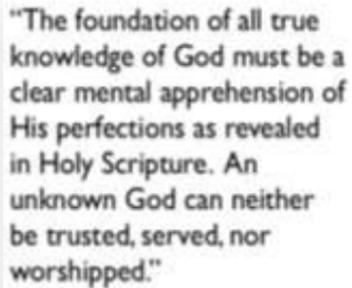
To James & John:

Luke 9:54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?

55 But he turned, and **rebuked them.** RV

By consulting the Bible instead of what we 'sort of, kind of remember', we see that Jesus was NOT 'always kindly' but we read these things and do not even see or understand them because we are blinded by "God loves you soooo much."

If someone says something like that now, there is a chorus of "That's judging, that's not being Christ-like." Hence, just like the Pharisees of old, our traditions nullify the Word of God.



"The foundation of all true knowledge of God must be a clear mental apprehension of His perfections as revealed in Holy Scripture. An unknown God can neither be trusted, served, nor worshipped."

A. W. Pink
Attributes of God.

The pinnacle of success today as a Christian, is being a 'nice' Christian. Such a loving, nice person is like perfection - the perfect Christian, supposedly. It skews our thinking and judgment.

Jesus was 'nice' enough to strongly warn people of sin and hell.

You can never understand God's determination and zeal in what He wants and does, when you believe this over-emphasis of His love for you.

You know how we all have 'blind spots' -- things that we do not see about ourselves?

The Church has a massive blind spot! It just cannot see this glaring problem.

How dangerous that is, how shallow - the perfect environment for deception. And you are deceived.

In fact, Jesus would tell you that you are 'cowardly, with little faith' if you kept coming to Him as you do to the pastor, counselor or even a friend, with every little problem and personal crisis.

Recently I had someone challenge me because they said the Bible says nothing about exposing the sin of civil leaders, we must contain ourselves to only the Christian community. Really? **Then how are we supposed to genuinely be the salt of the earth? By somehow being a hidden image of Jesus?**

Strange isn't it, how Jesus said 'the world hates Me because I testify it's works are evil':

John 7:7 *The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that its works are evil.* KJV

Yet we claim that it is not Christ-like to upset the world with the truth of its evil ways. We claim to be the 'salt of the earth', but hide from any possibility of angering the world. Yes, our traditions of men too, annul the Word of God.

We have believed the politically correct lie that says we can only speak to and for Christians. Wrong. God is the God over all the universe. That includes non-Christians. There are examples in both the OT and the NT, of God exposing and calling the world into account for its sin. What about Jonah? God sent him to call Nineveh to repent.

John the Baptist exposes the sin of Herod:

[Mark 6:17-18](#) *Herod had earlier married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. But John had told him, "It isn't right for you to take your brother's wife!" So, in order to please Herodias, Herod arrested John and put him in prison.* CEV

And:

Jesus to Herod the King:

[Luke 13:32](#) *Jesus said to them: **Go tell that fox**, "I am going to force out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and three days later I'll be through."* CEV

That fox = A figure of cunning, mischief and cowardice. Herod deserved the name.

Jesus Himself stated that we would speak against the rulers of this world:

[Mark 13:9](#) . . . *and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, **for a testimony against them.*** KJV

Just testifying of Jesus Christ before leaders or anyone, involves exposing their sin.

But, even worse for us, there are some hard things Jesus is saying to us that contradict this 'God loves me so much' idea, but we cannot understand them.

Now, back to some of the hard things Jesus said.

Jesus to the Churches.

Yes, that's to you and me and our churches.

By our standard, these things are not very nice:

[Rev. 2:5](#) Consider how far you have fallen! **Repent** and do the things you did at first. **If you**

do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. NIV

Rev. 2:16 So change your hearts! **If you don't change, I will come to you quickly and fight against these people** with the sword that comes out of my mouth. ERV

Rev. 2:22 "So I will throw her[Jezebel] **on a bed of suffering. And all those who commit adultery with her will suffer greatly. I will do this now if they don't turn away from the things she does.** 23 **I will also kill her followers.** Then all the churches will see that I am the one who knows what people feel and think. And **I will repay each of you for what you have done.** ERV

Rev. 3:16 But since you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, **I will spit you out of my mouth.** 17 You claim to be rich and successful and to have everything you need. But you don't know how bad off you are. **You are pitiful, poor, blind, and naked.** CEV

Please note, these words are not spoken to the Pharisees or the Jews of that day. They were spoken by Jesus himself, to the churches and to us.

We are completely oblivious to the fact that **we ARE the Pharisees of the post modern Church.** **When we read about Jesus rebuking the Pharisees, we imagine ourselves to be in the crowd looking on. We have no clue that we are in the Pharisees in the group, being called hypocrites for our traditions of men that annul Scripture.**

Remember that the Pharisees were the really serious, good believers. They wanted to restore worship and serving of God. But, they got onto some wrong ideas about God, became proud in their superior unbiblical theology, and dismissed any who disagreed with them. Sounds just like us today.

This is the Jesus whom we claim to be soooo wonderfully kindly and nice (when they say we should be 'more like Jesus') when He says to us:-

- 'I will spit some of you out of My mouth'
- 'if you don't repent, I will come and fight against you'
- 'I will kill those who follow the usurper'

- **'if you don't repent I will remove your glory'**

So, I would like to know, where do Christians get the idea that Jesus was so gentle and kindly? I don't see much of it in Scripture and I have looked at every word Jesus is quoted as saying.

It seems to be a logical leap by people who want to re-imagine the Jesus of the Bible. They have taken the verses on God's love for us and massaged them until they turn out looking like 'only ever kindness'. As the saying goes, 'if you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything.' This seems to be the case here, and generally, the data we did not like, has been left out.

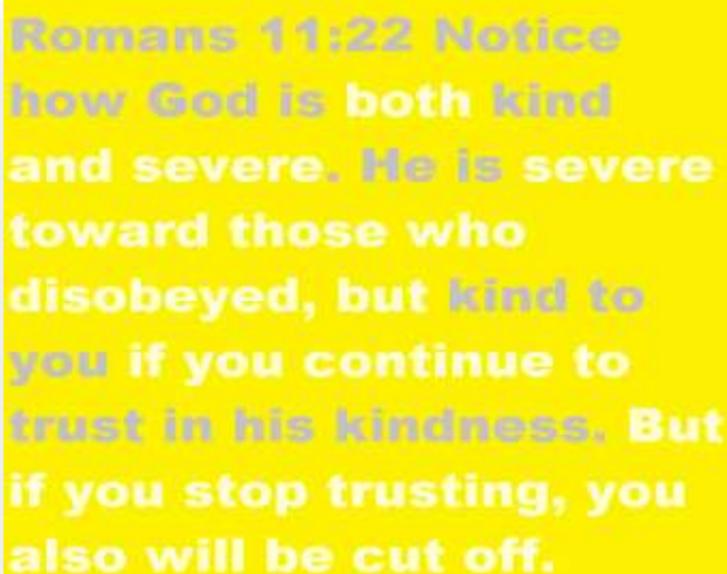
Jesus loves us enough not to be mostly 'gentle and kindly'. He had an extremely important mission to accomplish, one that required a certain firmness even steeliness, as well as kindness.

All I can say is "Oh thank Jesus, that you did it Your way and not ours, or else none of us would ever get to heaven."

In the Church, we do not like people who 'rock the boat,' and yet Jesus was most definitely a 'boat-rocker.' Not only that, He taught the disciples to rock the boat' too.

What we have done, is something like this.

We were given the Scriptures intact - something like this picture here:



Romans 11:22 Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off.

But then, we really wanted to preach a nice message to our congregations in an era where 'nice' is everything. The congregation really wanted to hear a nice message too. So, we preached a nice message, and they were happy about that. They loved it and loved us for it, and we really liked that.

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

We kept on preaching this nice 'God loves you soooo much and has a wonderful plan for your life, and says you are special just as you are, and He wants to give you an abundant life in every way, heal your every hurt, and restore every low self-esteem.'

This Sola Affectus, 'kindly love' message began to colour the thinking of everyone, even the non-Christians. Our glasses became rose tinted and then more rose tinted.

Now we permanently wear these rose tinted glasses because we cannot handle the ~~real Truth~~ oops, I mean handle the bright light.

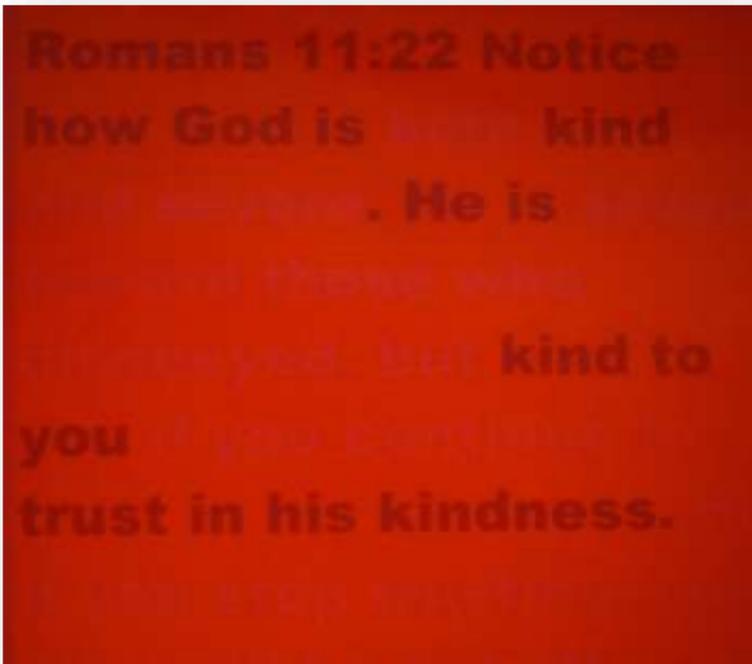
This is the typical pair of 'God's Great Love' rose tinted glasses that we now wear, that was supplied by our 'nice' pastor:



Image courtesy [Polyvore](#)

Now, when we read the Scriptures, they look something like this. It's wonderful, we got rid of all manner of unpleasant commands and truths.

See?



Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

It works just like that. It does, I made up some rose tinted glasses and tried it out, and this is the resulting image.

Now, in order to get our proper eyesight back, we need radical surgery - cut out the 'God loves us so much' elements from our life. The blindness does not have to be permanent, it can be corrected, but it will take commitment and hard work.

Pastors, stop preaching it and preach Christ, in repentance, in holiness, in judgment, in deep humility, in prayer...

Here is a reasonable proposal: **Make a rule that every time you mention God's love, you then must preach twice as much about God's wrath, and commands.**

If Scripture does not state that God loves us that many times, but the New testament includes 1050 commands, then every time your mention God's love, you talk much more about God's commands.

The Jews hold to 613 commands of God in the Law (248 positive Mitzvot/Commandments ("the Do's"), and 365 negative ones ("the Don'ts").).

The New Testament has 1050 commands.

Don't you think it is time we got this back into a biblical balance?

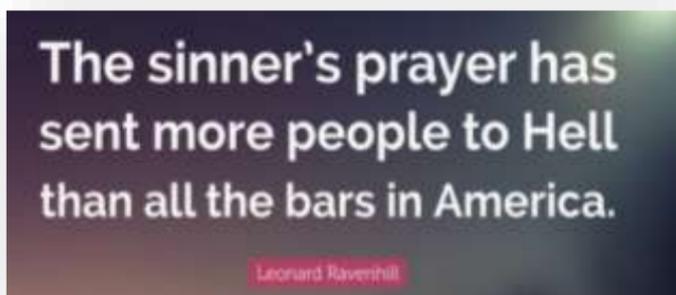
What did **Martyn Lloyd-Jones** say about this?:

*"It is not surprising that the cross has been discounted by modern theologians; **it is because they have started with the love of God without His holiness.**"*

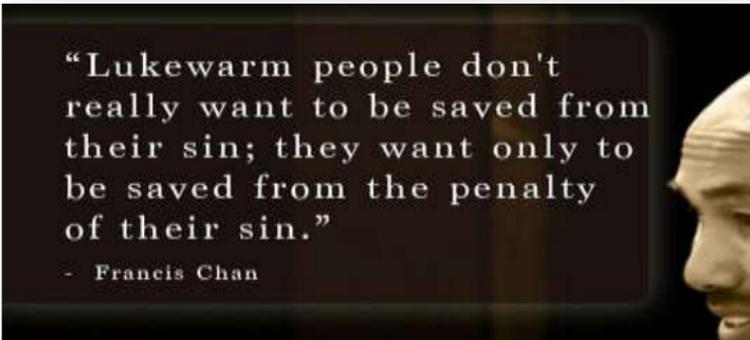
What did **R.C. Sproul** say about this?:

*"The failure of modern evangelicalism is **the failure to understand the holiness of God.**"*

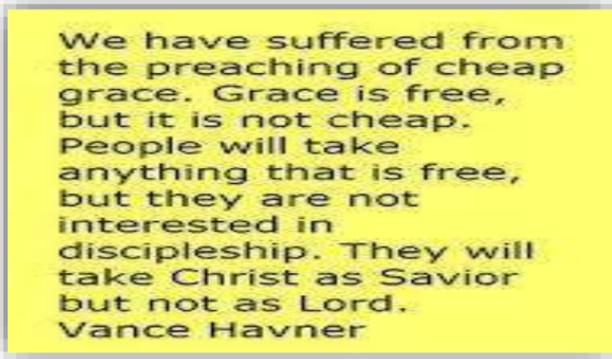
Church! We need radical surgery - cut out the 'God loves us so much' elements from our life - from your thinking, from your Church, and pray for a personal revival.



How right Ravenhill is. The 'sinners prayer' with little understanding of how vile our sin is and little life-changing repentance, produces a goat who believes he is a sheep.



An elderly retired Baptist pastor told me years ago that C.H. Spurgeon considered the new innovation of the 'altar call' to be most unhelpful. He felt that it **caused Christians to focus on a single event to confirm their commitment to God rather than their daily walk.** They would tend to rest on that, rather than viewing their day to day walk with God as the confirming factor of their genuine faith.



Those words are so profound for this era. It is hard to imagine not doing altar calls because they have been the norm for so long. We cannot imagine how it could possibly work without them.

But this is a very good point. A person's relationship with God is primarily between them and God. They need to make their own decision and they need to maintain that commitment. Daily.

We are much too quick to offer shallow words of 'assurance of salvation' to one who is unsure or struggling. Let them struggle and work it through with God - learning to cling to God despite all other problems and let the Holy Spirit give them the assurance.

Hold their hand when necessary, but do not be quick to offer God's assurance of salvation.

Sadly, our desire to 'help' people, causes us to identify too much with their discomfort, rather than point them in the right direction and find their salvation and their answers in God.

We claim that to have a relationship with God is so important. Well then, let people work out their faith in their relationship with God. They will mature. If they never have to wrestle with their problems and sins, because we saved them, with ever-comforting words of reassurance, how will they grow?

CONCLUSION:

☒ Jesus was always kindly with people = No, not true at all.

CHAPTER 12. WAS JESUS ALWAYS KINDLY TO THE SICK

Was Jesus always kindly to the needy, sad and sick then? **Surely He was, because today, that's what we must do with needy people.**

In short, no, not particularly.

Yes, Jesus was kind, He came to die and warn people of hell, but that's not the type of 'kindness' we elevate.

In this chapter I want to take it a step further and challenge the popular but false idea that Jesus was only ever nice to the needy. The idea that Jesus would never be hard on anyone that was already suffering in some way.

And at the same time, I want to challenge our belief and practice of only ever speaking kindly to the needy. We hold this rather strange idea, coming from secular psychology, that it is only by being nice, that you help someone out of their problems, their sin, and their bondages.

That it is, only by 'encouragement' that you help a troubled person out of their troubles.

If this 'kindness is a better motivator than criticism/challenge' is so true and fundamental to human nature, why didn't Jesus do it that way?

How foolish we are with our traditions of men.

Sometimes 'tough love' is needed. We exercise double-think on this issue, one minute declaring that 'encouragement better motivates than correction' and the next minute in a different discussion, agreeing that there are times 'tough-love' is needed.

Well, we say tough love is sometimes needed, but 'don't anybody ever use it on someone else, unless that person is not particularly liked' - then it's completely appropriate.

This concept is closely akin to the saying we love to quote:

'You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar'.

This saying is quoted as though it were Scripture, and the end of all arguments about getting non believers into the Kingdom. It is not 'the ultimate' Scripture for evangelistic techniques - it is not even Scripture at all. This saying is used in such a shallow way, to thwart any hard words and force everything to conform to our Sola Affectus gospel.

However, this saying is useful when speaking about personal attitudes toward others, yes, it is generally true.

Again, this is typically where many people will over react and object with "How are you going to get people in if you are hard on them?"

Sigh

What a foolish, disingenuous thing to say. Did I say anything about not being caring or nice? No! This kind of comment is one of pretense, as though I was saying just that, as though that proves my thesis wrong.

I can weep for that person while I tell them that 'unless they repent, they will go to hell to pay for their own sins.' I could say it in a kindly way.

Of course we should endeavour to be nice to people, but the gospel requires that we challenge people to repent of their sin too. Both those who are believers and those who are not.

If Jesus had commanded "Go and bring as many people in as you can, don't be too fussed about their lack of devotion, sin or commitment" then this saying would be entirely appropriate:

'You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar'

This is the aim of modern marketing and advertising – just get in as many consumers as you can.

But Jesus did not in any way, propose that kind of evangelism. He said "**Go and make disciples.**"

That requires not just people, but '**filtered people**' - **those who hear, 'repent and die to the world for the Lord, and be prepared to die, take up their cross daily and follow Christ. If they do not, they are not worthy of Me.'**

We hate terms like 'filtered people' we much prefer to keep things unsaid and keep it in the realm of vague concepts. It is so much safer. Jesus did not live in the realm of vague concepts, He rocked the boat with truth. That is what Jesus commanded us to do too! We are to simply preach what we were told to, allowing the Word and the Holy Spirit to filter people – people will choose for themselves if they are prepared to die to self and follow Christ and His demands.

Note Jesus' way of 'filtering' volunteers for the cause:

Luke 9:61 *Then someone said to Jesus, "I want to go with you, Lord, but first let me go back and take care of things at home."*

62 Jesus answered, "Anyone who starts plowing and keeps **looking back isn't worth a thing to God's kingdom!**"
CEV

If some leader today was to say such a thing, we would say "What a stupid leader, how are they going to get help from anyone with an attitude like that?"

No! Jesus is not stupid, we are. **The Kingdom of God is to be presented as God's own possession, and presented in the way He did it - it will cost you everything.**

The Kingdom of God is not ours to 'sell off cheaply' so that we can just get them in and look good. Which is largely what we have done. We uncritically imported many who are unfiltered and unacceptable to God. What arrogance.

Why do we constantly entice people into the Church, who are mere 'consumers' rather than the 'givers'? **We insult a Holy God by trying to sell a 'good life' to sinners.**

Jesus commanded a tough call, not a 'get everyone in that you can with any promise you can' sales pitch.

We are not building a fun multi-level marketing company, selling cheap eternal grace, we are building the Kingdom of God, for a Holy God, the Lord of all creation.

Think about it; if you wanted the best mountain climbing team, would you just get anybody you could into the team? No, you would lay out the requirements and commitment needed and begin to filter out those who were not fully committed. Your life depends on it. It has nothing to do with catching more people with sweetness.

We bring our silly worldly expectations and traditions of men into the Church. We have dumbed down God, the Bible, Jesus and Christianity so much, that we do not see them as being worthy of 'getting in' those whom they say are the right ones. No, we have a better idea 'let's get in **everyone** because God loves **everyone** so much.'

Let us be more discerning with sayings like:

'You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar'

This saying like so many sayings, **MUST** be interpreted within it's context, otherwise we use it simplistically to interpret the Bible. To use it as a blanket statement over all ministry interactions, is false. It is a **pretext** - something we have taken out of it's true context to mean something that it does not.

Here are some examples where Jesus was stern even with the frightened or needy. Of course He did it in love, that's not in question, (just a very different kind of love than what we peddle) but He was stern:

Jesus to His frightened disciples:

Matt. 8:26 *But he said to them, "**Why are you cowardly, you people of little faith?**" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it was dead calm.* NET

God's Word Translation:

"Why do you cowards have so little faith?"

To a frightened Peter:

Matt. 14:31 *Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "**You of little faith**, why did you doubt?"* NET

To a broken Peter who had denied his Lord, Jesus said:

John 21:17 *The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" **Peter was hurt** because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. **18** Very truly (listen to me carefully) I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go. **19** Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"* CEV

What? No wonderfully reassuring cuddle and encouraging words? If only Jesus was to take **our** advice, He could do it in a more loving way.

Hmmm, brings to mind '[For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom.](#)' (1Cor. 1:25.)

To the disciples after the upheaval of the trial & crucifixion:

Mark 16:14 *Afterwards, Jesus appeared to his eleven disciples as they were eating. **He scolded them** because they were too stubborn (hardness of heart) to believe the ones who had seen him after he had been raised to life.* CEV

Other versions translate it as:

- reproached
- rebuked

- criticized
- sharp words
- berated
- put them to shame

To a gentile woman pleading for her sick daughter:

Mark 7:27 And he said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread **and throw it to the dogs.**" ESV

To the publicly humiliated woman caught in adultery:

John 8:11 "No one, Lord," she answered. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "**Now go and sin no more.**" BSB

Pulpit Commentary:

He does not say, "Go in peace," or "Go to peace;" but **from this moment, this awful "now" (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν), "sin no more."**

Cambridge Bible for Schools Commentary:

[go, and sin no more] Or, **go and continue no longer in sin.** The contrast between the mere negative declaration and the very positive exhortation is striking. See in John 5:14. Later, Jesus met the man in the temple and told him, "You are now well. **But don't sin anymore or something worse might happen to you.**

Popular NT Commentary: John 8:11

no more. The word 'I' is **peculiarly emphatic.** The language, it will be observed, is not a sentence of acquittal: it is rather an intimation to the woman that she has still space given her for repentance and faith.....



If Jesus were here today and handled that situation in the same way, the warm fuzzy Christians of today's Church, would claim that He overstepped the mark of common decency, by telling that poor hurt, humiliated lady in a forceful way, to 'Go! And sin no more!' Because that's totally insensitive.

No, instead Jesus should have given her a big hug, and He would have told her that she was a special person. And, He would have made a point of doing this in front of everyone, so that she was vindicated to some degree

and therefore, help her to heal and be able to move on with her life.

And then He would be severely condemning of those evil Jewish men for the gross and public humiliation they had brought upon her.

By today's standards, Jesus handled that situation very poorly indeed. Yet, this very story is one of the most commonly used, by most Western Christians, to falsely silence any discerning or correct judging of sin. It is used to silence the speaker and shut down any discussion.

To the healed leper:

Mark 1:43 *Immediately Jesus sent the man away with **a very strong warning.***

44 He told him, "See that you do not say anything to anyone..." Net Bible

To those Jesus healed:

Matt. 12:15 *...Great crowds followed him, and he healed them all. 16 But he **sternly warned** them not to make him known.* Net Bible

To the 2 blind men:

Matt. 9:30 *And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus **sternly warned** them, "See that no one knows about this."* Net Bible

To his disciples:

Matt. 16:20 *Then he **strictly charged** the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.* ESV

If Jesus was so warm, kindly and sensitive to their needs, why were his disciples and friends often afraid or nervous of him?

Afraid to ask Jesus what He meant:

Luke 9:45 *But the disciples did not know what he meant. The meaning was hidden from them. They could not understand it, **and they were afraid to ask.*** CEV

Mark 9:31 *because he was teaching the disciples that the Son of Man would be handed over to people who would kill him. But three days later he would rise to life. 32 The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant, **and they were afraid to ask.*** CEV

The disciples held back from asking:

John 16:19 *Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, 'A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'?"* ESV

Mark 9:9 As Jesus and his disciples were coming down the mountain, he told them not to say a word about what they had seen, until the Son of Man had been raised from death.

10 So they kept it to themselves. **But they wondered what he meant** by the words "raised from death." CEV

Many times, Jesus sounds unapproachable.

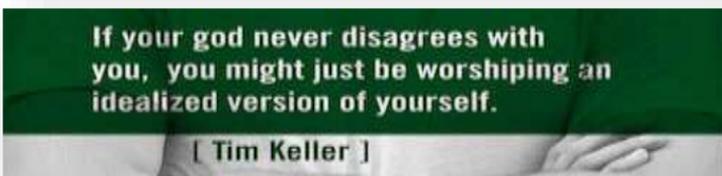
Jesus often spoke cryptically making it difficult to understand:

John 16:29 *The disciples said, "**Now you are speaking plainly to us!** You are not using examples. 30 At last we know that you understand everything, and we don't have any more questions. Now we believe that you truly have come from God."* CEV

As we look more closely at these interactions Jesus had with people, it becomes clearer, what He was really like. Our manufactured picture of Jesus is something like this: meek & mild, always so kindly, running after us, attending to our every need and discomfort.

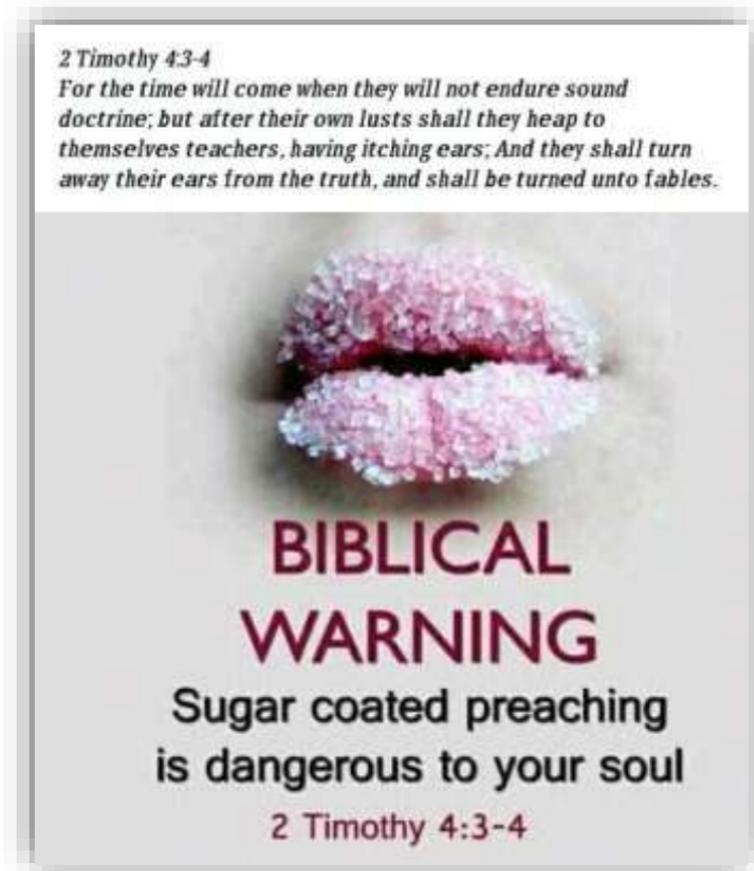
Whereas, the real Jesus that emerges, when we put aside our traditions of men, and learn from a literal reading of the Bible. Jesus is One who is intense, stern, nit-picky, contrary, outspoken, a stickler for the truth, intimidating, very focused, bossy. Yes, He did all things in love, but because the stakes were high in a fallen world, His love is expressed in a different way than what we think, want and now demand.

We made Jesus into a 'snowflake' after our own image, because we did not value the literal Bible, but rather elevated our own traditions of men.



If 89% of the interactions Jesus had with people are either stern or neutral, how could we possibly come to believe that Jesus was so sugary nice? It is just not

logical it is both illogical and subjective. It is just plain ridiculous and shows how much we want to believe a lie. In fact, it is a weapon of Satan against the Kingdom of God.



A weak gospel with no saving power is being preached to the masses! How pleased the demon hoards must be!

1Jn 5:10 *If we have faith in God's Son, we have believed what God has said. But if we don't believe what God has said about his Son, it is the same as calling God a liar.* CEV

So, when you declare and push the idea that 'Jesus is nice to people', it annuls the Word of God, you lie and call God a liar!

Here, John was refuting the Gnostics, who claimed to love God, but held wrong views about who Jesus was.

We too, have wrong beliefs about who Jesus is, and the Apostle John would refute our foolish, false beliefs too.

This kind of blind foolish 'sentimentalism' masquerading as 'higher spiritual truth', is destroying the Church and the Gospel.

So, we now find that, having declared that it was 'only the Pharisees and teachers of the Law' that Jesus was hard on, that He is documented as being hard, more

often on people who are not the Pharisees and teachers of the Law.

Not only that, but through all this investigation, we are exposed as being the Pharisees of today making up our own 'nice' Christianity. We too, have developed traditions of men that will protect us from having to obey the Bible, as Kierkegaard says, and protect us from having to obey God.

God is calling the Church to a broken repentance for our hard hearts, our sin and our dishonesty about what Jesus is really like.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Jesus Always Kind To The Sad/Needy/Sick = No, not like high emphasis we maintain.

CHAPTER 13. DOES JESUS RUN TO HELP US?

We believe that Jesus is so caring, that He runs after people to help them, encourage them, teach them guide them...

I love Michael W. Smith's song "**Secret Ambition**" but one line is not really correct theologically. Now that's ok normally because in poetry it is quite acceptable to use exaggeration to convey meaningful thoughts, and we usually understand what the writer is meaning. Not unlike when a poet or singer says in a love verse, 'I will give you the moon'. We know it is not true, but it conveys the depths of his love.

But, in a time of wrong thinking about God, and in the absence of good teaching, Christians do take this as a fact and a popular song reinforces wrong thinking in millions of young people (well, when I say young people, I also mean the many grey-haired babies in the church too).

*'...Questioning those in powerful positions
Running to those who called His name...*

Really?

Of course, Michael is only verbalizing what the Church strongly believes and wants to believe, he is not inventing some strange new idea. We all love the idea of Jesus being besotted with us.

Where in the New Testament do we see Jesus 'running' after people to minister to their needs and desires?

He certainly did not go running to Lazarus when he got news that his dear friend was very sick-he, waited two more days until Lazarus had died.

This concept of Jesus watching to heal our every need, is contrary from what we see of what Jesus did and said. Jesus constantly pointed to the Father and to Himself, not the people. He was quick to chastise the people for not knowing God. Jesus called people to honour God, to obey God. He healed those that he **encountered along the way**. He did not exalt human feelings in that way. He expected people to defer to God while sacrificing themselves for God.

We have this false sense of spiritual security. We believe that God is going to just shower us with all the information we need for salvation, safety, healing,

protection, etc... as long as we are a Christian. We have no real concept of having to seek God with all our heart. The Bible show us that Jesus is not like that. The Scriptures repeatedly show Jesus giving a little information and expecting that person to actively seek after God for themselves until they find God, and find the answers. We have this false confidence, believing that God loves us soooo much that He will tell or give us anything we really need. As though no real effort on our part is necessary. This contradicts Paul words – '[work out your salvation with fear and trembling](#)'³⁵ and when Jesus told us to be like '[the persistent widow who kept going to the crooked judge](#).'³⁶

God created man with the knowledge of Himself written within, it is up to each person to seek out the Originator of this still small voice. All creation speaks of God, each person must seek the God who made such an amazing world. ([Rom. 1:20](#)³⁷) As Jesus said, 'it is a hard thing to be saved' and it is an easy thing to be deceived. He said 'be watching' for my coming. Seeking hearts. Haphazard belief is not supported in Scripture. The responsibility is always on us to be seeking God and His Word to find His direction for our lives.

Not only are we required to wrestle and persevere to hear and receive from God, but God never promised to give us the message in a 'nice little package.' No, God so often uses someone we do not like, maybe like a prophet, to give us the message. But we cannot imagine that God could possibly be speaking through any unpleasant person, so we reject the message. What a 'prince/princess mentality' we carry, and how conceited we are. If we believe that Jesus is so kind to us, why would we accept anything but nice from anyone else?

Let me give you some examples of Jesus, not running to people:-

Allows his friend to die:

[John 11:3](#) *The sisters sent a message to the Lord and told him that his good friend Lazarus was sick.....6* **But he stayed where he was for two more days.** CEV

³⁵ [Philippians 2:12](#)

³⁶ [Luke 18:1-6](#)

³⁷ [Rom. 1:20](#) God's eternal power and character cannot be seen. But from the beginning of creation, God has shown what these are like by all he has made. That's why those people don't have any excuse.

You may argue that this is different because God had a plan. Yes, He did. That plan was to, 'not' run to Lazarus, but to do a miracle. You can see that, in the way He responds to Mary.

Today, if one was to put off praying for a sick person, and they died as a result of it, that one would be regarded almost as an evil person.

To His own mother & family:

Matt. 12:47 *Someone told Jesus, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside and want to talk with you." 48 Jesus answered, "**Who is my mother and who are my brothers?**"* CEV

Notice the attitude of Jesus here? Even His own dear mother He did not run after, when she was very concerned about his welfare. Jesus was a very focused person and was 'about My Father's business'. I doubt that Mary would not be hurt by this, for she 'treasured these things in her heart' as Luke tells us when writing his account of the gospel.

Tell me, if Jesus' role was to tell of God's great love and to run to the needy, why did he only heal **one person** at the pool at Bethesda, when there was a multitude of sick people?:

John 5:2 *Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.*

3 In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. ESV

No, Jesus does not run to or after us. We are to seek and cling to the Father for strength:

2Cor. 12:8 *Three times I begged the Lord to make this suffering go away.*

9 But he replied, "My kindness [grace] is all you need. *My power is strongest when you are weak." So if Christ keeps giving me his power, I will gladly brag about how weak I am.* CEV

Kindness? "You must endure it" is God's idea of kindness? But surely if Jesus was 'kind' in the way we hold so dear, He would do something more than that.

This is why so many fall away, they expected God to 'help' them (just take it away) in a time of dire need but He did not, so they walked. When people walk away from God in this way, it shows that they had not died to self, to follow Him. 'God' in their minds was more like the 'great genie' who would keep them from bad things

and give them a good life. That is just part of the false 'prosperity theology.'

Luke 9:23 *Then Jesus said to all the people: If any of you want to be my followers, **you must forget about yourself. You must take up your cross each day and follow me.*** CEV

Forget about myself? Why? Because we are self-centered, sinful, weak, ignorant, and unable to save ourselves.

That is our life on earth, that is life. However, we do not need to live spiritually disabled, depending on God to run after us and keep us happy, by naively believing a false gospel.

Jesus – said what?:

Matt. 15:11 *it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.” 12 Then the disciples came and said to him, “**Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?”... 14 Let them alone; they are blind guides...**”* ESV

What? 'let them alone' and forget about them?

That is the **opposite** of running after them.

This is what God said to the Northern Kingdom through Hosea:

Hos 4:17 *Ephraim is joined to false gods; **let him be.*** BBE

Again we see Jesus acting like the 'God of the Old Testament'. More on that later.

What do some Bible commentaries say about this '**let them alone**' declared by Jesus?'

John Trapp Commentary:

*Ver. 14. **Let them alone** - A dreadful doom;*³⁸

³⁸ <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jtc/matthew-15.html>

*Ver. 14. **Let them alone**] A dreadful doom; like that, Hos 4:14: "I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom," &c. No so great punishment as not to be punished. And, Hos 4:17: of that same chapter, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone:" q.d. he hath made a match with mischief, he shall have his belly full of it. Never was Jerusalem's condition so desperate as when God said unto her, "My fury shall depart from thee, I will be quiet, and no more angry," Eze 16:42. A man is ever and anon meddling with his fruit trees, paring and pruning, &c.; but for his oaks, and other trees of the forest, he lets them alone, till he comes, once for all, with his axe to fell them.*

Pulpit Commentary:

Let them alone. Do not trouble yourselves about them; let them be offended, if they will.³⁹

John Gill's Bible Exposition:

Let them alone,.... Have nothing to say, or do with them; do not mind their anger and resentment, their reproaches and reflections, nor trouble yourselves at the offence they have taken; if they will go, let them go; they are a worthless generation of men, who are not to be regarded, hearkened to, nor to be pleased; it matters not what they say of me, and of my doctrine⁴⁰

Explanatory Notes R. Ice:

Don't worry about them. Don't be concerned by the hurt feelings and the opposition of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law.⁴¹

Expositors Bible Commentary:

He simply says "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." Expose their error by all means; root it out if possible; but as for the men themselves, "let them alone."⁴²

Adam Clarke Commentary:

The words are rendered, let them alone: but the whole connection of the place evidently proves that our blessed Lord meant, give them up, have no kind of religious connection with them, and the strong reason for which He immediately adds, because they are blind leaders.⁴³

Thomas Coke Commentary:

Therefore, let them alone; concern not yourselves about them."⁴⁴

So, Jesus teaches in a way that insults the Pharisees, and then He tells the disciples 'let them alone' to, 'forget about them and move on'.

Not only is Jesus not running to them with nice words, He is NOT running after them at all.

Why do we? We run after people, sometimes for years, trying to be everything that might cause them to change and follow Jesus.

This is NOT the pattern that Jesus modeled.

³⁹ <https://goo.gl/gvGD9Y>

⁴⁰ <https://goo.gl/7P9DBS>

⁴¹ <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/ice/matthew-15.html>

⁴² <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/15-14.htm>

⁴³ <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/15-14.htm>

⁴⁴ <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/15-14.htm>

When someone has a hard heart, we move on, like Jesus. That is unless the Holy Spirit shows us that this is a situation we must persevere with. (Obviously we persevere with our own family members, but even then, we must be careful to give only what the Holy Spirit directs us to.)

He does not run after us, He commands us to come to Him.

Another problem with this thinking is that pastors feel that they need to be 'like' Jesus and 'run after anyone' who is troubled. It wears them down - burnout syndrome, and it is not good for the sheep. Sheep must learn and grow, they must work out their own salvation with the Father, they should not have a pastor saving them from every problem and systematically pronouncing 'assurance of salvation'. Let them work it out themselves, then they will truly have it, i.e. salvation.

No, on the contrary, Jesus mainly called people to come to him, rather than running to or after people.

I can only think of one instance of this concept of Jesus being so eager to find someone to help them. There is the instance where Jesus sought out the [man He healed of blindness](#), (John 9:35) after the Jewish leaders had interrogated him, but this would be a low keyed 'running to' unlike what we envisage. Possibly Jesus sought out the woman of Samaria too, we do not know. So it can be said that Jesus did seek individuals on occasions, but not as a practice or focus.

Think of it like a busy evangelist who carries a vision for the many, and keeps focused on that, while there are some instances of seeking out a person or two, it is not the main focus for him. We ought not read our view into what Scripture describes of Jesus' ministry.

Jesus not only preached and spoke bluntly to people, He also often spoke in cryptic statements and parables. That's not Jesus running after people, the responsibility is on us to seek God. If we do not seek God, the Creator of the universe who left abundant signs of His existence, then people can blame no one else. 'If we seek God, we will find Him' as Scripture declares.

As a general principle, rather than Jesus 'running to people', an objective reading of His ministry reveals quite the opposite.

"But Neil, if you talk like that, you would drive them away."

I have heard this so many times over the years, from people considered to be mature, experienced believers and pastors.

Some years ago I had a heated debate with Joe, a seventy plus year old unstoppable evangelist here in Melbourne. He believes in the prosperity doctrine and I tried to show him that it is not a Biblical concept. I asked him where in the Bible does he find any support for such a view. He answered:

3 John 1:2 *Beloved, in regard to all things I pray that you prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers.* MKJV

I felt like weeping.

He needs to read a simple English version of the Bible, because he cannot translate from the more literal versions.

Something like the **Contemporary English Version:**

3 John 1:2 *dear friend, and I pray that all goes well for you. I hope that you are as strong in body, as I know you are in spirit.* CEV

...the New Living Translation:

3 John 1:2 *Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit.* NLT

...or the Easy-To-Read Version:

3 John 1:2 *My dear friend, I know that you are doing well spiritually. So I pray that everything else is going well with you and that you are enjoying good health.* ERV

Joe finally got very frustrated with me because I could not see how wrong I was about the Bible, and he blurted out: ""If that's all you preach (repentance) why would they come in? You would drive them away."

What! So we need to preach prosperity as well, otherwise we do not have enough to offer them? Their great sin against a holy God, followed up by eternal judgment in hell is not enough, we need some enticement?

That's idolatry.

I found it hard to believe, yet it was the 2nd time I had been told that in about 2 weeks.

Joe would be shocked to be reminded that he had said that, because he would not say it normally, but in the heat of the moment, his deeply held belief came out.

Garry, another pastor friend objected to these things and said 'You would have no one left in the Church if you said that Neil.'

We were not given some divine right to change what Jesus commanded.

If the way Jesus did it and taught us to do it, was indeed the worst possible way to evangelize, and it was truly driving people away, that is God's business, not ours. We are to simply obey. We were commanded to do it in a certain way. God knows what He is doing and no other option was ever offered to us.

I know, Jesus would have failed every modern marketing course right now, because he did it all wrong if His intention was to get as many people in as possible. But I care little for our man-made professional ideas and modern training courses.

Yes, some people would NOT accept God without some 'extra' enticements. But this is the very point I am making. Jesus did NOT want just anyone coming in - he wanted those who had truly died to self and had no demands, only humility and obedience.

It turns out that Jesus was right all along, it is the 'best' way to evangelize, if you truly want saved, properly focused and passionate people coming into your church.

Why is it so hard for us to remember that tough love works better than weak love?

And why is it so hard for us to understand that Jesus said He does not want those who are 'lukewarm' when He said it clearly in many different ways in the Bible?

I then must ask the same question Jesus did - 'Are your hearts so hardened, that you cannot understand?' (Mark 8:17.)

And as Stephen said :

Acts 7:51 You stubborn and hardheaded people! You are always fighting against the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors did. CEV

It is sad to say, 'yes we are hardheaded' because we preferred to listen to the words of men rather than to plain Scripture. And we can get away with it in this age, because everyone else is doing it too.

Here are a few instances of Jesus, as we would ignorantly say, 'driving people away':

- 'tells rich young ruler to sell all and give to poor'

You will lose most people doing that.

- 'eat my flesh and drink my blood'
This is so extreme, but we refuse to really see it.
- 'exposed woman of Samaria for her immoral life'
- "You faithless and perverse generation, how long do I have to put up with you?"
- "You blind fools."
We would say that goes beyond driving them away and is so insultingly wrong.
- "'Get behind me, Satan" to Peter.
- 'Drove people out of the temple.' Twice.
Here Jesus IS literally 'driving people away.'
So, by your reckoning, who will ever come to Jesus's Church?
- 'He rebuked them for their lack of faith'
Yet our unbending belief is that you only motivate people by encouraging them.
- "This is an evil generation."
Jesus scores a fail here again according to our wisdom.
- "I say to you, many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"
- "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea".

Jesus obviously has not read '**How To Win Friends And Influence People.**' We think we are so spiritual, advanced and so clever, but really we are so stupid.

- 'to the crowd - "You knew I was a hard man, reaping what I did not sow, bring them here, and slay them before me"
Why say such a thing? Because a true cause has little interest in a self-serving agenda.
- 'Jesus said, "You are the important teacher of Israel, and you still don't understand these things?"'

We would chastise a 30 year old Jesus for correcting a respected elder, by saying something foolish like "Touch not the Lord's anointed."

- 'to the woman caught in adultery - "GO! And sin no more!"
You don't hurt a hurt lady like that.....
- "You are an adulterer if you lust after a woman."
Well, you are not going to get anybody in by talking like that!
- "And will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth"
Well, talking weird like that is going to scare off anyone that wants a normal church.
- "I did not come to bring peace, I came to bring division, wounding and death."

Ok, we just lost everyone, didn't we?

No! Only most of them - those who would not bow their knee to the Almighty Living God and have rejected the true message.

That's just a few.



We just don't get it. Why? Scripture is clear.

Jesus wanted to drive away the 'goats', the 'lukewarmers' and the half-hearted. He does not want them in His Church dragging everything down to the lowest common denominator - flesh breeds flesh and the number of unsaved in the Church is now so high, that they have the critical mass, they determine the overall congregational culture. If they do not want hell, sin or judgment preached, the pastor will not preach on hell, sin and judgment, and the Kingdom of God is robbed.

If Jesus does not want them, upon what basis do we bring them in? We must have a very strong case for opposing His will! What is it?



Strange isn't it, how we avoid conflict 'like the plague' while at the same time saying & singing that we want to be Christ-like. Yet Jesus declared such shocking things as "You must eat my flesh and drink my Blood" in order to sort out/lose those who were not fully committed. If you do not want to cause any conflict, you should have thought about that before. You should have taken the time to 'sit down and count the cost' before you chose to be a follower of Jesus Christ. After all, that's what He told you to do:

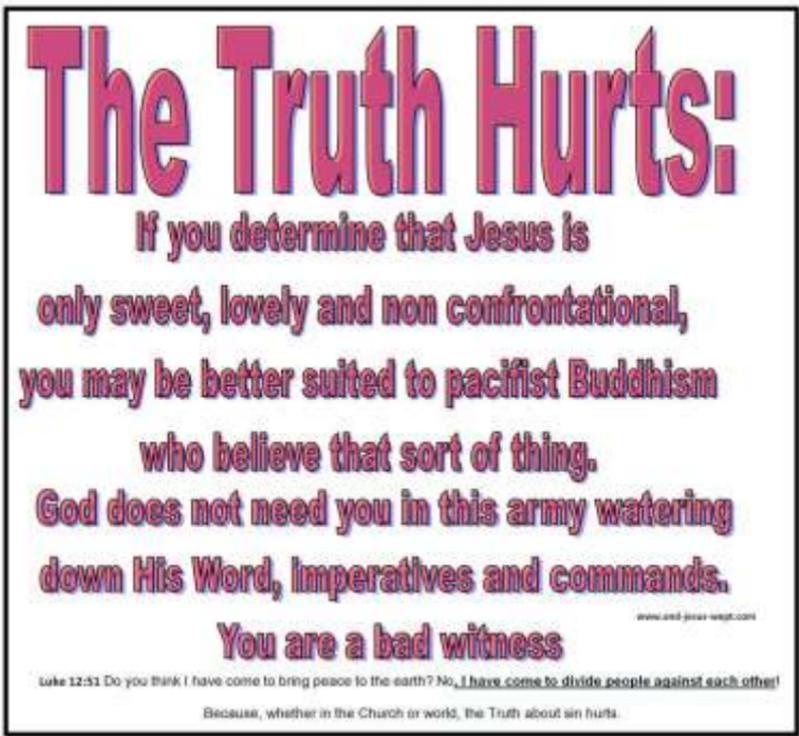
Luke 14:26 *You cannot be my disciple, unless you love me more than you love your father and mother, your wife and children, and your brothers and sisters. You cannot come with me unless you love me more than you love your own life... **sit down and figure out how much it will cost...***

V27-30⁴⁵ CEV

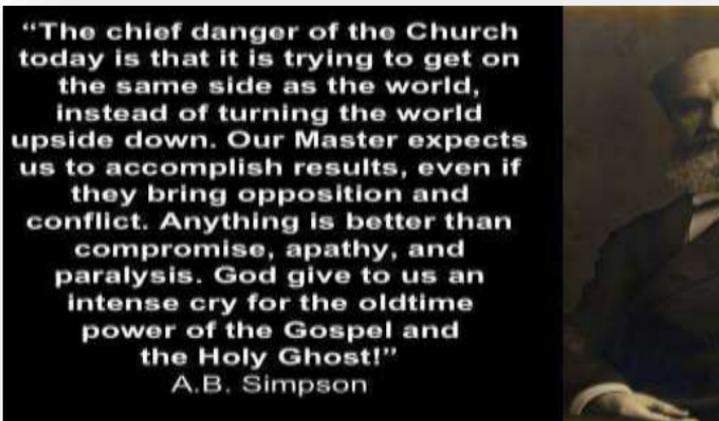
Or do you refuse to be involved in the 'normal' conflict of being a genuine follower of Jesus by speaking the truth? That truth which offends people, because it testifies of Christ and exposes their sin? If so, then you need to renounce your supposed 'Christian commitment' and leave. You are 'not worthy of this calling' and you are not accepted by Christ. You may find that pacifist Buddhism is more to your liking.

⁴⁵ **Luke 14:27** You cannot be my disciple unless you carry your own cross and come with me.

28 Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. What is the first thing you will do? Won't you **sit down and figure out how much it will cost** and if you have enough money to pay for it? 29 Otherwise, you will start building the tower, but not be able to finish. Then everyone who sees what is happening will laugh at you. 30 They will say, "You started building, but could not finish the job."



We were called to repent of our sin and join God's 'People's Liberation Army' in order to bring the lost in. A Cause where we die to self and obey the Commander's commands, and if you refuse to, you will be discharged, even if you do not realize it. How can you say, you were ever really a Christian?



Either Jesus did not know what He was doing or, we are so incredibly foolish, ignorant, and hard-hearted. We are stubborn fools, spouting a lot of fleshly ideas.

Recently I read the Barna Research project - [Six Reasons Young Christians Leave Church](#) September 2011:

- #1 – Churches seem overprotective.
- #2 – Teens' and twenty somethings' experience of Christianity is shallow.
- #3 – Churches come across as antagonistic to science.

- #4 – Young Christians' church experiences related to sexuality are often simplistic, judgmental.
- #5 – They wrestle with the exclusive nature of Christianity.
- #6 – The church feels unfriendly to those who doubt.

We hear so much about 'being relevant to the world'. Yet, what 'people want' is almost completely irrelevant! God tells us in His Word how to build and run a church. Why on earth would church leaders consider what young people favour as a guide on how to build a church? That's not church, that's a Christian youth club of sorts.

At no time did God give us permission to change what He required. If every single person in the world except you, refused to accept the commands of God, you still have no right to soften the message to get them in.

Our first responsibility is to obey God, not people.

Paul Washer on this:

"When we look at Romans 1:16 we understand that Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. That might seem something unusual to us that he has to make that statement, being an apostle, a principal carrier of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But I want to tell you that Paul's flesh had every reason to be ashamed of the gospel because the gospel he preached contradicted everything that was believed to be true and everything that was believed to be sacred in his culture.

*Now just really quickly I want to say this. **Paul makes no attempt to become relevant to his culture. He makes no attempt to make treaty with his culture, adapt his message to the culture, repackage the message or any of the other nonsense that has become so prominent in the evangelical community today.***

To the Jew the gospel, Paul's gospel was the worst sort of blasphemy because it claimed that the Nazarene who died on that cross accursed, was the Messiah and the Son of God.

To the Greek it was the worst sort of absurdity because it claimed that this Jew from some out of the way place was actually God in the flesh. Therefore, Paul knew that whenever he opened his mouth to speak the gospel he would be utterly rejected and ridiculed to scorn unless the Holy

Spirit intervened and moved upon the hearts and minds of his hearers.

*Now this is what he knew. This is what you should know. **If you are properly preaching the gospel, it will be scandalous and if you try to make it less of a scandal you no longer preach the gospel.***⁴⁶ (Emphasis added)

What God commanded us to teach is wholly relevant. God knows all truth. God intimately knows man - He also intimately knows every single person, so He is the only One qualified to determine what is the best way to save man. Our 'modern' bright ideas do not help God, they get in the way, they obfuscate and they produce death. Traditions of men, do not help and if people refuse to come into the Church with what God told us to tell them, He does not want them. Most would say 'well, that's a bit harsh' but only because they do not know the God of the Bible.

I love many **Babylon Bee** satirical pieces, here are two:

'Progressive Believer Ensures Survival Of Christianity By Denying Every Major Christian Doctrine'

“. . . The problem with Christians is they are tossed to and fro by every passage of the Bible, rather than remaining faithful to the ever-shifting moral standards of the culture,” Gerry told reporters Wednesday. “I’m just happy and humbled to do my part to call other Jesus-followers to a more palatable understanding of the Christian faith . . .”
[Read more...](#)⁴⁷

'Pastor Forced To Undergo Seeker Sensitivity Training After Mentioning Sin, Hell'

SEATTLE, WA—According to sources, local pastor Ryan Ferguson is being required by his church leadership team to attend a six-week seeker sensitivity training course after “carelessly” mentioning “unwelcoming” concepts like sin, hell,

⁴⁶ [Regeneration vs Decisionism DEEPER Conference 2008](http://www.sermonaudio.com/viewtranscript.asp?sermonid=1021081230111)
<http://www.sermonaudio.com/viewtranscript.asp?sermonid=1021081230111>

⁴⁷ <http://babylonbee.com/news/progressive-believer-ensures-survival-of-christianity-by-denying-every-major-christian-doctrine/>

*and repentance to his congregation in a recent Sunday sermon...[Read more...](#)*⁴⁸

How foolish we are.

So many have now become apologists for a different Jesus and a different god. The god of the sola affectus gospel.

But let's look at what the God of the Bible expects:

You must deny self daily - [Luke 9:23](#), [Mark 8:34](#), [Matt 16:24](#)

So, forget about and deny your own bright ideas about how important you are and how much God wants to run around after your every want. You just deny yourself and obey Him, He will take care of the rest.

Is it any wonder that we welcome in the goats who only want to be pampered when we see pastors begging for the unsaved to come forward during an altar call, as though Jesus Himself was begging. He is the King of Glory not the subservient benefactor begging for a response. (Not that there is no situation to 'beg' or 'plea' for a response to something vitally important. That is if it comes from us, but not when it seems to come from God Himself. Paul pleaded for people to respond.)

Christians instantly react to this kind of talk and 'judge' it as too hard. No! It is not too hard, it is exciting to give your life for the greatest cause of all. It is so deeply fulfilling, and gives great peace and communion with God.

Oh that we might die to self, and live for God.

What else does the God of the Bible expect?:

- **to take up his cross and follow after Me or is not worthy of Me** - [Matt 10:38](#)
- **carry his own cross and come after Me or cannot be My disciple.** [Luke 14:27](#)
- Jesus told another, "Come follow Me." "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father." But Jesus said "**Allow the dead to bury their own dead**; but you go and preach everywhere the gospel." [Luke 9:59-60](#); [Matt 8:21-22](#)

⁴⁸ <https://babylonbee.com/news/pastor-forced-undergo-seeker-sensitivity-training-mentioning-sin-hell>

- **"I will follow You wherever You go."** Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, **but I have nowhere to lay my head.**" [Luke 9:57-58](#)
- **For not one of us lives for himself.** [Rom 14:7](#)
- Jesus said to him, **"If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions** and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; **and come, follow Me.**" [Mark 10:17-21](#), [Matt 19:16-21](#)
- **Count the cost.** "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? **"So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.**" [Luke 14:28-33](#)
- **"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. [Matt 10:37](#)
- **"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother** [figuratively speaking, to show how devoted we must be] and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. [Luke 14:26](#)
- **"If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."** [John 15:20](#)
- **"Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."** [Acts 14:22](#)
- **"He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.** [John 12:25](#)

If you said of any of the quotes above 'well, that's a bit harsh' you are also saying that Jesus is a bit harsh.

And He is, by our standards of 'niceness.' But He is not harsh at all in the light of surviving a sinful world and living for eternal values and heaven.

It only seems harsh to us because we do not understand that sin is so vile, hell is so terrible, God is so holy and

sin must be punished. There simply is no way around this, God cannot change cosmic requirements just because mankind finds them inconvenient.



Sin is so vile, and hell is so terrible:

'Then he will throw them into a flaming furnace, where people will cry and grit their teeth in pain.' [Matt. 13:42](#) CEV



Consider the words of this atheist, **he understand the reality better than you do:**

[Letter from an Atheist.](#)

This is an excerpt of an e-mail to evangelist Ray Comfort:

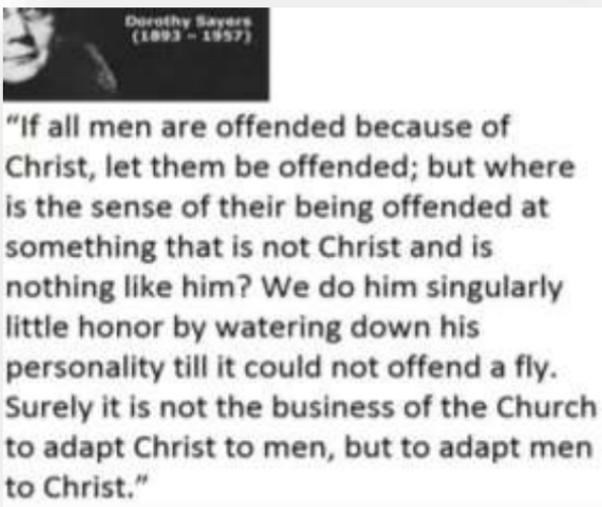
"You are really convinced that you've got all the answers. You've really got yourself tricked into believing that you're 100% right. Well, let me tell you just one thing. Do you consider yourself to be compassionate of other humans? If you're right, as you say you are, and you believe that, then how can you sleep at night? When you speak with me, you are speaking with someone who

you believe is walking directly into eternal damnation, into an endless onslaught of horrendous pain which your 'loving' god created, yet you stand by and do nothing.

*If you believed one bit that thousands every day were falling into an eternal and unchangeable fate, you should be running the streets mad with rage at their blindness. That's equivalent to standing on a street corner and watching every person that passes you walk blindly directly into the path of a bus and die, **yet you stand idly by and do nothing.** You're just twiddling your thumbs, happy in the knowledge that one day that 'walk' signal will shine your way across the road.*

*Think about it. **Imagine the horrors Hell must have in store if the Bible is true. You're just going to allow that to happen and not care about saving anyone but yourself? If you're right then you're an uncaring, unemotional and purely selfish (expletive) that has no right to talk about subjects such as love and caring.**"⁴⁹
(Emphasis added)*

No, we do not change God's requirements, we obey them. The Kingdom requirements are based on eternal truths, on an Infinite God, how dare we think we can modify them.



It is true that Jesus 'would have all men to be saved'⁵⁰ that is His desire, but it is also completely true that

⁴⁹ <https://www.livingwaters.com/evangelism/letter-from-an-atheist>

⁵⁰ **1Ti 2:4** God wants everyone to be saved and to fully understand the truth. ERV

Jesus did not and does not, want half-hearted or lukewarm followers:

Luke 14:27 You ***cannot be my disciple*** unless you carry your own cross and come with me. CEV

Rev. 3:16 But since you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, ***I will spit you out of my mouth.*** CEV

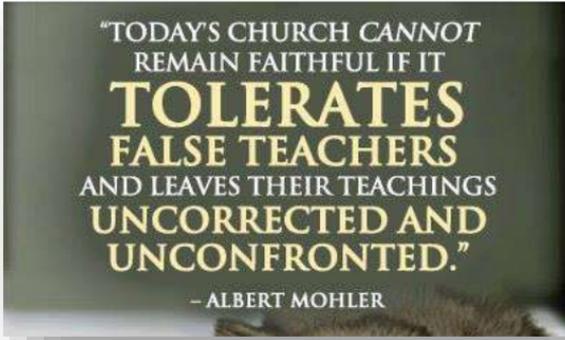
He wants all in, or all out, not some "Oh well, hey, come on in, you might truly repent and make me Lord one day." What a horrible violation of His teaching, of His Kingdom and of His death on the cross.

The 'Just Get Them In' mentality is so very wrong. We may have no standards but God does and it is His Church.

'By failing to preach on abortion we are encouraging not only cognitive, but moral, dissonance of the highest order. We are not merely giving sanction to the evil of our age, we are also misrepresenting the gospel. We think we're making it easier for seekers to find Christ, but we're actually making it easier for them to never feel any real need for Him. After all, if God isn't all that upset over the heartless, cold-blooded murder of 56 million defenseless babies, how concerned can He be over any of our sins?'
<http://www.breakpoint.org/features-columns/articles/entry/12/25126>

As Martin Luther put it, "Peace if possible, truth at all costs." And as Messianic Rabbi Jonathan Cahn put it recently, "Without truth there is no love." So we must be people of truth. We must live it, believe it and proclaim it.





We take it so lightly but God does not.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Jesus Runs After People To Help/Guide = No, Jesus did not 'love people so much that He ran to the needy as His normal practice.'

Again, yes God loves us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

CHAPTER 14. WHAT DID JESUS COME TO DO?

Or one may ask, what was Jesus' 'job description' as described in the Bible?

Was it to tell us that God loves, cares for and encourage us as we constantly hear from the pulpit?

Recently in a Baptist church Bible study I was attending, we were discussing the role of the Law and what changed when Jesus fulfilled the Law.

An older man who has been a Christian for 61 years, a pillar in his Baptist church, who has lead Bible studies, and is a counselor, made the grand declaration in a Bible study:

"Christ was to come and show us two things; how to love God and how to love one another."

That was the whole gospel. He did not want anyone to add anything more to that insipid watered-down version of the gospel. If they did, they were 'not keeping it simple' and that made it 'confusing' for everybody.

And if anyone talked about how sinful we are and the need to repent regularly, he would chastise them for focusing on negative things.

This is like saying that a trip to the majestic Mount Everest, is all about the luxurious, comfortable bed the chalet provided for you to sleep in.

I asked him to repeat it so I could write it down accurately.

How shockingly shallow.

Christ was to come to show us how to love?

What about, to defeat sin and death?

What about, to die for the vile sin of mankind?

What about the justice of God and His wrath over evil?

What about, to obey his Father?

What about, the great plan of salvation -to save the lost?

What about, to glorify the most Holy Creator God?

What about, to defeat Satan before all the hosts of heaven and hell - the great cosmic battle?

What about to destroy the works of the devil?

What about to make us like Himself?

What about, to empower His people to defeat sin?⁵¹

⁵¹ [2 Cor. 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.](#) NIV

What about the 'great mystery' that the forefathers longed to see?

1Tim. 3:16 *Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:
He appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory.* NIV

Heb. 11:13 *All these great people continued living with faith until they died. They did not get the things God promised his people. But they were happy just to see those promises coming far in the future. They accepted the fact that they were like visitors and strangers here on earth.* ERV

Here is a sum up from Jesus just before His ascension:

Luke 24:46 and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 **and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.** ESV

It is cosmic and huge, not simplistic and narrow.

I was grieved when I heard it, and felt like weeping. What hope does the modern Western Church have, when even the older generation have such a shallow nutshell understanding of why Jesus came?

This is just Sunday School theology. And even then it is far too simplistic and not a very accurate sum up of the gospel.

We live on Sunday School theology (**little children's theology**) and we keep our people on it too, for fear that someone may raise a subject or concept that might upset someone.

When we focus so much on these 'nice' things about God, we lose any focus on the hard things concerning God and life. This is natural for the human mind. Consider this; this is how God made the human mind to function; when we are deeply hurt about some offence, we are to forgive and forget and the hurt of that thing will fade away. That is a God-given ability the mind has to deal with painful memories - by not focusing on the problem, they fade or move into our peripheral

thinking (as we know, keeping it in focus will lock us into the offence.)

However, that same function of fading or forgetting that which is not kept in our minds, also works with all other things we think about. If we do not keep in mind the wrath of God, the reality of hell, the fact that love offends too, the evilness of sin; these things will fade from view and retreat into our peripheral thinking.

Then our assessment, discerning and judging of all other things is compromised- we only have half the correct dynamics in mind when making our judgments on how to think or act in any given situation.

That's why Peter says:

2 Peter 1:13 *In fact, I think I should **keep on reminding you** until I leave this body.* CEV

And why Paul says:

2 Timothy 2:14 ***Keep reminding God's people of these things.** Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen.* CEV

We have fallen hopelessly in love with the idea of 'love' (mainly because we want to be loved) and we really do not love God that much. We switched our affections from loving God, to loving 'being loved.'

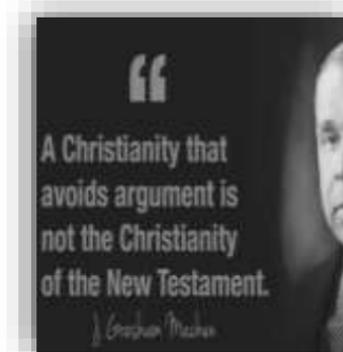
It could be said that we now worship 'being loved' rather than loving and worshipping God.

And we will argue, be indignant, malign and reject anyone who threatens this addiction.

So, let's get this straight. Jesus went about challenging people, preaching the truth that He knew was going to upset people, but we think we can do the same job by avoiding any possibility of conflict.

How carnal we are! Too bad about the truths that God commands us to preach, we know better and rebel against Him, with the pretense that we are being so wise and so very 'loving' by avoiding any one being hurt or offended. Conflict is not of God we 'wisely' reason.

To speak about God's love for us in every given situation, is seen as a more spiritual way of speaking,



as though this is the more correct way to address all things.

But it is NOT, otherwise Jesus would have done lots of it.

We should stop calling ourselves Christians, until we start following Jesus in the way He told us to.

I recently heard it preached with no clarification:

**"Moses brought the law.
Jesus brought grace and truth."**

Yes, that is true, in John 1:17, but, Jesus preached law far more, (remember the rich young ruler), repentance mostly and hell a lot.

Jesus did NOT preach only grace (particularly our sappy understanding of the word 'grace') while playing down the hard things. Quite the opposite.

You see how easy it is to quote a Scripture, from a wrong understanding because of our false assumptions? Preachers talk about the 'Gospel of Grace' but what they really mean is the 'Gospel of Grace, and only grace.'

Please brethren, how can we be pitting grace against repentance like this? This is totally contrary from what Jesus wanted and called us to do.

Sure, Jesus preached some about the grace of God too, but never at the expense of repentance, law and hell - he most certainly did not preach 'grace' over against repentance, law and hell, which is what we have come to do.



It grieves me to see pastors preaching in a simplistic way, making grand theological statements about something like grace, without indentifying the usages of the word grace and what it means in a particular context. But no, we have our established traditions of men, on how we view grace. Words can mean many different things in many different settings, discussions or contexts. But we do not feel the need to really study

to determine **what it means**, we just comply with the 'acceptable view'.

Yes, Jesus was coming to establish a new covenant of grace, but He predominantly preached repentance, hell and the Kingdom.

That tells you something about God's idea of preaching grace, if we are interested and willing to go against the flow for God.

Did you know that Jesus never used the word 'grace'?

It is true, but grace was present in the act, of Jesus telling them to repent of sin.

Why do we assume that 'grace' is only something associated with Jesus and the New Testament?

The Law was also God's wonderful grace to mankind, given by the only God who is full of grace. Even in the Old Testament.

What is it that Jesus Himself and the Bible tells us about why He came?

It seems evident from Scripture, that Jesus was far more interested in creating internal conflict, bringing people to a crisis of conscience that might provoke them onto faith in God. But what we do not see, is Jesus trying to make people feel happy, or build their self-esteem. And it makes sense, because hell is a very terrible place in which to end up.

Even when James is speaking about peace-making, he states that holiness comes first, then peace-loving:

James 3:17 *But the wisdom from above is **first pure, then peaceable**ⁱⁱⁱ, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial, and not hypocritical.* Net Bible

Pulpit Commentary:

First pure, then peaceable. "The sequence is that of thought, not of time" (Plumptre). **Purity must be secured, even at the expense of peace.**

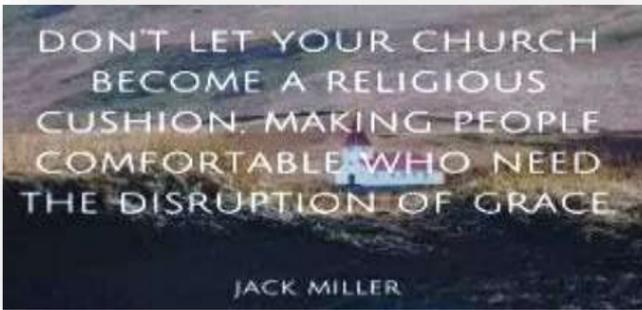
We have it back-to-front, we want peace while holiness and truth come second, third, fourth or maybe not at all. If we were to look at the dynamics of what we are doing, it turns out we are **devangelizing** [52](#) not Biblically evangelizing people.

⁵² **devangelise** verb (used with object)

1. to attempt to spread Christianity (evangelical or otherwise) so poorly that it has the opposite effect to what is intended.

So, if we are prepared to see it, Jesus continually brought His hearers to a place that demanded they make a choice for or against God, in the same way Joshua did:

Josh 24:15 *If you have no desire to worship the LORD, **choose today whom you will worship**,...*
NET



And that is why Jesus makes this confrontive statement about His mission:

Luke 12:51 *Do you think that I came to bring peace to earth? **No indeed! I came to make people choose sides (division)**.* CEV

Yet, we are fixated on keeping the peace, and never causing any offence. Obviously Jesus came to bring peace to our souls in a spiritual sense, but this same truth would bring conflict and divisions in a practical sense – to many families and the world.

Look at the lengths Jesus went to, to cause the non-genuine followers to leave Him – those who want followed Jesus as an ‘option’ for the benefits, not by ‘conviction’ for a Great Cause – the Kingdom of God:

John 6:53 *Jesus answered: I tell you for **certain that you won't live unless you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man...** 66 After this **many of his disciples quit following him** and did not accompany him any longer. 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, "**You don't want to go away too, do you?**" NET*

A path in life taken by choosing a beneficial ‘option’ cannot withstand such a declaration, but a true ‘conviction’ of the reality of a cause, can. So too, a mere

2. to cause, or attempt to cause, someone to leave the Christian faith. verb (used without object)

3. to lose interest in the Christian faith.

beneficial option cannot withstand the sufferings required to follow Christ. It cannot withstand the shame of lost reputation or the loss of your wealth. It cannot forgive the deepest cuts or supply the ability to defeat the hardest sin. The mere option cannot truly die to itself in order to live for Christ.

Why did Jesus come, what does the Bible say?

The usual first response to this, is that He came to die for us, but this is only one of many reasons stated in the Bible. Let us go on to observe the things Jesus proclaimed that He came to do.

Here are a few:

- [Matt. 5:17](#) "I have not come to abolish the Law but to **fulfill it.**"
- [Luke 19:10](#) "For the Son of Man **came to seek and to save the lost.**"
- [Luke 4:43](#) "I must **proclaim the good news** of the kingdom . . . for that is **what I was sent to do.**"
- [Luke 12:49](#) "**I have come to bring fire on the earth**
- [John 9:39](#) Jesus said, "**For judgment I have come into this world.**"
- [John 18:37](#) "So you are **a king!**" Jesus replied, . . . for this reason **I came into the world.**"
- [John 18:37](#) . . . for this reason **I came into the world — to testify to the truth.**
- [1Tit. 1:15](#) "Christ Jesus **came into the world to save sinners**"
- [1John 3:8](#) For this purpose the Son of God was **revealed: to destroy the works of the devil.**
- [1John 3:5](#) Jesus was **revealed to take away sins.**
- [Heb. 10:9](#) "Here I am: **I have come to do your will.**"

NET

There is nothing there that shows any emphasis on God's love for us from what Jesus Himself, said.

Let us now look at 3 independent lists about this question, from a range of doctrinal backgrounds.

Obviously, Jesus also came to tell us that God loves us, among many other things, but let's see if any of these lists found any clear statement to that effect, or shows the great emphasis on it, that we give it today:

[What did Jesus come to do? - Matt Slick](#)⁵³

1. To reveal the Father.

⁵³ <https://carm.org/what-did-jesus-come-do>

2. *To be a ransom for many.*
3. *To serve.*
4. *To save the world.*
5. *To preach the gospel of the kingdom of God.*
6. *To bring division.*
7. *To do the will of the Father.*
8. *To give the Father's words.*
9. *To testify to the truth.*
10. *To die and destroy Satan's power.*
11. *To destroy the devil's works.*
12. *To fulfill the Law and the Prophets.*
13. *To give life.*
14. *To taste death for everyone.*
15. *To become a high priest.*
16. *To atone for sin.*
17. *To proclaim freedom for believers.*
18. *To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*
19. *To bring judgment.*
20. *To take away sin.*
21. *To preach.*
22. *To call sinners.*
23. *To know who is true.*

Why Did Jesus Come? 21 Reasons - Dr. Roger Congdon⁵⁴

1. *He came to fulfill prophecy.*
2. *He came to abolish the law.*
3. *He came to seek the lost.*
4. *He came to save the lost.*
5. *He came to serve.*
6. *He came to give His life as a ransom.*
7. *He came that men might have life more abundant.*
8. *He came to reveal the Father.*
9. *He came to do the will of God.*
10. *He came to preach.*
11. *He came to bring fire.*
12. *He came to bring judgment.*
13. *He came to be king.*
14. *He came to bear witness to the truth.*
15. *He came to save sinners.*
16. *He came into the world to be a faithful high priest.*
17. *He came to put away sin.*
18. *He came to destroy the works of the devil.*
19. *He came to send a sword.*
20. *He came to bear our sins.*
21. *He came to provide a pattern of holy living for Christians.*

⁵⁴ <http://www.teachinghome.com/em-elements/christmas/21reasons.cfm>

BlueletterBible site - Don Stewart⁵⁵

1. *He Wanted To Further Reveal God To Humanity*
2. *Jesus Came To Fulfill God's Promises To Certain People*
3. *Jesus Came To Fulfill The Law Of Moses*
4. *Jesus Came To Die For The Sins Of The World*
5. *Jesus Came To Bring In A New Covenant*
6. *Jesus Came To Destroy The Works Of The Devil*
7. *Jesus Came To Judge The World Righteously*
8. *Jesus Came To Sympathize With Believers As The Great High Priest*
9. *Jesus Came To Be An Example For Believers*
10. *Jesus Came To Prepare Humanity For A Heavenly Destiny*

No, there is no specific Scriptural claim in any of those lists to support our over emphasis. Why then do we make it so important, why do we preach, evangelize and talk about 'God loves us' so much?

I would like to add one of my own here, because I believe it is important for us to keep it in mind, to help keep a Kingdom perspective. I love to ask my audiences this question, to cause them to think about where their perspective really is:

Q) Why did Jesus come?

I get all sorts of answers, but I am looking for the most foundational reason, the essence, distilled down to its purest form.

A) To be obedient to the Father:

- **John 14:31** *...I am doing just what the Father commanded me....."* Net Bible
- **John 4:34** *...I must finish the work that he gave me to do.* CEV
- **Heb. 10:7** *Then I said, Lo, **I come** (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) **to do Your will, O God.**"* MKJV
- **John 6:38** *For I have come down from heaven **not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me.*** NET Bible

Who is the centre of everything?	God.
Who is the source of all life?	God.
Who is The great Cause of all things?	God.
To whom will every knee bow?	God.
Who ought to be first in our lives?	God.

⁵⁵ https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/don_stewart_806.cfm

Do you see here how God's says that He will cleanse us, but not 'for your sake'?:

Ezekiel 36:22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: **It is not for your sake**, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, **but for the sake of my holy name**, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came... **25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.** **26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you.** And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh... **32 It is not for your sake that I will act**, declares the Lord God; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. ESV

Psalm 106:8 Yet He saved them for the sake of His name, to make His power known.

Isaiah 43:25 I, yes I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake and remembers your sins no more.

So then, if God the Father 'sent', 'commanded' His Son to come, the most foundational reason we have and the most reasonable single answer is, '**obedience to the Father.**' The primary reason Jesus came to earth is for the Father, for His plan.

In a discussion on Facebook, I had an elderly Christian lady, finding it difficult to accept my insistence that we should not be emphasizing God's love for us and finally, she posted this question:

"Would you agree that the greatest love story ever told is God's provision of the lamb of God to a people who were lawless and rebelling against His law?"

I replied with this to bring what I saw as a Kingdom perspective:

"No, not really, though it is a very great love story.

I believe that the greater love story, is the love Jesus had for His Father who asked Him to go and die' and Jesus said "Yes" to His Father.

The ultimate reason that Jesus came to die, was not for us but was because the Father asked Him too - obedience to the Father.

I think that it is a matter of perspective; God is 1st and foremost, while sinful humans are secondary. I believe this question on preaching God's love is, at its deepest level, about 'knowing' God and His centrality to all things spiritual and eternal.

Mike, a brother in the Lord chipped in with this:

“. . .Today's gospel is exceedingly man centered. Whether it is 'seeker friendly' or just a gospel message that has man somewhere at the centre, that is a wrong emphasis. The gospel is not about man – it is not about our need of a Saviour, though clearly that is a major part of what we call the gospel. The gospel is about the glory of God. Our salvation is of course part of that glory, but our salvation is secondary to the Glory of God.

Ephesians 1:12 *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. If anyone thinks salvation is about them – think again!*

Returning to the now Neil's comment, which pointed to the immense love that existed between Father and Son throughout all ages past; this is taught, but little understood, in the burnt offering. Man was nowhere involved!

C H Mackintosh wrote this of the burned offering: "This offering speaks of both a divine & sublime relationship between The Father & The Son. It was completely burnt as man had no part in it. If we look more closely we see that it is depicting something that took place from all eternity past. We cannot truly speak of 'time' in eternity though how else can we relate? "

For anyone who may wish to pursue this thought, please refer to my notes and 'Thoughts on Leviticus'.

God's love can never be measured by quantity as He is infinite. This is where many go wrong with John 3:16. Jesus wasn't speaking there of the quantity – the world – but of the quality of God's love --- 'so loved'. That little word 'so' is central – not man, not the world! If God had created a billion worlds and

redeemed every soul from those worlds, it would still not reach the quality of God's love. That quality is infinite and whatever exchange took place between Father and Son (as we speak) in the burnt offering is both unfathomable and immeasurable. The Reformers may have removed the idolatrous mass from the centre of worship, and replaced it with Scripture alone. Far too many believers today, from across all theological divides, are replacing the glory of God in Christ, with man! We need to remove man from the centre of the gospel and replace him with Christ!"

Can you see how this kind of Kingdom perspective keeps God on the throne in our thinking? Rather than holding to the view that we are the greatest reason that Jesus came.

Obviously, we can say that Jesus came to die for us, but this is a secondary reason. Maybe not even secondary, in the whole scheme of things, it could be argued that God's holiness or character are the secondary reason and we may be the tertiary reason, or the quaternary, quinary, senary, septenary, octonary, nonary, or denary reason.

Who knows? But that is not important. What is important is that **God IS First** and I am only a humble servant of God. A loved servant for which I am eternally grateful, but nonetheless, a lowly humble servant.

Then What Does Scripture Say Of Itself About This?

Does Scripture speaking of itself show any emphasis on God's love for us?

I would like to also add what Scripture says of itself in a very simple way, with two well known, often quoted verses.

Jesus IS the Word made Flesh. So Both will agree.

- 1) **2Tim. 3:16** *Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work.*
NET

Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges:

*. . . Ellicott well sums up the meaning 'that Holy Scripture **teaches the ignorant, convicts the evil and prejudiced, corrects the fallen and erring, and trains in righteousness all men, especially those that***

*need bringing to fuller measures of perfection.*⁵⁶

It IS inspired (God-breathed) by God and useful for, yes, for **reproof**, **correction**, as well as **teaching** and **training**.

And:

- 2) **Heb. 4:12** *For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any double-edged **sword**, **piercing** even to the point of dividing soul from spirit, and joints from marrow; it is able to **judge the desires and thoughts of the heart**.*
NET Bible

Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges:

...a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart] *These words are a practical explanation of those which have preceded. The phraseology is an evident reminiscence of Philo. Philo compares the Word to the flaming sword of Paradise; and calls the Word "the cutter of all things," and says that "when whetted to the utmost sharpness it is incessantly dividing all sensuous things" (see *Quis Rer. Div. Haeres & § 27; Opp. ed. Mangey i. 491, 503, 506*). By *enthumçseis* is meant (strictly) our moral imaginations and desires; by *ennoiai* our intellectual thoughts: but the distinction of meaning is hardly kept (*Matthew 9:4, &c*).*

It is a **piercing sword**, and a **judge of desires and thoughts**.

Nothing there about God's love for us in either of those well known verses, they are mostly about things we do not like to hear about.

Just by reading it, Scripture itself, exposes and reprimands us. So where do we get the idea that no one ought to expose and reprimand us? Why do pastors, teachers and home group leaders, dumb Scripture down to be a slight slap on the wrists as the worst for us, and others make out that Scripture says that God adores us and waits on us hand and foot; to heal our every discomfort and encourage us for every hurt feeling?

Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart, can you hear it? Will you answer the door and the call?

⁵⁶ http://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_timothy/3-16.htm

CONCLUSION:

☒ What Jesus And Bible Said About His Work = no emphasis on God's love for us.

Again, yes God loves us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

CHAPTER 15. JESUS' INSTRUCTIONS TO THE SEVENTY

What did Jesus instruct the twelve and the seventy disciples to preach when He sent them out, as recorded in [Luke 9:1-6](#) and [Luke 10:1-12](#):

In both instances it is the same:

v2 to proclaim **the kingdom of God** CEV

v9 **say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come upon you!'**" CEV

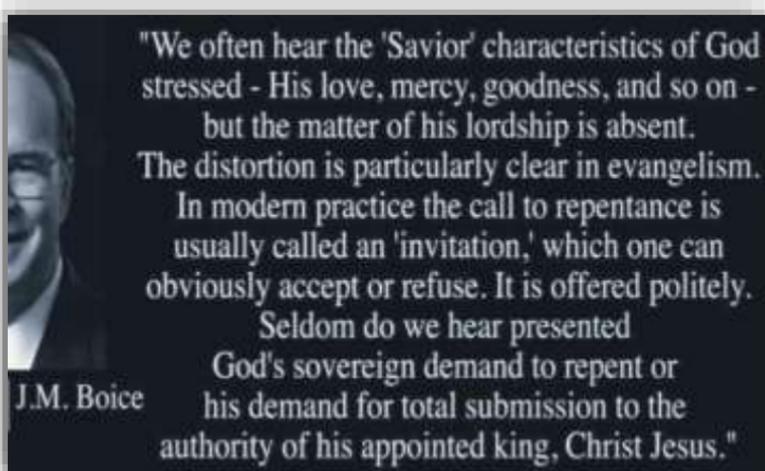
Again, nothing there about preaching God's great love, not a single word about it. In fact, it is far more like the way Peter later spoke to the men of Athens, by way of a 'command':

[Acts 17:30](#) *Therefore, although God has overlooked such times of ignorance, he now **commands all people everywhere to repent**, 31 because he has set a day on which he is going to judge the world in righteousness, by a man whom he designated, having provided proof to everyone by raising him from the dead."* Net Bible

Yes, you read that correctly, God '**...commands all people everywhere to repent....**'

COMMANDS! It's not a long winded invitation begging people to come to 'gentle' Jesus because 'He loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.' No! He is the Great Creator and Holy God. He commands and we obey.

You see how your perspective is so very different from what the Bible clearly shows us?



Obviously you do not go around 'commanding' people to repent and become a Christian. No, you preach that sin is a great offence to the holiness of God; and that He will judge those who rebel; and that He has provided a way for forgiveness through Christ's atoning sacrifice.

Again, I am sure that they preached about many different things, but it is summed up as preaching 'repentance.' That was **the emphasis of everything they were preaching, it was filtered through the prism of repentance from sin**, accepting Jesus as the Messiah and surrendering to God completely.

We have heard the term 'Kingdom of God' so often, we came to think of it as merely 'where God lives and where we are admitted to when we are saved.' Supposedly, a place where God cares for us and helps us through the bad times. This is an incorrect perception of the term. We need to be reminded that the proper meaning of the term, is that it speaks of God as the Ruler and Lord. It speaks about God in the light of Him being the king and ruler.

It is the Old Testament concept of God as the indisputable ruler who was to be obeyed.

Jesus did not instruct the disciples to go preach 'God is love' or 'God is light', He told them to go preach 'about how things ARE, in the God-ruled sphere.'

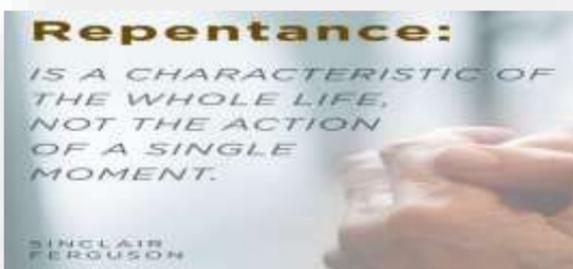
You could say that 'Christians are merely those who have acknowledged that God is the creator of all, the ruling king, and they submit to His commands.'

But for us, everything is preached through the prism of 'God loves you so much.'

Effectively, we are saying, there is no need to feel too convicted by the Holy Spirit because, supposedly God wants to alleviate your suffering mind and deliver you from such awful feelings.

Thankfully the disciples did just as Jesus told them to.

Sadly we do not, and when someone is Christ-like in exposing sin, we want to remind and warn them to 'keep it in balance'.





What is prominent in God's Word?

What should be prominent in our lives and preaching?

I found that only about 1% of the NT states or strongly infers that God loves us, but so much more is said about repentance, hell, holiness, self-sacrificing love for others.....

I posted some of these things online a while back and as is almost always the case, I had a pastor friend call me into 'a balance'. So, I replied with this:

So often when we hear something like I stated, we feel we need to bring a 'proper' balance to the perceived imbalance.

But let me set the scene - the NT speaks only 1% about God's love for us, and 99% loving Him, loving others, hell, holiness, perseverance, serving, forgiveness, evangelizing etc.....

But, because of the entrenched humanistic belief in the 'highest importance of man' (while claiming God does not exist) the Church has taken this emphasis lock, stock and barrel, and so now, the Church in general, preaches maybe, 80% God's love, encouragement, healing & comfort, and 20% hell, holiness, perseverance, serving, forgiveness, evangelizing etc.....and even that 20% has little to no effect, because of the 80% nice stuff we preach.

The Church in general is way out of balance in its preaching & teaching. And contrary from the modern belief that 'love & encouragement' motivates people, the Bible says, 'challenge one another as long as it is still called today.'

This is going to sound like a complete imbalance that needs to be corrected because of our 'Church

tradition' but when you read the words of Jesus and the apostles, it just is not true.

But Christians & pastors in general are not interested enough to re-read the NT to search this out for themselves.

He did not answer or get back to me.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Jesus' Instructions to His 72 Disciples = no emphasis on preaching God's love, it is not even mentioned.

CHAPTER 16. JOHN 3:16

Let us now look at John 3:16 for any great emphasis on God's love for us.

First of all, before we look at the text, I want to consider two facts to keep in mind:

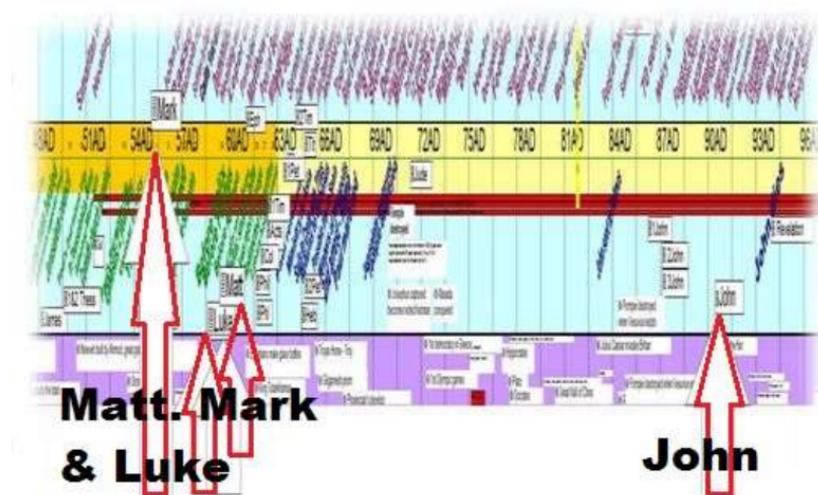
1) John 3:16 is only recorded in John's gospel account. If God's love for us was so important for us to teach, why is this verse - the most recognizable verse and concept of Christianity, not in Matthew, Mark or Luke? It is only in John.

The crucifixion and resurrection are central to the gospel message, and they are reported in all four gospel accounts, as well as the letters. Why not 'God loves you so much'?

We do not want to get into theology by numbers, so let's not take this line of thought too far, but it is to be considered.

2) Again, if teaching God's love was so important for us to know and to teach, why was it penned long after the other books, in around 90AD. Only the book of Revelation came later in about 95AD.

As you can see on my [perspective Bible timeline](#)⁵⁷ John's gospel account was written long after the other three gospel accounts.



Surely if it was sooooo important, it would have been not only talked about far more in Scripture than we are discovering, but **it would have been available to the new, fresh movement of the Christian Church.** Why would it appear some 60 years after Jesus established

⁵⁷ <https://sites.google.com/site/bibletimelinechartpdf/>

God's plan to evangelize the world and not immediately after?

Again, I would not take this idea too far, but it does help present a fuller picture of God's thinking and intentions for the Church.

Or to put it another way; if we were to remove the verse 'John 3:16' most of the foundation for our over emphasis would disappear. **This is a warning sign.**

Now the text:

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.* NKJV

3) Usage of the word 'world':

World:

G2889 κόσμος - kosmos:

Probably from the base of G2865; orderly *arrangement*, that is, *decoration*; by implication the *world* (in a wide or narrow sense, including its inhabitants, literally or figuratively [morally]): [it is translated in the KJV as] *adorning, world.*

We are not told explicitly in John 3:16 how to interpret the word 'world', so this alone ought to cause us to be a little more humble and less demanding of God.

Yes, God loves us, but we need to take it down a notch.

As Dennis, (a dear brother in the Lord, a man of rare spiritual clarity) said of this verse:

There is something I have long believed about John 3:16. Does God love the world? We are told that if WE love the world the love of the Father is not in us. But does that make sense? If 3:16 says God loves the world, that would exactly be the love of the Father.

*Here is where I'm going: The Greek word used for "world" here is "kosmos." There are many possible emphases this word can mean, but the #1 usage is listed as "1) **an apt and harmonious arrangement** or constitution, order, government" (Strong's). God loves His Creation, His order, and the harmonious arrangement He set up!! For the sake of His Creation, His plan, and His order, He sent His only begotten Son, that that order through Him might be saved.*

God set a heavenly order in place on earth in so many ways - consider the twelve tribes of Israel, which speaks of 'perfect government, the family unit designed after the Trinity, and in many other ways.

We even see that God's physical creation is very important to Him, as we see in the heavenly city which will be built with many of earth's elements as described in Revelation 21:

Rev 21:18 *The wall was built of jasper, and the city was made of pure gold, clear as crystal. 19 Each of the twelve foundations was a precious stone. The first was jasper, the second was sapphire, the third was agate, the fourth was emerald, 20 the fifth was onyx, the sixth was carnelian, the seventh was chrysolite, the eighth was beryl, the ninth was topaz, the tenth was chrysoprase, the eleventh was jacinth, and the twelfth was amethyst. 21 Each of the twelve gates was a solid pearl. The streets of the city were made of pure gold, clear as crystal. CEV*

Consider also, the insightful words of Dr. Peter Pett on 1John 4:8, from his [Commentary Series on the Bible](#)(2013):

*John reveals God in three ways, God is Spirit ([Joh 4:24](#)⁵⁸), God is Light ([1Jn 1:5](#)⁵⁹), God is Love. He uses the most incorporeal things that he knows in order to describe God. To him none had physical form. God as He is in Himself is without body or physical attributes, He is totally separated from all that is evil and in darkness, He is pure light, and He is pure, righteous love. Thus all that He is seeks to produce what is holy, righteous and good, untainted by the effects of sin and of the world. That is what His love seeks to achieve, and will achieve. That is what His love offers. And we are to seek to be like Him. **But it is not the physical world itself that is tainted, it is the spirit of the world ([1Jn 2:15-16](#)⁶⁰). God does not love that. His general benevolence is towards His creation, for it is His workmanship. But he does not love the spirit of the world. The spirit of the***

⁵⁸ John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship God must be led by the Spirit to worship him according to the truth. CEV

⁵⁹ 1John 1:5 Jesus told us that God is light and doesn't have any darkness in Him. Now we are telling you. CEV

⁶⁰ 1John 2:15-16 Don't love the world or anything that belongs to the world. If you love the world, you cannot love the Father. 16 Our foolish pride comes from this world, and so do our selfish desires and our desire to have everything we see. None of this comes from the Father. CEV

world is what man has produced without God, with the aid of the Evil One, and love of it is thus condemned. It is self-seeking. It is thus in direct contrast with the 'love of the brethren', which seeks not wealth, nor physical satisfaction, nor honour and fame, but the good of others, and especially of those who are God's.

*As such God is totally distinct from His creation. **He sees His creation as good. What is not good is what man and the Evil One have done with it, and the spirit that they have introduced into it.** Both God's light and God's love abhor the spirit of the world. His light reveals it for what it is, and His love seeks to remove it and to call men out of it. It is the 'power of darkness', in contrast with 'the kingly rule of His beloved Son' where He gives to those who respond to Him 'the inheritance of those who are separated to God in light' ([Col 1:12-15](#)⁶¹).*

It is under that kingly rule, and to those who are under it, or who will be under it, that His love fully shines forth. To those who are 'in the world' He shows a general benevolence, but His love as the God Who is love is only fully shown to those who walk in His light, and have turned from sin in their hearts, for only they are receptive to it. His benevolence in general is open to all, His general benevolence reaches out to all, but His full love as the God Who is love can only become experienced and personal to those who respond to Christ and receive the life that He offers, eternal life, although the same love is active in seeking to bring men to this point. It is His love that draws men to respond to Christ ([Joh 6:44](#)⁶²). It is His love that has given to Jesus Christ those whom He has chosen ([Joh 6:37](#)⁶³; [Joh 6:39](#)⁶⁴).

⁶¹ Col 1:12 I pray that you will be grateful to God for letting you[a] have part in what He has promised His people in the kingdom of light. 13 God rescued us from the dark power of Satan and brought us into the kingdom of His dear Son, 14 who forgives our sins and sets us free.

15 Christ is exactly like God, who cannot be seen. He is the first-born Son, superior to all creation.

⁶² John 6:44 No one can come to me, unless the Father who sent me makes them want to come. But if they do come, I will raise them to life on the last day. CEV

⁶³ John 6:37 Everything and everyone that the Father has given me will come to me, and I won't turn any of them away. CEV

⁶⁴ John 6:39 and he wants to make certain that none of the ones he has given me will be lost. Instead, he wants me to raise them to life on the last day. CEV

God does not love all men as they are. His wrath is revealed at what they are (Rom 1:18 From heaven God shows how angry He is with all the wicked and evil things that sinful people do to crush the truth. CEV). But His love reaches through with the aim of making some respond to Him so that they may enjoy His love. It is a love revealed to such from the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4⁶⁵) which will be fulfilled within His final purposes. It is holy love.

But the message that John is emphasizing stresses that God in His 'otherness' from His creation, He Himself became true man in Jesus Christ, so that He might be the representative of man in His death on the cross and in His physical resurrection. It was as "God-made-man" that He died on the cross for our sins, and as glorified "God-made-man" that He took His seat at the right hand of God, a distinction necessary because while in His Godhood He was One with the Father on His throne, in His glorified manhood He received His own throne to which He calls His own (Rev 3:21⁶⁶).

The physical creation is therefore not in itself evil. It is what man has made of it that is evil. And the creation itself will therefore be 'redeemed' by itself also being totally transformed, so that it will result in a new Heaven and a new earth in which dwells righteousness (2Pe 3:13; Rev 21:1; Rom 8:19-21). In this will His love for His creation be revealed, and all sin, all that is not light, will be done away.⁶⁷ (Emphasis added)

So, is the 'world' referred to, all the people of the world, or does it include the created world order as well?

Again, we should not be so quick to interpret it as only the people causing us to have a very high view of our own importance.

We can only interpret John 3:16 as a full and glorious love to every single person, without any reservations, if we ignore other Scriptures that tell us that God 'hates the wicked.'

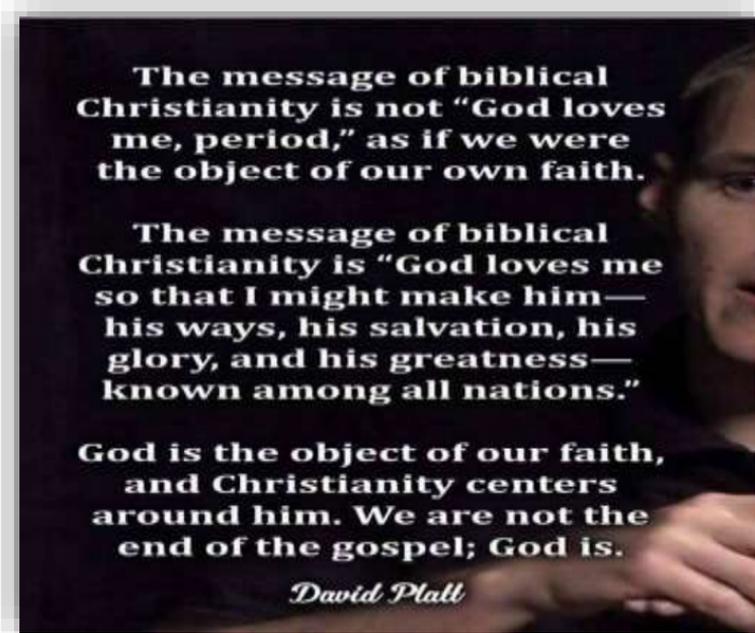
⁶⁵ Eph 1:4 Before the world was created, God had Christ choose us to live with him and to be his holy and innocent and loving people. CEV

⁶⁶ Rev 3:21 Everyone who wins the victory will sit with Me on My throne, just as I won the victory and sat with my Father on His throne. CEV

⁶⁷ <https://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/pet/1-john-4.html>

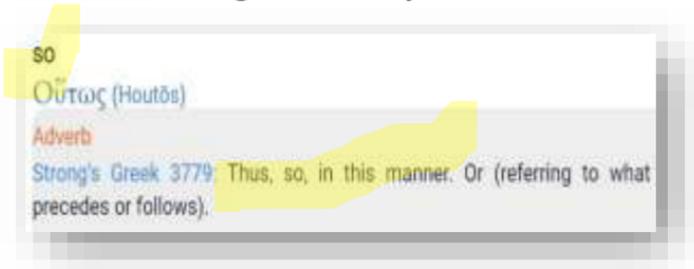
Also, the context of John 3:16, it is necessary to note that it is speaking primarily about God, it is more about God than it is about us, way more. In this verse/truth, God is the Deity, His will is pre-eminent, and we are secondary. Even Jesus is not the main Subject, God is. Though, I would not say that Jesus was incidental. It is about an order of things, a cosmic order, the very law of the universe and beyond all time - God IS! So, bow and worship Him.

I just found this and it is very good - David Platt puts it better than I can:



3) 'So loved', is not 'Soooo much loved'.

The [Greek word](#) in English literally, is rendered:



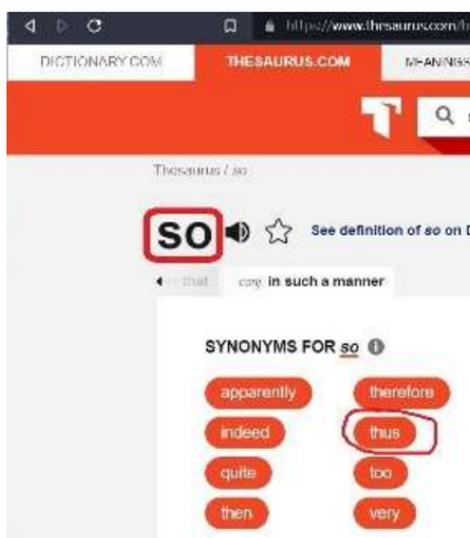
The Spirit Of The Reformation study Bible, in its notes on John 3:16, tells us:

so. - Means "in this way" or "thus." Jesus again pointed to the parallel with Moses' situation. He did not use "so" in the sense of "so greatly" or "so dearly."

So the scholar is saying it does not mean 'God soooo loved' but rather 'God in this way, loved...' by giving His Son to die.

Or in the same sense that one could say 'the man so treated her, because he was a kind man.' It was not saying that the man loved her soooo much. He probably does, but that is not what was said.

Here are some helpful synonyms to clearly show it's meaning:



[The Apostolic Bible Polyglot:](#)

John 3:16 For **thus** God loved the world, so that...

[Christian Standard Bible:](#)

For God loved the world **in this way**: He gave...

[Lexham English Bible:](#)

For **in this way** God loved the world...

[New Living Translation:](#)

"For **this is how** God loved the world: He gave...

[Christian Standard Bible:](#)

For God loved the world **in this way**: He gave...
[Holman Christian Standard Bible:](#)

"For God loved the world **in this way**: He...
[GOD'S WORD® Translation:](#)

God loved the world **this way**: He gave his...
[International Standard Version:](#)

"For **this is how** God loved the world: He gave...
[New English Translation - NET Bible:](#)

For **this is the way** God loved the world:...
[Literal Emphasis Translation:](#)

For God **thus** loved the world that He gave...
[Names of God Bible:](#)

God loved the world **this way**:...
[The Voice:](#)

For God expressed His love for the world **in this way**:...

[Greek Interlinear:](#)

3779 [e]	1063 [e]	25 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	5620 [e]
Houtōs	gar	ēgapēsen	ho	Theos	ton	kosmon	hōste
16 Οὕτως	γάρ	ἠγάπησεν	ὁ	Θεός	τὸν	κόσμον	, ὥστε
Thus	for	loved	-	God	the	world	that
Adv	Conj	V-AIA-3S	Art-NMS	N-NMS	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Conj

[Garner-Howes Baptist Commentary:](#)

1) "For God so loved the world," (houtos gar egapesen ho theos ton kosmon) "Because God **thus (just like this)** loved the world (the created universe);" After this manner or to this degree, that He "was in Christ," reconciling the world unto Himself, [1 Timothy 3:16](#); [2 Corinthians 5:18-21](#); [Ephesians 2:4-7](#).

The [Concordant Literal New Testament](#) translates it:

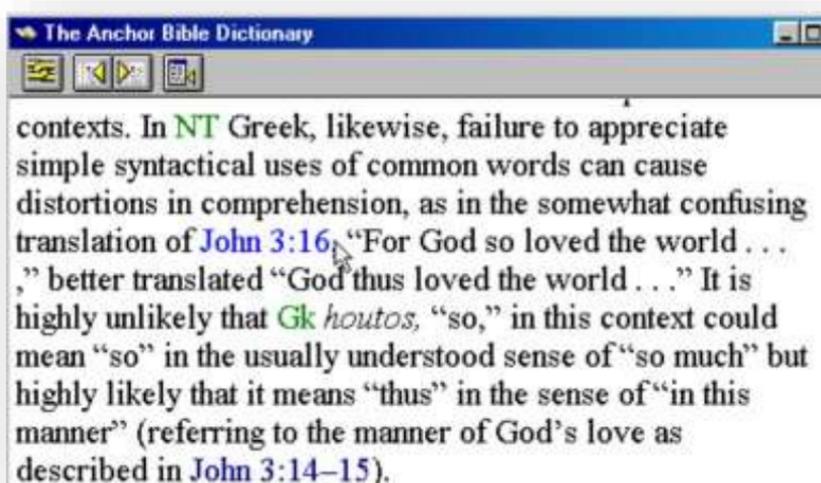
[John 3:16](#) For **thus** God loves the world, so that He gives His only-begotten Son, that everyone who is believing in Him should not be perishing, but may be having life eonian." CLV

[A. E. Knoch](#) translator of the Concordant Literal NT states:

SO—MANNER, NOT MEASURE

*Often, in my early days, did I revel in the word so, and in my preaching, I expatiated on the magnificent extent of God's love to the world. But one day I thought I would look it up in my Greek concordance. I am ashamed to say that for a while I was disappointed **to find that it was not "so," in the sense of quantity or size. But it was not long before I began to see that the quality of God's love is here displayed by the way in which it expresses itself to His creatures, and this is far more precious***

*than its abundance. It is the manner of God's love which is here revealed, not alone its measure. **This Greek word is usually rendered thus, not so.** Its true force is seen in the preceding verse, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, thus must the Son of Mankind be lifted up." In other places the Authorized Version translators have it on this wise (Matt.1:18), after this manner (Matt.6:9), likewise (Matt. 17:12), in like manner (Mark 13:29). Thus is a closer rendering, as in its next occurrence. Our Lord "sat thus on the well" (John 4:6). "Thus God loves the world..." The word "so" really calls attention to the manner rather than the measure, yet, in this connection it has become blurred, and is always taken as an adverb of size, hence it should be replaced by a clearer expression.⁶⁸*



We shall look into this a little more in the next chapter.

5) So 'loved' = God's Love Shown By A Single Act In The Past

The Spirit Of The Reformation study Bible notes on John 3:16 also describe God's primary way of showing love:

that He gave his . . . Son. - Jesus defined the love of God in terms of the atonement, as is frequent in the New Testament (15:13-14; Rom 5:8; Gal 2:20; Eph 5:2; 1 Jn. 3:16; 4:9-10; Rev 1:5).

Meaning that John 3:16 is saying that God showed His love by the one act, of sending His Son to die, not that this great love is like constantly flooding waves over us, every minute of every day.

⁶⁸ <https://www.concordant.org/expositions/the-evangel/john-316/>

No, it is saying that the love is described in terms of atonement – by a single act of God.

These are the mentioned texts for supporting this claim:

John 15:13 *The **greatest way to show love for friends is to die for them.** CEV*

Rom 5:8 *But God showed how much **he loved us by having Christ die for us,** even though we were sinful. CEV*

Gal 2:20 *I have died, but Christ lives in me. And I now live by faith in the **Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me.** CEV*

Eph 5:2 *Let love be your guide. Christ **loved us and offered his life for us as a sacrifice that pleases God.** CEV*

1 John 3:16 *We know what **love is because Jesus gave his life for us.** That's why we must give our lives for each other. CEV*

1 John 4:9 *God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. 10 Real love isn't our love for **God, but his love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice** by which our sins are forgiven. CEV*

Rev 1:5 *May kindness and peace be yours from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness. Jesus was the first to conquer death, and he is the ruler of all earthly kings. **Christ loves us, and by his blood he set us free from our sins.** CEV*

Primarily and mostly, God's love was shown by sending His Son to die for our sin – **a single act.**

More than that, this Single Act is expressed in the Past Tense

Notice here that verse 16 explains God's love for His creation of man, by using the term 'sent His Son'.

The emphasis is on something that has been done, not something that is to occur in the future. The main emphasis is on what **has been done already.**

Think of all the preparations of preparing the world and Israel to bring His Son into the world. Covenants with or involving Adam, Abraham, Noah, Moses, Israel,

David; the great testings of God over four thousand years, with tens of thousands of deaths, all to send His Son at this specific time in history.

So, when Jesus states that 'God loved' (past tense) the world (His creation, not the spirit of this world, not the rebellion of man), His emphasis is on what God has done. It is not a simplistic all encompassing statement of a glorious unlimited love for all people every day.

What each person deserves is hell, even the good people, so, anything less than that is grace - God's undeserved acceptance. Or you could say, a 'general' love for all people. Just allowing mankind to live on, in rebellion to God is a great grace of God in itself.

Consider how Jeremiah explains it:

[Lam 3:22](#) Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.
NIV

We also find this 'past tense' use of God's love for us in:

[2 Thess 2:16](#) May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who **loved** us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, 17 encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. NIV

The Tense of "ἠγάπησεν" (ēgapēsen - loved) in John 3:16

It can be stated categorically that in John 3:16, "Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν κόσμον..." (Houtōs gar ēgapēsen ho Theos ton kosmon...), the verb ἠγάπησεν (ēgapēsen) is in the **aorist active indicative, third person singular** form from the verb ἀγαπάω (agapaō).

- **Aorist Tense:** In Koine Greek, the aorist tense typically denotes an action viewed as a complete event, often (though not exclusively) occurring in the past, without specifying its duration or continuousness. It presents the action as a simple, whole fact.
 - In the context of John 3:16, this aorist, coupled with "ἔδωκεν" (edōken - "He gave," also aorist), points to God's decisive, historical act of giving His Son. This was the supreme demonstration of His benevolent disposition towards the world. As Daniel Wallace notes in *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, the aorist often emphasizes the *fact* of the occurrence rather than its "once-for-all-ness" or its "past-ness" *per se*, though in

narrative like John, it usually refers to past events.

- This specific act of "loving" by "giving" is presented as a historical reality. It does not imply that God's benevolent disposition ceased after this act, but rather that this act was its definitive and climactic expression concerning the salvation of the world. This is crucial from a Free Will/Arminian perspective: God's salvific intent and provision were decisively made for all humanity in this historical act.

Let us look at what some of the scholars say about this:

[Meyer's NT Commentary](#) - John 3:16:

ἠΓΑΠΗΣΕΝ] *loved*, with reference to the time of the *ἔδωκεν*[he gave].

[Meyer's NT Commentary](#):

[2 Thess. 2:16-17](#) The apostle rises from *his* evangelical activity (2 Thessalonians 2:15) up to *Christ*, the Lord and Ruler of the Christian church, and concludes with the mention of *God*, who is the final reason and contriver of the Christian salvation *ὁ ἀγαπήσας ἡμᾶς καὶ δούς*] refers exclusively to *ὁ Θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ ἡμῶν*. Baumgarten-Crusius incorrectly refers only the second participle to God, and the first to Christ. But the participle *aorist ἀγαπήσας* must not be weakened into "qui nos amat et quovis tempore amavit" (so Schott, after Flatt and Pelt), **but refers to the divine proof of love already belonging to the past,—accomplished, i.e. to** the fact by which the love of God to mankind is *κατ' ἐξοχήν* proved,—to *the mission of His Son in order to rescue sinners from destruction*.⁶⁹ (Emphasis added)

[Dr. Constable's Expository Notes](#):

Loved is [aorist tense](#) which speaks of a completed action in the past, in context referring to God's act of sending His Son. It gives a glimpse into the infinite heart of God. Notice this description demonstrates that **love** is not just a feeling but is associated with action. It is easy to say I love you, but God showed

⁶⁹http://biblehub.com/commentaries/meyer/2_thessalonians/2.htm

that He loved the world by sending His Son. God's love was a costly love!

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It is reasonable to hold that, John 3:16 is saying that, God's love for us is shown by what He 'did' - not what He will be doing daily. There are other verses that speak of God watching over us, but not here in John 3:16. We are very quick to exaggerate it's meaning. We should be a little more careful in how we view what John says about His love. It is not constantly focused on our every need. The Bible is not about you and I.

**6) This interaction was a private meeting. At night. In secret.** Maybe Nicodemus was afraid of the Jewish leaders, or maybe he just wanted an in-depth discussion with Jesus without the interruptions from the other leaders. But, it was a private meeting that was only recorded in one of the gospel accounts – John's.

As far as we know, Jesus did not publicly preach God's love for people - **there is no record of Jesus ever publicly preaching about God's love for us.**

That will be a shock for many. Why? Because we have assumed Jesus did. We based our great emphasis on His supposed preaching of this very thing. Often. Again it's one of those things that we 'kind of, sort of remember' the Bible says. But we do not verify it, because being so loved is very appealing to our sin nature.

### **7) John More Likely Is Author of John 3:16:**

Some theologians believe that verse 16 were John's own words, as a general sum up or commentary on how he understood what Jesus was teaching, rather than the very words of Jesus. This could be.

Theologians all agree that the conversation with Nicodemus were the words of Jesus at the beginning of the chapter, but then at some point in the chapter, the written text becomes John's own thoughts and words. What they do not agree on, is at what point, John's words take over.

If verse 16 were John's words, it also helps to explain why the 'so loved' is in the past tense. Which reinforces the idea that God's 'loved' was in the Cross – a single act in the past, rather than day to day. Sure God is with us day to day and loves us day to day, but this is not what John 3:16 is saying.

Notice how the New International Version updated their red letter version in recent years. Notice where they end the actual words of Jesus:

<sup>10</sup>“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? <sup>11</sup>Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. <sup>12</sup>I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. \* <sup>14</sup>Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, † <sup>15</sup>that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” ‡

<sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. <sup>18</sup>Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. <sup>19</sup>This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

The Expositor’s Bible Commentary:

*b. The author’s comment (3:16-21)*

16 Commentators are divided as to whether vv. 16-21 are a direct continuation of the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus or whether they represent only the author’s comment on Jesus’ words. In either case, they express the most important message of the Gospel (emphasized elsewhere in many ways)-that salvation is a gift received only by believing God for it. The nature of belief is implied in the illustration of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness (v. 14). Belief consists of accepting something, not doing something. The result of belief is that one receives eternal life. He is freed from condemnation and lives in a relation of total honesty with God, for he does not fear having his real self exposed. “Eternal,” the new life God gives, refers not solely to the duration of existence but also to the quality of life as contrasted with futility. It is a deepening and growing experience. It can never be exhausted in any measurable span of time, but it introduces a totally new quality of life. The believer becomes imperishable; he is free from all

*condemnation, he is approved by God. The verb "perish" depicts the opposite of salvation. It is used of death as opposed to life (Mark 3:6, transitive), "destroy" as opposed to preserve (1Cor 1:19), "loss" as opposed to win or gain (2John 8). It may be used of sheep that have gone astray (Matt 10:6) or a son who has wandered from his father's house (Luke 15:24). Its use here clearly implies that those without God are hopelessly confused in purpose, alienated from him in their affections, and futile in their efforts. Positive belief in Christ is necessary; all that one has to do to perish is nothing. To perish is to fail completely of fulfilling God's purpose and consequently to be excluded forever from his fellowship. The presentation of the good news of God's love offers only two options: to believe or to perish. Eternal life, which is accepted by believing, is a gift of God and brings with it the fullest blessings God can bestow. To perish does not mean to cease to exist; it means to experience utter failure, futility, and loss of all that makes existence worthwhile. Its use with reference to Judas in John 17:12 is a vivid illustration.'*

#### [Peake's Commentary on the Bible:](#)

*Though "Jews" reject, God will exalt His Messiah so that all must see and acknowledge. Clearly the author puts his own meaning on "exaltation." The word must have had to Nicodemus a different and simpler sense. In what follows (John 3:16) the author's own thoughts and theology become more apparent, but the subject is the natural sequence to what has been said.*

#### [Expositor's Greek Testament:](#)

[John 3:16](#). Several conservative theologians, Neander, Tholuck, Westcott, are of opinion that the words of Jesus end with [John 3:15](#), and that from [John 3:16-21](#) we have an addition by the evangelist. There is much to be said in favour of this idea. The thoughts of these verses are explanatory rather than progressive. [John 3:16-17](#) repeat the object of Christ's mission, which has already been stated. [John 3:18-19](#) declare the historic results in faith and unbelief, results which at the date of the conversation were not conspicuous. [John 3:20-21](#) exhibit the causes of faith and unbelief. The tenses also forbid us to refer the passage directly to Jesus. In His lips the present would have been more natural. To John looking back on the finished story aorists and perfects are natural. Also, the

designation “only begotten son” is not one of the names by which Jesus designates Himself, but it is used by the evangelist, [John 1:18](#) and [1 John 4:9](#).— **οὕτω γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ... ζῶν ἰώνιον**. The love of God for the world of men is the source of Christ’s mission with all its blessings. It was this which prompted Him to “give,” that is, to give not solely to the death of the cross alluded to in [John 3:14](#), but to all that the world required for salvation, His only begotten Son. “The change from the aorist (**ἀπόληται**) to the present (**ἔχη**) is to be noted, the utter ruin being spoken of as an act, the possession of life eternal as an enduring experience” (Meyer, Weiss, Holtzmann).

[Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges:](#)

**16–21.** It is much disputed whether what follows is a continuation of Christ’s discourse, or the comment of the Evangelist upon it. The fact that terms characteristic of S. John’s theology are put into the mouth of Christ, e.g. ‘only-begotten’ and ‘the Light,’ cannot settle the question: the substance may still be our Lord’s, though the wording is S. John’s. It seems unlikely that S. John would give us no indication of the change from Christ’s words to his own, if the discourse with Nicodemus really came to a full stop in [John 3:15](#). See on [John 3:31–36](#).

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As I was searching online for the views of recognized ministries, I found this by **David Pawson** and it made me wonder if I needed to write this book, because someone has already written and spoken about it:

What About John 3:16?

There is currently tremendous and growing interest in the impact of the familiar verse John 3:16. The relevance of the surrounding verses is explored, and many fascinating insights equip the reader to understand the true meaning and significance of the passage and its proper application. Difficult and controversial issues are not avoided, and we are shown how powerful this passage is.

David Pawson has recently been questioning whether we have been scriptural or sentimental in focusing evangelistic preaching on the love of God and, more recently, His ‘unconditional’ love. He has drawn attention to some surprising biblical data:-

*that Jews in the Old Testament and Christians in the New only talked about God's love among themselves; **that neither Jesus nor the apostles ever preached it publicly; and that the book of Acts contains not a single reference to it in common with most other books in the Bible.***

By contrast, the early evangelists focused on God's righteousness (e.g. Romans 1:16-17). People normally respond with: 'What about John 3:16?' which is widely assumed to be the best summary of the gospel we are able to preach. Yet it maybe a classic example of text out of context becoming a pretext, even one of the most mistranslated, misunderstood and misapplied.⁷⁰ (Emphasis added)

I have not listened to this series by David Pawson as yet, as I wanted to write what was on my heart first. I may include some things he teaches when this book is complete and I listen to his teaching on it.

Christianity, unlike some religions is a '**revealed**' religion - we were given the truth to share as is. It was in no sense of the word, an 'evolutionary' message. It was not something subject to change and would develop into something different as the centuries went by.

God declares this many, many times:

*The Bible says more than **3,000 times** "**thus saith the Lord.**" And the words which follow are **quotes from God.**⁷¹*

And:

*'The writers claim a supernatural origin for their writings. **Nearly 4,000 times** expressions like "**Thus says the Lord,**" "**The word of the Lord came unto me,**" etc., are recorded in the Bible.'⁷²*

It was revealed and to be preached as is.

Revealed truth is to preach, not modify. Why have we taken it upon ourselves to soften the gospel message with a lot of talk about God's love?

Jesus declared truth, He did not entertain a lot of silly, all-inclusive discussions. Group chat is not how He or

⁷⁰ <http://davidpawson.org/resources/series/what-about-john-316>

⁷¹ 1) <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/10-amazing-bible-facts/#ixzz448CTyS2F>

2) <http://ordinaryadventure.com/2016/06/fact-or-fiction-are-the-bibles-claims-true/>

⁷² <http://www.believers.org/believe/bel191.htm>

the disciples did it. Sure the rabbinic custom was to ask questions and the teacher would teach, but not an 'everyone has a right to share their view, type attitude. But in the post-modern era, everybody needs to be an executive and have a say, or somehow they are a victim and the church is so unkind.

The Church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. He decides what happens and we stop sooking about minor things and get on with our job. Why should we be arguing 'our rights' when we are called to focus on our responsibilities? Basically we need to grow up.

Recently I heard a discussion with a divorced man arguing with a friend that his divorce was not his fault and it was unfair that he was ineligible to be an elder. What? So what! Life is not fair for anybody in one way or another. Who do we think we are, to be arguing for 'something personally better' in the Church, when it is not our Church. We did not die to save it. Our sin made it necessary for Him to die and even after He has wonderfully redeemed us, we continue to sin. But we think that somehow in some parallel universe, we have a right to expect beyond His commands.

In fact when we look a little deeper into what God's love really is, we realize that it cannot be separated from His holiness, justice or His wrath. We cannot truly understand His love without understanding how evil sin is, how holy God is, and the great hatred God has for sin.

Think of it this way - if you owe a huge moral debt to someone, and your reasonable punishment is fifty years of hard labour.

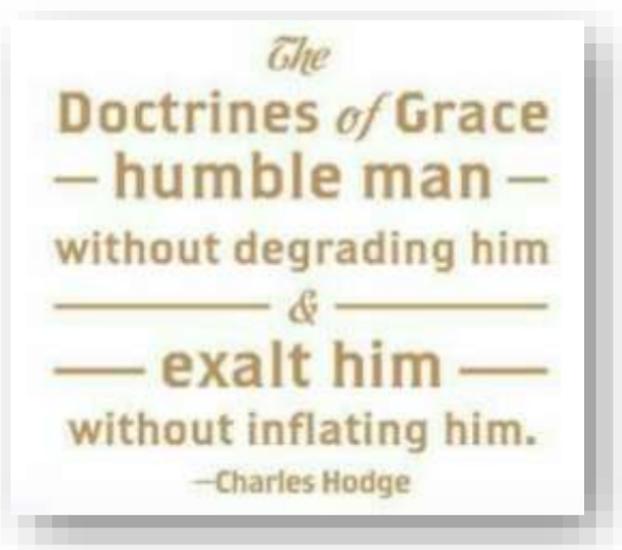
Even **the slightest act of forgiveness, is seen as so wonderfully gracious**, without the person doing anything else for you.

Hence, 'God loved us that He sent His Son to die for us' without Him needing to do anything more at all.

Or put it this way; if God had said, "Ok, you can get into heaven, but I will not do anything else for you on earth despite terrible calamities" even this would be so wonderfully gracious.

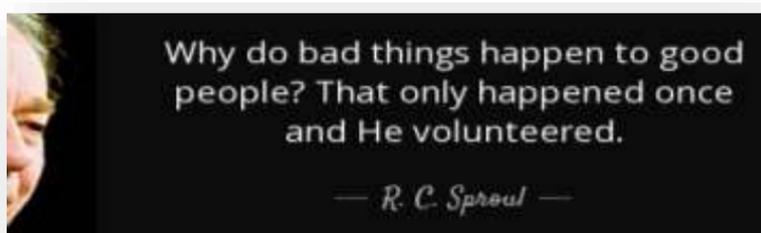
But, if there is no moral debt, then being saved into heaven is no great gift in the eyes of the receiver. We have lost sight of the very great moral debt that our sin really is. Sure, we are forgiven, but then we act in a presumptuous way, as though we ourselves are 'special' despite our daily sin.

His wonderful grace to us, is supposed to give rise to a deep humility, not conceit.



As in the story of [Luke 7](#), the one forgiven more, we forget just how much we are forgiven. When considering our moral debt to God, in reality, everyone of us is the sinful, immoral woman. We ought to be extremely grateful to God, just for being forgiven of our sin, let alone expecting Him to do anything else for us. But this is exactly what we do. We feel elevated by the His amazing grace and we want, even demand, that God does more and more to ease our every little burden. Jesus dying on the cross for us should not be internalized, it is not about us, it is about how great God is.

A proper Kingdom perspective is more like this:



Sproul here presents the **starting point** in understanding God and life in a sinful world.

Think of it this way - Queen Elizabeth requests your company for afternoon tea. You go to Buckingham Palace and the staff instruct you on the correct royal etiquette - how you are to present and conduct yourself, before the queen. We enter and comply with the necessary protocols, but halfway through our cup of tea, we think how unfair life is and start complaining to the queen "How come I don't have a palace too?" You grumble. There is an awkward silence, you have just embarrassed yourself dreadfully before Her Majesty,

Queen Elizabeth. But, you are so self-centered that you do not even notice. Your social self-awareness in this setting, is all but non-existent. So you continue to complain. A royal attendant leans over and tersely whispers in your ear "You forget your place."

We truly have 'forgotten our place.'

We can confidently declare how saved we, but it does not change the fact that we are still sinners before a Holy God. He chooses to relate to us as cleaned, but that does not change the fact that we continue to sin daily.

It reminds me of:

Jer 6:15 Are they ashamed of their disgusting actions? Not at all—**they don't even know how to blush!**

God is also our King, and fortunately for us, He is very patient and longsuffering(2 Peter 3:9⁷³), but instead of being grateful for that, we forget our place and presume on His good nature and patience by **not being content**. We become demanding, spoiled children.

Every time we complain and say "Why is this happening to me?" We show again that we have forgotten our place. We are sinful(sin is utterly vile), God is holy, He did nothing wrong, we did, but we complain about the effects of sin in the world as though Almighty God is letting us down or not taking proper care of us. We expect so much more than His love by sending His Son to die.

Anything in the slightest that God does for us is a wonderful blessing.

2 Tim 3:1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, **swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure** rather than lovers of God, 5 **having the appearance of**

⁷³ **2 Peter 3:9** The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. NASB

Num. 14:18 that you love to show mercy and kindness. And you said that You are very patient, but that You will punish everyone guilty of doing wrong—not only them but their children and grandchildren as well.

19 You are merciful, and you treat people better than they deserve. So please forgive these people, just as you have forgiven them ever since they left Egypt. CEV

godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

8) Being 'loved' by God, should be no more emphasized in John 3:16 than 'perishing' for not believing.

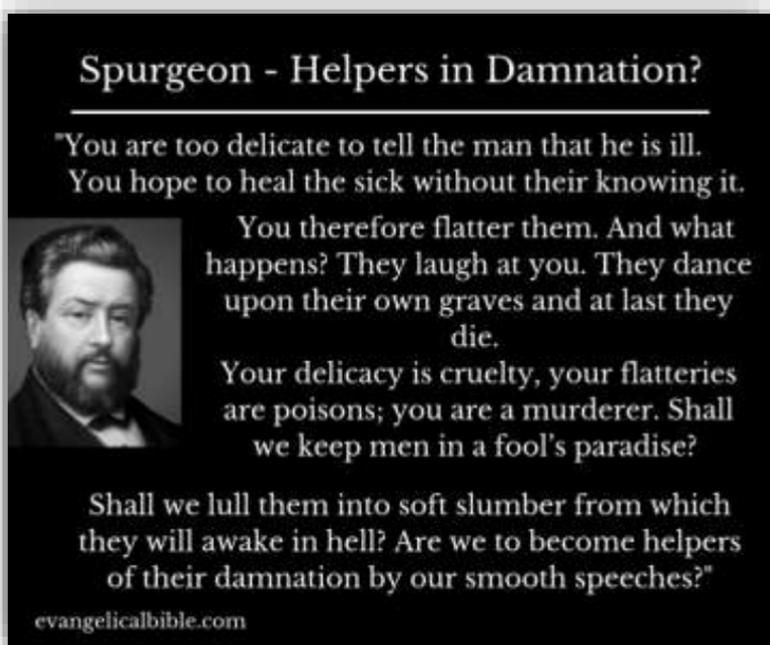
Loved by God in verse 16 should not be more emphasized than being 'condemned if you do not believe' in verse 18.

Why do we emphasize 'love' without emphasizing 'perishing if we do not live for God'?

Yet pastors will not preach on hell and judgment any more.

Why emphasize God's love for us so much on the basis of John 3:16, but not hell, when Jesus publicly taught about hell and judgment but not 'God's love for you'?

Oh how presumptuous we are, how spiritually conceited we are shown to be.



To help keep a better balance, when we quote John 3:16, we could also quote:

John 3:18but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Understanding any Scripture is done by and with, other Scripture, not by collecting all the nice Scriptures we like and bunching them together as our own package deal.

Of course we know that and even preach that principle, but we do not do it.

One of the problems in understanding John 3:16 is the shallow appreciation of words like 'judge/condemn' which is used in the next verse:

John 3:17 *God did not send his Son into the world to **condemn its people**. He sent him to save them!*
CEV

So many times I hear Christians say something like "See, even Jesus does not condemn us, so who are you to judge?"

The word 'condemn' is translated in different ways in the Bible – i.e. to be condemned to death, or to carry out judgment, or to condemn/expose as sin, etc...

Jesus most certainly does condemn the things we do as wrong, but obviously He did not come to condemn us to death. He was constantly judging the hearts, attitudes and actions that were wrong, as wrong. But, no He did not condemn people to death, He will do that the **second time** He comes.

Let me ask a simple question: How could Jesus save people if He did not judge/discern/expose/declare them as sinful so they could repent? How can anyone call people to repentance if they do not first judge/discern/expose them as sinners and tell them they have sinned?

Of course we are not to "judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." **John 7:24** CEV

So many would outright reject any evidence of the things I am saying in this book, just 'because we KNOW God loves us' type thinking. And that is despite them not having the evidence from Scripture. They only have their traditions and 'special' verses by which to judge every prophetic word.

Jesus also says to us:

"You are completely wrong! You don't know what the Scriptures teach. And you don't know anything about the power of God." **Matt. 22:29**
CEV

We have not sought God in brokenness to really know what His Word says and who He is. Our opinions come from our contemporaries, popular books of the day and a shallow reading of God's Word.

The only way we will truly know the heart of God even in the slightest, is by seeking Him in His Word in complete humility and brokenness.

Hey, everyone knows some things about God, but they do not truly KNOW Him.

The modern church is producing passionate people with empty heads who love the Jesus they don't know very well.

Voddie Baucham

Many claim to have a good relationship with God, but they do not. They only have some vague recollection of a salvation experience a long time ago and now go through the motions of being a 'good Christian' in a church with bright modern music and lots of activities. At times they have spiritual buzz that seems to confirm to them, that they are a spiritual Christian.

They feel like they are a good Christian. Of course they know that they are falling short in some things and that one day they would like to be better. But, that's normal to them, surely that's just like everyone else.

They really do think that they are a good Christian who understands the deep things of God.

If they ever stopped long enough to genuinely seek God whatever the cost, they would KNOW God, and would be so broken and ashamed with the realization of what a farce their Christianity was.

I say again: the only way you will truly know the heart of God even in the slightest, is by seeking Him in His Word in complete humility and brokenness. And it must be continuous.

For me, daily I humble myself before God. I repent of any pride, for sometimes, I get glimpses of this insidious evil in my thoughts or words. It is so subtle and willing to deceive us, right into hell.

CONCLUSION:

☒ John 3:16 = no it does not promote any over-emphasis on God's love for us. It was a private discussion, not a public teaching, about a past event.

CHAPTER 17. THE LOVE THE FATHER LAVISHES ON US

This Scripture seems to have an emphasis on God's love for us, at first sight:

1John 3:1 *Think how much the Father loves us. He loves us so much that he lets us be called his children, as we truly are. But since the people of this world did not know who Christ is, they don't know who we are.* CEV

I like the NIV wording of this verse:

1John 3:1 *See what great love the Father has lavished on us..* NIV

Firstly, the Greek word 'given' here, is in the past tense. Something given beforehand rather than referring to love that is given daily.

[Word Pictures in the New Testament \(A. T. Robertson\).](#)

[1 John 3:1:](#)

Hath bestowed (*dedōken*). Perfect active indicative of didōmi, state of completion, "the endowment of the receiver" (Vincent).⁷⁴

The perfect tense refers to a completed action which results in the current situation.

Word Biblical Commentary (Volume 51: 1, 2, 3 John):

*a. The perfect δεδωκεν (literally, "**he has given**"), as read by \aleph B C K P, et al., is replaced in some MSS (e.g. AL) by the aorist εδωκεν ("he gave"). Obviously the latter reading is secondary. Careless copying would easily account for the omission of the reduplicated δ at the start of the word; and, theologically, the context demands the use of the perfect tense. Our present state as God's children, John is claiming, rests on God's loving action in the **past**. The use of the aorist tense at this point, if original, might have suggested that God's love was displayed in the past, and had no continuing effects in the present. (Emphasis added)*

The same 'perfect active indicative' Greek word representing something done in the past is used in:

John 5:22 *Furthermore, the Father does not judge anyone, but has assigned all judgment to the Son,* NET

⁷⁴ <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/rwp/1-john-3.html>

So, when we take a second look at this wonderful verse, we realize that God 'lavished' His love on us – (**past tense**) in that Jesus died for our sin (**past tense**). Something God DID rather than something God is doing daily.

More than this, what does this Scripture tell us, what is the evidence of God's lavish love?

He allows us to be called His children. To 'be' His children.

Those who have 'an ear to hear' will realize that the spirit of the message of this passage simply reveals that the great love spoken of in this verse, is simply that **He allows us to be called His children. Daily.**

Being His children **is enough.** Why do we twist God's Word and intentions by building a theology of 'God constantly running after us', that puts 'me' at the forefront of His concerns and the centre of His universe?

Each time we read about God's love for us, as in these types of verses, it conjures up images of a God who is besotted with, and swooning over me, whispering sweet-nothings into my ear.

This is an extraordinary phenomena of such a shallow even false view of God Almighty, that is just not compatible with how the Bible describes God. You need to ignore a lot of hard, demanding Scripture in order to come to such a conclusion and view.

Rather, we need to understand that God is so holy and our sin is so evil, that for God to merely save us from our sin and hell, **is to show extreme love. Lavish love.**

For God to continue to accept us (grace) each day, though we be sinful, is indeed a 'lavish' love. Daily.

He does not need to do anything more for us, to be seen as to have 'lavished' His love on us.

Here it is in a nutshell from Paul's letter to the Romans:

Rom 5:8 But God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful.

CEV

God's great love was shown by Jesus **DYING** for us. **EVEN while we were sinners.**

Yes this, is the extreme love of God, NOT some perceived constant flow of cuddles, comfort, healing 'grace words' and protection. As sinful people, we get to walk and talk with God just as Adam did. Wow, what

wonderful grace that is, from a Father God who loves us.

I am determined, not to demand more comforts, but I do request His Holy Spirit, His power, His strengthening, His wisdom often.

Primarily and mostly, God's love was shown by sending His Son to die for our sin, which is different from the way we perceive God as loving us, attentively saving us from every little pain.

Back to 1 John 3, John goes on in verse 8 to describe anyone who is not obedient to God:

1John 3:8 *Anyone who keeps on sinning belongs to the devil.* CEV

Well that's not very lavishing in His love or 'unconditional acceptance.' That's what we really think when we use the term 'unconditional love' if we are honest.

You think this is too extreme?

What does the Bible say?

James 5:11 . . . *You remember how patient Job was and **how the Lord finally helped him**. The Lord did this **because he is so merciful and kind**.* CEV

James says, God did not help Job while Job lost his wealth. Then when his servants who were minding the livestock were killed along with the livestock. Then his sons and daughters were killed. Then his body was covered in very painful sores.

James says that **God finally helped Job and this is evidence of God's great mercy and kindness**.

So, to view 1John 3:1 in context - yes, 'that God lavished His love on us, yet, merely saving us is the full result of that love' helps us keep it all in balance, in a proper perspective.

If we understand this, we can indeed 'come boldly to the throne of grace'^{Heb 4:16} but we come in boldly, to worship Him in total **humility**. (Not to celebrate how special we are.)

So, rather than seeing God lavish His love on us and expect a constant flow of blessings, (which is really living the 'prosperity doctrine' if you think about it) we should instead be content and grateful that God would notice a sinful creature, stoop down to save us from sin - oh, the grace of God.

Oh, how many times I have had Heb. 4:16 thrown in my face to soften, to diminish any talk of God's holiness and

justice - 'Yes but God said to come boldly into His presence.'

Again, we confidently quote something we sort of, kind of, remember from Scripture while ignoring the context:

Heb 4:16 *Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace **to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.*** NET

To receive mercy!

We **come boldly into His presence to humbly receive mercy** from a very gracious Holy God, who owes us nothing. We do not come boldly into His presence to loudly and adamantly declare that we are special or ask God to run after our wants.

The only prosperity doctrine in the New Testament, is 'righteousness, peace and joy' in Christ Jesus. Until we get to heaven, then we shall enjoy all kinds of great prosperity.

One could reasonably ask the proverbial question: How do you know when a Western Christian is taking a verse out of context?

Answer: When they quote a verse of Scripture.

Somehow, we must come back to the simple understanding that, God's great love was shown in that He sent Jesus who died for our sin. That's the most of it. Not the constant flow of trimmings we long for. It can well be argued that, God granting all those trimmings is not love, for it causes humans to be spoilt and lose focus:

1Tim. 6:9 *People who want to be rich fall into all sorts of temptations and traps. **They are caught by foolish and harmful desires that drag them down and destroy them.***

10 *The love of money causes all kinds of trouble. Some people want money so much **that they have given up their faith and caused themselves a lot of pain.*** CEV

The more we get, the more we lose focus on God and His Kingdom's work. So a god who did, wonderfully prosper us financially, takes away our problems, and gives us a comfortable life, is NOT a god of love.

The God of the Bible is so much higher than those selfish, carnal, earthly aims.

I am reminded of something profound that [John Wesley](#) frequently warned his followers about:

"I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion.

Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches. How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, a religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionately increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away. Is there no way to prevent this--this continual decay of pure religion? We ought not to prevent people from being diligent and frugal; we must exhort Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich."⁷⁵

John Wesley

We prosper just by hard work and not being wasteful, why would God throw us continual temptations to be self centred as well?

Getting back to the point, notice in these verses in Jude also, the idea that God's great love, was sending Jesus to die for us:

Jude 1:21 *And keep in step with God's love, as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to show how kind he is by giving you eternal life.* CEV

Again this idea is contained in the letter to the Colossians:

Col. 1:22 *But his Son became a human and died. So God made peace with you, and now he lets you stand in his presence as people who are holy and faultless and innocent.* CEV

He lets us stand in His presence. That is great love. Great grace:

Titus 3:7 *Jesus treated us much better than we deserve. He made us acceptable to God and gave us the hope of eternal life.* CEV

Yes, Jesus treated us so much better than we deserve, and what was it He did? He made us acceptable to God.

⁷⁵ goo.gl/yQkkMQ

God treated Judah far better than they deserved, see how Jeremiah puts it:

Lam 3:22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.
NIV

Psalm 78:38 Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath. NIV

Malachi 3:6 "I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed."

Christians need to reject the post modern spiritual conceit and be like King David:

Psalm 5:1 (A psalm by David for the music leader. Use flutes.) Listen, LORD, as I pray! Pay attention when I groan.

2 You are my King and my God. Answer my cry for help because I pray to you.

3 Each morning you listen to my prayer, as I bring my requests to you and wait for your reply.

4 You are not the kind of God who is pleased with evil. Sinners can't stay with you.

5 No one who boasts can stand in your presence, LORD, and you hate evil people.

6 You destroy every liar, and you despise violence and deceit.

7 Because of your great mercy, I come to your house, LORD, and I am filled with wonder as I bow down to worship at your holy temple.

8 You do what is right, and I ask you to guide me. Make your teaching clear because of my enemies.

CEV

Paul puts it this way:

Gal. 6:3 If you think that you are too important to help someone in need you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody. NLT

1Cor 3:7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.

So, it can be said that 'we are nothing.'

And Jesus spells it out here:

Luke 17:10 "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded,

say, **We are unworthy servants.** We have done what was our duty to do.” NKJ

And John the Baptist understood his position:

John 1:27 Though his ministry follows mine, I'm **not even worthy** to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandal."

Most would argue with this and say something like "God is not oppressive, you make Him sound strict, unloving and harsh."

No, He is the Holy God and as much as we might not like it, that can never be changed – it is unchangeable, eternal, cosmic, it is God.

And I would answer from the best Scriptural understanding of God I could, by saying "No, God is not oppressive, though His real self would seem to be very strict to the Snowflakes of today. Yes, He is strict, but He can be no other - the basic realities of the cosmos dictate it so and God is also confined by these. No, I do not make out God to be unloving. God is merely being consistent with His own nature and cosmic laws.

And harsh? "Well, yes, in a way His demands are harsh because we live in a sinful world, but pretending God to be only nice, does not prepare us for living in that sinful world."

Yes, God lavished His love upon us, even though we were deeply sinful. Our response must be to humbly obey such a wonderful holy God, not to be feeling wonderfully special and expecting more and more.

True joy is found on our knees, humbly before our Lord and Master. True joy is not found basking in our hyper-love construct. That is fleeting and eventually unsatisfying.

CONCLUSION:

☒ 1 John 3 = does not portray an over-emphasis on God's love for us within its context.

CHAPTER 18. GOD LOVES EVERYONE?

Contrary to popular opinion and preaching, **did you know that God often 'puts up' with you and me?**

This concept of God is completely alien to us these days.

Matt. 17:17 *Jesus said, "You faithless and corrupt people! How long must I be with you? **How long must I put up with you?** Bring the boy here to me."*
NLT

It would never cross our mind that God could be unhappy with us, fed up or frustrated with us. The belief in His loving us so much, all the time, causes us not to even consider such a thought.

Yet, far from delivering people from demon possession or healing the sick, most of us rarely speak the gospel to the unsaved. Or speak out strongly like Jesus did against sin 'in the camp' or church.

Personally I say "Thank you, Father, that you put up with me all these years. Hallowed be Your Name."

Let me ask you a question. Does God hate anyone?

Most will say 'No'.

The Bible clearly says He hates the wicked, you see what I mean when I say that you do not know God?

If you were to know only the nice side of a person but not the unpleasant side, you do not 'know' the person, you only know some things about them. So too, we no longer know God, we only know some things about Him.

The demons know God better than we do and they shudder. ([James 2:19](#))⁷⁶

Yet we pride ourselves on really knowing God in a way that former generations did not.

God hates the evil doers:

Lev. 20:23 *The nations I am chasing out did these disgusting things, and **I hated them for it**, so don't follow their example.*
CEV

⁷⁶ [James 2:19](#) You surely believe there is only one God. That's fine. Even demons believe this, and it makes them shake with fear.

Dictionary of NT Theology:

***hated** - Heb. qûts . . . weariness with something that is so intense it occasions revulsion (Gen 27:46; Num 21:5; cf. Job 10:1, qût) as well as the loathing Yahweh manifests toward a rebellious people that occasions rejection (Lev 20:23; cf. Ps 95:10, qût)*

Word Biblical Commentary, Vol 4:

Hated -Heb. qûts communicates deep feelings of repulsion met contempt produced by continuous irritation.^{iv}

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament:

2002 (qûš) I. be grieved. loath. (ASV and RSV frequently translate differently, with RSV introducing the idea of "fear" or "dread" [Ex 1:12] and probably [at least in- part] because of the seeming parallelism with gûr III].)

qûš denotes the deep emotional reaction of the subject issuing in a desired repulsion (or destruction) of the object. Compare the following synonyms: bā'ash "to be or become stinking, odious," gā'al "to cast away as unclean, to loathe." shāqaš "to detest as unclean," tā'ab to treat as an abomination "in a ritualistic and, also, a moral and general sense. dērā'ôn "object of contempt," and qût, a variant spelling of our root. The root occurs nine times:

Understanding the state of mind denoted by this root enlightens many passages. Rebekah complained to Isaac that she loathed her life because of Esau's wives (Gen 27:46).

If she is telling the truth perhaps their strange ways had so irritated her that her life had become unbearable. At least this is probably what Isaac believed. It is such an irritation and loathing that it is forbidden toward God's fatherly reproof (qûš is parallel to mā'aś, q.v.). This word describes God's feelings toward the Canaanites (Lev 20:23) and toward all idolatry (cf. qût). Israel used it to describe their feelings toward manna after prolonged feeding on it (Num 21:5). Several peoples are described as having such an irritating abhorrence of Israel

(Ex 1:12; Nu 22:3; 1Kgs 11:25), and Israel felt the same toward her enemies (cf. Isa 7:6, 16).

'Hate' in this passage is to be read literally as God's hate for people, according to:

- Pett's Commentary
- the Pulpit Commentary
- Matthew Henry's Commentary on this verse^v

Psalm 5:5 *Arrogant people cannot stand in your presence; **you hate all who behave wickedly.***
6 *You destroy liars; **the LORD despises violent and deceitful people.*** NET

Strong's Concordance:

*Hate = Hebrew **sânê'**
to hate (personally)*

Translated in the KJV: - enemy, foe, (be) hate (-ful, -r), odious, X utterly.

'Hate' in this passage is to be read literally as God's hate for people, according to:

- Expositors Bible Commentary
- Bible Knowledge Commentary
- Complete Commentary
- John Trapp; Notes on the Bible
- Albert Barnes
- Adam Clarke Commentary
- Exposition of the Bible - John Gill
- The Biblical Illustrator^{vi}

Psalm 11:5 *The LORD approves of the godly, but **he hates the wicked and those who love to do violence.*** NET

Psalm 26:5 *I **hate** the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked.* ESV

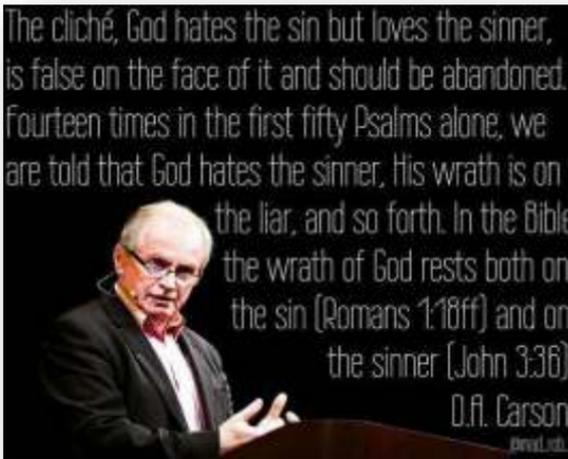
Prov. 6:16 *There are six or seven kinds of **people the LORD doesn't like(hates)**: 17 Those who are too proud or tell lies or murder, 18 those who make evil plans or are quick to do wrong 19 those who tell lies in court or stir up trouble in a family.*

CEV

Jer. 12:8 *My people have turned against me and roar at me like lions. That's why **I hate** them.*

CEV

Hos. 9:15 *Israel, I first began **to hate you** because you did evil at Gilgal. Now I will chase you out of my house. **No longer will I love you;** your leaders betrayed me.* CEV



Of course there are many who disagree and believe that the word 'hate' in these Scriptures should be read, not literally, but figuratively as in 'hate means they will go to hell' at the end.

It is hard to maintain the view of deferred judgment in the light of the many times that it shows God's action in the here and now.

And what of Scriptures like this?:

John 14:21 *"If you love me, you will do what I have said, and my Father will love you. I will also love you and show you what I am like....." 23 Jesus replied: "If anyone loves me, they will **obey me. Then my Father will love them, and we will come to them and live in them.**" CEV*

John 15:10 ***If you obey me, I will keep loving you, just as my Father keeps loving me, because I have obeyed him.*** CEV

Love them IF they are obedient?

And notice that Jesus repeats it a second time in John 14, even though that was not was Judas was asking about. Obviously it was important to Jesus.

Love us IF we are obedient? This is so contrary from what we have always been taught and will be very difficult to accept for most.

When I hear a preacher say "If you were the only person in the world, Jesus would die just for you" it troubles me greatly. How can someone make such a grandiose statement as though they know the mind of God?

Anyway, the idea that God loves everyone soooo much, is not sustainable when you take **ALL** Scripture into account.

And who are the wicked? No, not just the murderers but the prideful, the liars, the trouble makers... Jesus said that showing favouritism was evil too. Anyone not obeying God in what He has told them is rebelling against God and under His anger.

We do not definitively know the ones God hates right now and rightly so. We are to live in humility before God, grateful that we are not destroyed because of our daily sin.

The Bible says quite a lot about the anger of God too:

The 'anger of the Lord burned against them':

Num. 11:33 But while the meat was still between their teeth, before they chewed it, **the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague.** NET

2Chron. 36:16 But the people only laughed and insulted these prophets. They ignored what the LORD God was trying to tell them, until **he finally became so angry that nothing could stop him from punishing Judah and Jerusalem.**

17 **The LORD sent** King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia to attack Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar **killed the young men who were in the temple, and he showed no mercy to anyone, whether man or woman, young or old. God let him kill everyone in the city.** CEV

But, even for those that determinedly believe that God does not hate anybody at all, they must surely see that at least they cannot be so adamant, and say that 'God loves every single person soooo much' in the bland way that we do.

Mind you, just for clarification, I believe we should never presume to know who are the ones that the Lord hates. Unfortunately, we judge these things from our own subjective theologies, whereas the Lord knows all things:

1 Cor. 5:12 *Why should I judge outsiders? Aren't we supposed to judge only church members? 13 **God judges everyone else.** The Scriptures say, "Chase away any of your own people who are evil."* CEV

In 1 Cor Paul makes a curious statement that our current theology is not equipped to interpret or explain. If someone said this today, they would be condemned by all:

1Co 16:22 *Let anyone who has no love for the Lord be accursed. Our Lord, come!* NET

Paul is writing to the church in Corinth not to some particularly evil person of the world.

God loves His truth more than He loves us. God hates the Church to be compromised with people who are not true Christians. Really, He seriously does.

I have said numerous times, we do not know the God of the Bible anymore, and this is an example of that.

If we properly understand the fearful truth of God's holiness; and the preciousness of His truth, we would not dare tolerate anyone in sin in the church. Not only that, we would challenge the lukewarm too. But we are too busy consoling our congregations and ourselves with God's kindness, that we cannot even see the verses we read that contradict our beliefs. Or, we skip over them; no need to meditate on those negative verses.

Do you want to really know God or not?

Considering all this, do you really think that God never hates anyone, or that God is never angry with believers?

The Anger or Wrath of God is His Love Too

God is never angry with us and dispel the myth:

Rom 9:13 *As the Scriptures say, "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."* ERV

God was angry with the Northern Kingdom - Esau.

God was angry with the Southern Kingdom too at times.

Rom. 5:10 *Even when we were **God's enemies**, he made peace with us, because his Son died for us. Yet something even greater than friendship is ours. Now that we are at peace with God, we will be saved by his Son's life.* CEV

Psalm 7:11 *You see that justice is done, and **each day you take revenge.*** CEV

John 3:36 *He who believes on the Son has everlasting life, and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but **the wrath of God abides upon him.*** MKJV

Morris - New Inter. Commentary on the NT:

*"The wrath of God' is a concept that is uncongenial to many modern students, **and various devices are adopted to soften the***

expression or explain it away. *This cannot be done, however, without doing great violence to many passages of Scripture and without detracting from God's moral character. Concerning the first of these points, . . . there are literally hundreds of passages in the Bible referring to God's wrath, and the rejection of them all leaves us with a badly mutilated Bible. And with reference to the second, if we abandon the idea of the wrath of God we are left with a God who is not ready to act against moral evil. . . . We should not expect it [God's wrath] to fade away with the passage of time. Anyone who continues in unbelief and disobedience can look for nothing other than the persisting wrath of God. That is basic to our understanding of the gospel. Unless we are saved from real peril there is no meaning in salvation"*⁷⁷(Emphasis added)

Other commentaries on John 3:36 – in the endnotes^{vii}

Psalm 79:5 Our Lord, will you keep on **being angry**? Will your **angry feelings** keep flaming up like fire? CEV

Psalm 85:3 You stopped being **angry with them**. Your **terrible anger** has gone away. ERV

Psalm 88:16 Your **anger is like a flood!** And I am shattered by your furious attacks CEV

Psalm 7:11 God is a righteous judge, a God who **displays his wrath every day**. NIV



God loves His perfect laws. If He is not consistent with His own holiness, then He lacks love. He loves the

⁷⁷ <https://goo.gl/9iCzkX>

Truth. If He does not judge error, He cannot love His own Truth.

Simply put, God cannot be untrue to Himself.

J.I. Packer:

"God's wrath in the Bible is never the capricious, self-indulgent, irritable, morally ignoble thing that human anger so often is. **It is, instead, a right and necessary reaction to objective moral evil.**"⁷⁸ (Emphasis added)

Exactly. God's justice is an inevitable action, of cosmic values. One would more easily push the earth out of its orbit, than stop this process.

R. P. C. Hanson:

*Most preachers and most composers of prayers today treat the biblical doctrine of the wrath of God very much as the Victorians treated sex. **It is there, but it must never be alluded to because it is in an undefined way shameful. ...God is love; therefore we must not associate him with wrath. God is love; therefore he is indefinitely tolerant.** Presumably it is for such reasons that the Christian churches of the twentieth century have in practice turned their backs upon the biblical doctrine of the wrath of God.*⁷⁹ (Emphasis added)

And again,

R. P. C. Hanson:

*. . .the contemporary rejection by Christians of the biblical doctrine of the wrath of God is a typical example of our allowing **secular, non-Christian ideas to creep into our understanding of the Christian faith in such a way as to distort it.***⁸⁰ (Emphasis added)

Just to clarify, in case one wants to accuse **Hanson** of an extreme reading of God's wrath:

It must of course be acknowledged that belief in the wrath of God in the past has often gone hand in hand with cruel and inhumane human behaviour,

⁷⁸ *Knowing God*, 151, J.I. Packer.

<http://www.amazon.com/Knowing-God-J-I-Packer/dp/083081650X/?tag=desigod06-20>

⁷⁹ "R.P.C. Hanson, *God: Creator, Saviour, Spirit* (London: S.C.M., 1960), 37." <https://goo.gl/fdkgUg>

⁸⁰ R. P. C. Hanson, *God*, p. 38.

<https://www.uniontheology.org/resources/doctrine/god/the-wrath-of-god-as-an-aspect-of-the-love-of-god>

*whether in war or in penal systems. But those wishing to blame the latter practice on the former belief would do well to consider the inhumane cruelties of atheistic regimes in the twentieth century.*⁸¹

Once we begin to move back to the Bible and away from what we 'sort of, kind of, remember the Bible says' the truth begins to shine through.

Observe that very phenomena in this example in a master's thesis:

A Critical and Comparative Analysis Of Recent Contributions Towards The Concept Of God's Wrath

by Thunga Banda

ABSTRACT

I began researching for this dissertation to prove that most biblical expositors are wrong, God is not wrathful at all and He has been misrepresented. However, the more I read, the more I uncovered evidence contrary to what I believed and thought I knew. I was very shocked and upon rereading the Bible with this new evidence, I indeed found out that God is wrathful. So the question arose in my mind, how could this be, how can a Being that is love be wrathful? How does it work?...

*The Biblical Accounts Concerning
Divine Wrath in the NT*

*Most commentators, scholars and preachers seem to have relegated divine wrath as occurring in the OT only and not NT. **They have a tendency to depict the NT as Jesus only preaching the messages of love and salvation,** without any hint of God's wrath as consequences or in reference to the OT.*

However the doctrine of the wrath of God is not limited to the OT, as some have falsely imagined. We read in John 3.36, 'He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him.'

⁸¹ R. P. C. Hanson, *God*, pp. 37-38; Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, pp. 108-9.

Paul says, 'For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men'.

Many more NT verses also indicate God's wrath⁸² against sin.⁸³ (Emphasis added)

Western Christians need to do as Thunga Banda did; reread the Bible noting the passages that they have been trained to pass over, in favour of a nicer God.

It is rather foolish to believe that God is never angry with you, me, a church, a city or a country. After all that the Bible has to say of His anger toward His own disobedient people through history.

And yet, **most Believers have never been taught that God is angry with you at times.** And they cannot accept the concept or the principle.

Because our own anger is usually so carnal, we cannot imagine God having any anger like that.

But, **God's anger is a perfect anger** – perfect in discernment, perfect in truth, perfect in measure and perfect in harmony with His own character.

As J.I. Packer says, **'God's anger is merely a moral response against evil.'** It is not reactive as we are, but it is like an automatic, controlled, measured response. In a way it could be compared to Newton's 3rd Law of motion - for every action (force) in nature there is an equal and opposite reaction.

I do not suggest that God is merely an indifferent force. Nor that God, after creating the world with governing principles, no longer has any involvement with His creation (Deism). None of those.

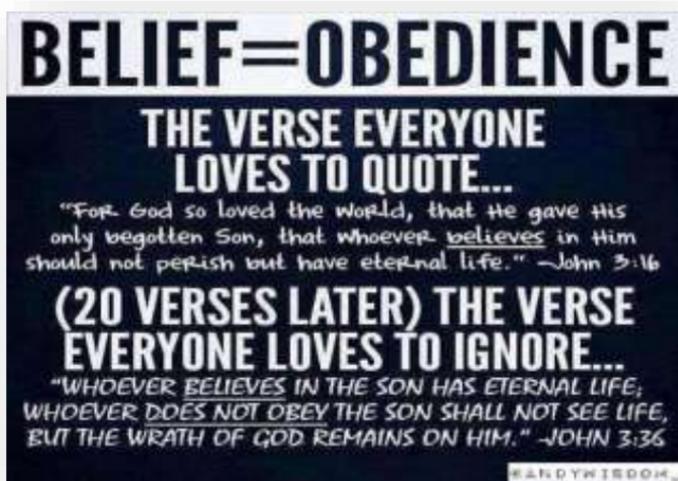
It's just the way things work in this universe that God created.

God is a personal, relational, active God, but His laws are universal, cosmic and eternal. He acts and feels in perfect coordination with His own laws.

⁸² See Romans. 1:18; cf. 2:5, 8; 5:9; 9:22; Col. 3:6; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:16; 5:9; Heb. 3:11; Rev. 6:16-17; 19:15). Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine, First Edition (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: IVP, 1994), p. 206. Defining what is meant by God's wrath is important, but so is accepting the reality of God's wrath. There are several mentions of God's wrath in the New Testament passages that speak of God's wrath: Matthew 3:7; Mark 3:5; Luke 3:7; 21:33; John 3:36; Romans 1:18; 9:22; Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 3:6; Revelation 6:16; 11:18; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15.

⁸³http://www.academia.edu/24983385/A_Critical_and_Comparative_Analysis_Of_Recent_Contributions_Towards

You could say that He is the perfect parent - He acts on sin without compromising His holiness, consistency or love.



Most pastors will not preach the truth about God's anger for fear that it will turn people off, causing them to think God is an angry old God. The congregation might think badly of them, so they focus on God's love, care and encouragement instead.

[Interview with D.A. Carson:](#)

*I suppose there are few theological topics that are more unacceptable to the contemporary, Western world than the theme of the wrath of God. Yet the fact remains that **the wrath of God is spoken of something like 600 times directly or indirectly in the Old Testament alone, quite apart from New Testament usages.** And that is in addition to passages where the expression — “the wrath of God” — or anything analogous is not actually found, but the narrative carries the same theme.⁸⁴ (Emphasis added)*

Sin is so evil it requires decisive confrontation and punishment. That is simply the eternal laws of the universe. I believe that the usage of the terms like 'avenging' is a clumsy description of the fact that God must judge sin, but not because He feels as though He needs revenge.

Being an object of God's anger is entirely our choice:

[Jude 1:21](#) keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

⁸⁴ <http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/the-bible-often-mentions-god-s-wrath-why-does-it-matter>

Col. 1:21 You used to be far from God. Your thoughts made you his enemies, and you did evil things.

We see that God was indeed angry at times with His people and with individuals.

Even most genuine Christians do not have developed theology about it, nor do they want to.

Consider this, was Jesus ever frustrated with His followers?

Was Jesus ever angry with his own?

Yes.

Of course the Father would be, and would administer discipline as well.

So if Jesus was angry at times with his disciples, why wouldn't He be angry with us at times?

Jesus to the disciples:

Mar 10:14 *When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said, "Let the children come to me! Don't try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God.* CEV

Of course!

Could the Father be angry with the Western Church now?

Yes.

Is He?

I believe so.

When we refuse to preach the 'full' gospel, His Word in His way, we rebel against God, of course He would be angry. Who do we think we are?

We have the Holy Spirit and fully know the redemptive plan of God, which the disciples did not, we have less excuse than they.

Yes, God is angry with us, and we need to repent before we are shattered. Does that mean God does not loves us now? Of course not. Can a mother be angry with her child for being rebellious, yet continue to love her child? Of course. Why, when it comes to God, do we have such an aversion to the idea that God can be angry with me or angry with you, yet continue to love us?

Well, because we believe that 'God loves us soooo much.'

Remember at the beginning of this chapter, I said that if you were to only know about the nice side of a person but not the unpleasant side, you do not 'know' the

person? You only know some things about them. So too, we no longer know God, we only know **some things about Him**.

And that without anger, the love of God cannot exist?

Consider then that God's love caused Him to :-

- save Joseph in Egypt
- warn people of hell
- give a child to Hannah, Sarah and Rebekah
- judge Ananias & Sapphira to death
- punish the unrepentant to hell
- send His Son to die for us
- discipline us when required
- allow terrible suffering throughout the world
- allow us to be called the children of God
- etc....

When we understand that God holds affection and anger in **perfect balance**, we begin to know God love.

CONCLUSION:

☒ God Loves Everyone = Scripture says no.

CHAPTER 19. UNCONDITIONAL LOVE OF GOD

We say that God loves us unconditionally.

Really?

Then how do we interpret these verses:

John 15:10 ***If you obey me, I will keep loving you, just as my Father keeps loving me, because I have obeyed him.*** CEV

Psalms 5:5 ***No one who boasts can stand in your presence, Lord, and you hate evil people.*** CEV

John 16:27 ***God the Father loves you because you love me, and you believe that I have come from him.*** CEV

1John 3:24 ***If we obey God's commandments, we will stay one in our hearts with him, and he will stay one with us. The Spirit that he has given us is proof that we are one with him.*** CEV

John 14:21 ***If you love me, you will do what I have said, and my Father will love you. I will also love you and show you what I am like.*** CEV

Heb. 11:6 ***But without faith no one can please God. We must believe that God is real and that he rewards everyone who searches for him.*** CEV

John 15:14 ***And you are my friends, if you obey me.*** CEV

Psalms 11:5 ***The Lord tests honest people, but despises those who are cruel and love violence.*** CEV

Sure, there is a general grace extended to all people (we know this from experience - up until now, God has not yet destroyed all non believers and we who were non believers) but to say that God has unconditional love for all people is taking it way too far.

If we are honest, 'God's unconditional love' became and is now, code for '**God's unconditional acceptance**' even if we live in sin. Everyone must be accepted now, even those living in lifestyles that Scripture clearly condemns as vile sin.

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

This has become just another tradition of men that we came up with to make the offensive gospel, less offensive and much more acceptable.

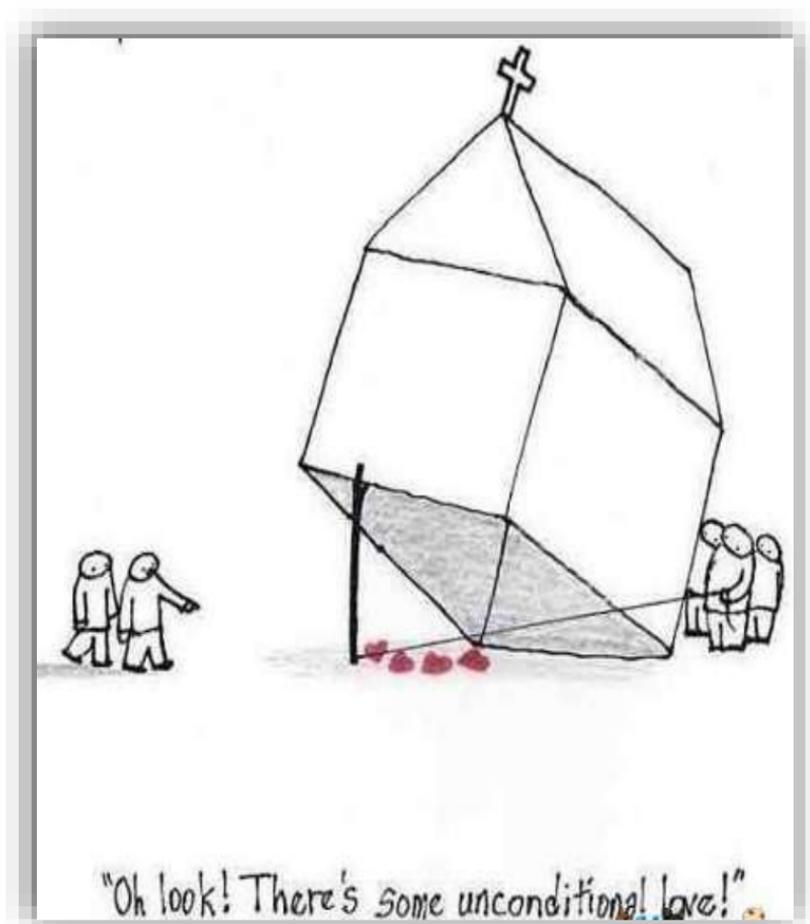
Again, some try to argue that these verses only mean that at the end God will send people to hell, rather than rejecting them now. That is not consistent with all the Bible says, nor with the character of God. God really IS holy in a way that makes us very uneasy. But most of us are not prepared to truly acknowledge the depth of His holiness.

God is demanding, His holiness demands it and there is no way around that.

Here is another insight into the God of now, not only the God who will judge all at the end of the age:

Heb. 10:38 *The people God accepts will live because of their faith. But **he isn't pleased with anyone who turns back.*** CEV

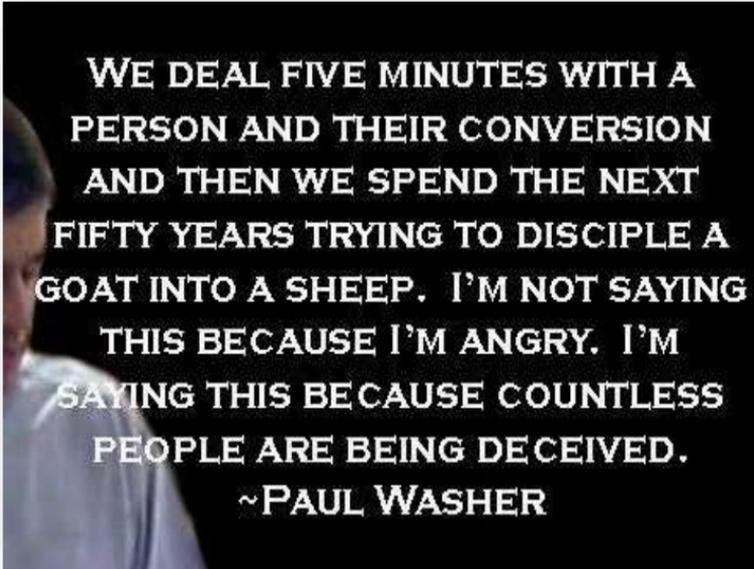
As I was looking for something online, I found this, thank you to who ever made it.



As the idiom goes '**a picture paints a thousand words**' and this cartoon so aptly exposes one of the main reasons we use the concept of God's 'unconditional love'. We just gotta get 'em in.

We really do not want to preach 'repentance from sin and Christ crucified' as it sounds a bit weird in the Post modern era. It is so much easier to tell people that God loves them unconditionally. The problem is, it does not work - it brings in people who 'came to get something' rather than 'came to give up all'.

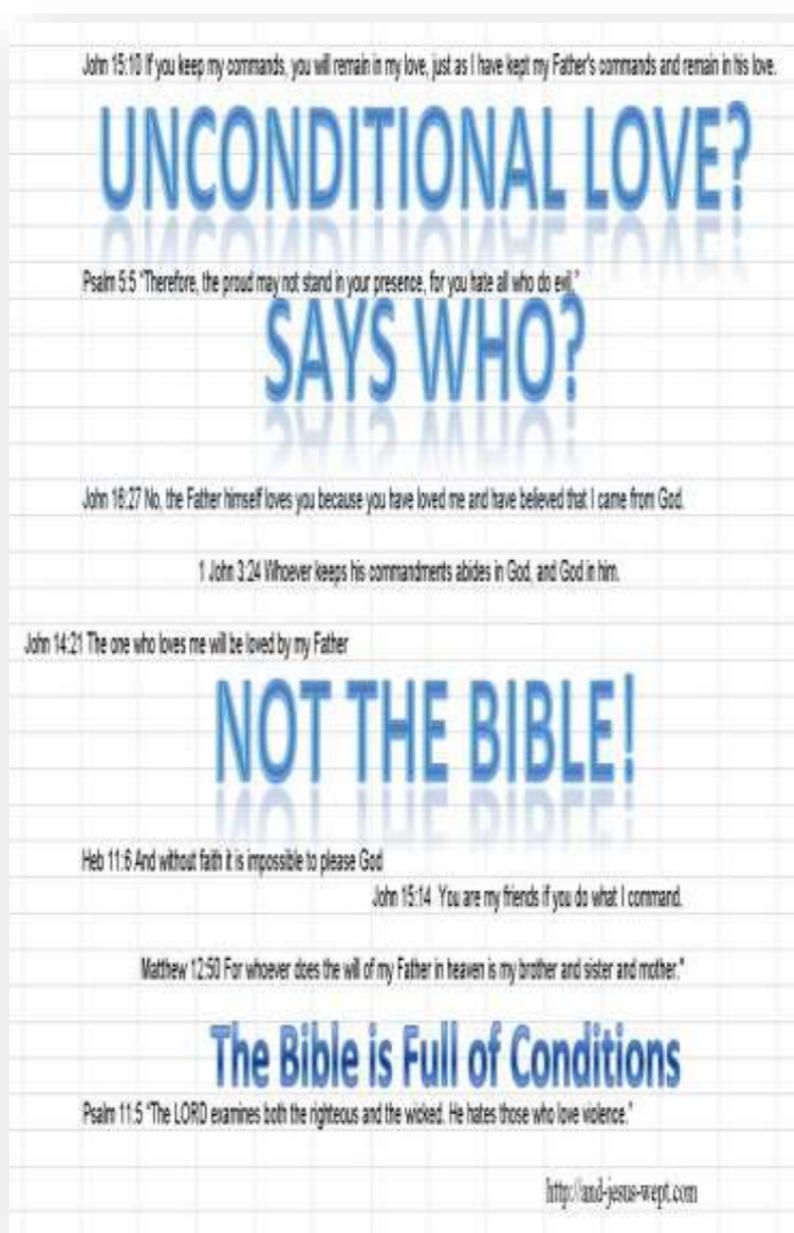
Paul Washer hits the nail on the head here:



David Pawson says it so well here:

The idea that God loves everybody unconditionally, wants them all to come to him just as they are, and everyone can then be happy - that is not the gospel, or the God that we are to present to the world. It implies when we emphasize to unbelievers that God is love that we are lovable. Because we measure His love by ours.... God had to tell the Jews, 'I don't love you because you are special; you are special because I love you'. And that is the biblical emphasis. God doesn't love us because we are lovable, but because He is love. That's a very different thing. And so we have had an overemphasis on a God of Love in our preaching to unbelievers - something that the New Testament apostles never did.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ <https://billmuehlenberg.com/2014/11/12/hating-sin-loving-holiness/>



Even W. Craig Reed who is **not** a Christian, in his book **7 Secrets of Neuron Leadership** questions the logics of this concept of an 'unconditional love' :⁸⁶

Now obviously he is not speaking of God, but the idea of love being without any conditions whatsoever.

Here is a little of what he says about it:

⁸⁶ goo.gl/xEQ9c6

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

How can we love unconditionally when we live in a conditional world?

Everything in our life is defined by conditions. We can keep our job if we perform adequately. We can keep our home if we pay our mortgage. We can advance our career if we work hard and leverage our professional relationships. We can have loving relationships if we nurture them. How then does the term "unconditional" have relevance when our lives are filled with all these conditions?

We must leave our expectations at the door.

The term unconditional love is an oxymoron. It's redundant. If we love, *truly love*, it should always be unconditional. Achieving this requires loving and receiving love without expectations. In fact, when it comes to love, the word "expectation" is synonymous with the word "condition."

During our childhood years, most of us learned from well-meaning parents, teachers, coaches, pastors, or other authoritarian figures. They

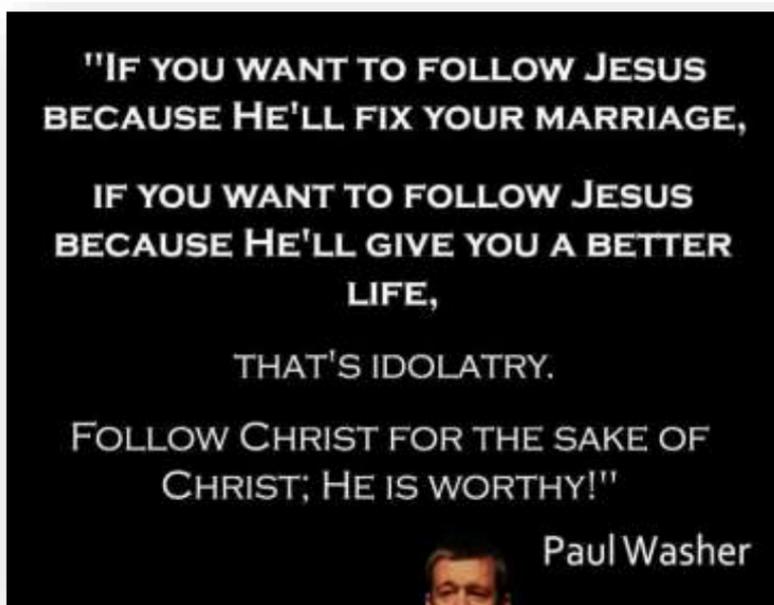
This from Marie, a dear sister in the Lord:

Would we agree that more and more churches are falling away - becoming apostate daily? If I asked the question, "Is this current apostasy due to "politically correct theology," how would you define the "politically correct theology," that is infecting the churches and individual Christians? I see it as the erroneous notion that "God's unconditional love accepts everyone 'just as they are'."

From Dennis a dear brother in the Lord:

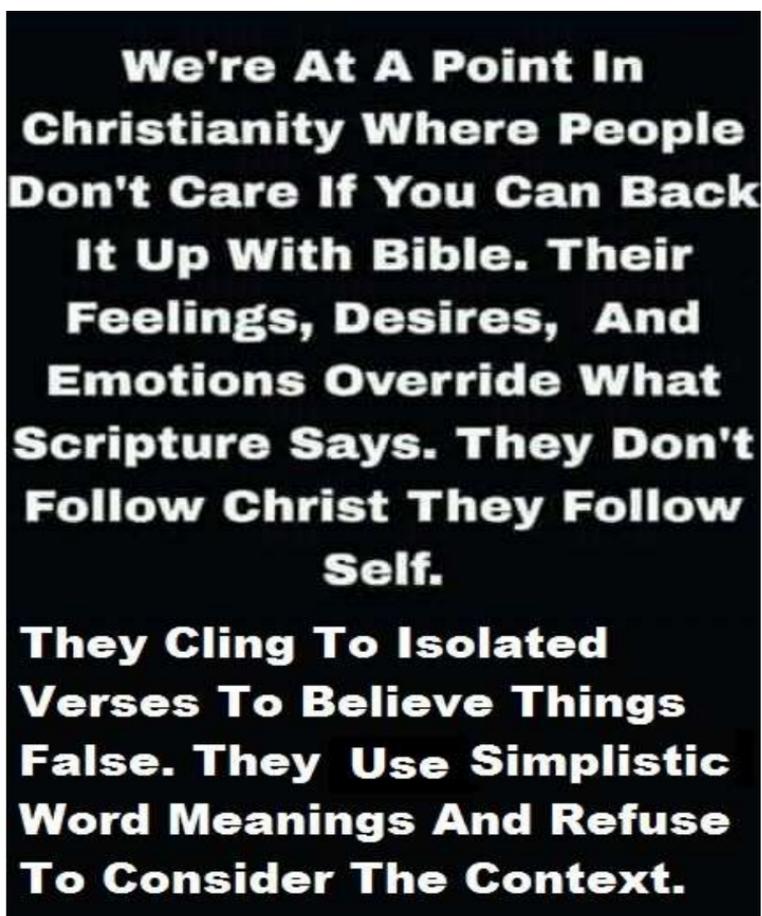
*The erroneous understanding of God's "unconditional love" has been a huge problem and stumbling block, but let's be clear: it is not this specific and tragic error but instead **the entire rewrite of the identity of God that has brought the church to this sad state.** When all of the threatening, scary, and terrible aspects of God are removed, **we have left only a caricature of God**, one that Lucifer is glad to fill and energize. We have all been deeply affected by this Great Substitution, and it is incumbent upon each one of us to keep coming out of it lest we be likewise deceived.*

Profound.



CONCLUSION:

☒ Unconditional Love Of God = it is hard to argue for God's 'unconditional love' in the light of so many conditional Scriptures in the Bible.



CHAPTER 20. GREAT COMMISSION

You would expect that if telling non Believers that God loves them is so important, then surely Jesus would specify this to the disciples in the final commissioning just before he left:

Matt. 28:19 *Therefore go and **make disciples** of all nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you**. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." NET*

Mark 16:15 *He said to them, "**Go into all the world and preach the gospel** to every creature.*

16 The one who believes and is baptized will be saved, but the one who does not believe will be condemned.

17 These signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages;

18 they will pick up snakes with their hands, and whatever poison they drink will not harm them; they will place their hands on the sick and they will be well." KJB

Luke 21:46 *He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and **repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." NIV*

No! Nothing about how they were to preach 'God's great love for people and having a wonderful plan for their life.'

What about the commissioning of Paul?

What did Jesus tell Paul to do?

Acts 9:15 *But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument **to proclaim my Name** to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." NIV*

Acts 26:7 . . . King Agrippa, it is because of this hope that these Jews are accusing me. 8 Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?....

...14 We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

15 "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?'

" 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. 16 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me.

17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. **I am sending you to them** 18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

19 "So then, King Agrippa, **I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.** 20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, **I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.**

NIV

No! As you can see, nothing even hinting at preaching God's love for people.

Later we shall look at what the apostles did preach, through the book of Acts, after hearing the command from Jesus to make disciples.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Great Commission = no emphasis on preaching God's love, it is not even mentioned.



Again, let me categorically state that God has a great love for us. It can rightly be said that everything God does, is through love. All I am saying is that **we talk about and focus on God's love for us far, far more than God does.**

Let us take a look at what the New Testament reveals from a number of different perspectives.

CHAPTER 21. ANY NT BOOKS WRITTEN ON THIS?

Is there a book of the New Testament that was written specifically to tell or teach us that God greatly loves us?

In a word, no.

There are various opinions, but as I see it, the New Testament books were generally written for these reasons:

- Matthew** - A record of Jesus' teachings & deeds proving his Messiahship to the Jewish mind.
- Mark** - A record of suffering servant Jesus and His teachings and deeds, He is the Great Leader God to the Roman mind.
- Luke** - A record of the man Jesus, His teachings and deeds to the Greek mind.
- John** - A record of Jesus a man who is Messiah, God and man.
- Acts** - the record of the acts of the Holy Spirit through apostles and believers, fulfilling Acts 1:8.
- Romans** - Paul's preparatory teaching letter before he arrives in Rome.
- 1 Corinthians** - Paul disciplines the Corinthian Church for many errors.
- 2 Corinthians** - Paul restores relationship and reiterates his authority and apostolic call.
- Galatians** - Paul disciplines and warns the church of Galatia about accepting teachings of Judaizers.
- Ephesians** - Paul warns about false teaching.
- Philippians** - Paul thanks Philippians for gift and asks two ladies to work in harmony.
- Colossians** - Paul warns Colossian church, of whom he had not met, about false teachings.
- 1 Thessalonians** - Paul corrects Thessalonian church's wrong eschatology and encourages them in persecution.
- 2 Thessalonians** - Paul again corrects wrong eschatology and comforts them in strong persecution.
- 1 Timothy** - Paul's pastoral letter to Timothy.
- 2 Timothy** - Paul's second pastoral letter and request to see Timothy while he (Paul)

was suffering in prison under Nero's persecutions.

Titus - Paul's pastoral letter to Titus.

Philemon - Paul appeals to a friend to forgive his runaway slave.

Hebrews - The author encourages Jewish believers.

James - James calls Christians around the empire to return to proper conduct.

1 Peter - Peter encourages believers during time of great persecution under Nero.

2 Peter - Peter warns about false teachers.

1 John - John warns about false teachers.

2 John - John warns about false teachers.

3 John - John writes to Gaius, a church leader to support visiting preachers and warn of self-important Diotrephes.

Jude - Jude warns of false teachers.

Revelation - Jesus' vision of the times, to encourage believers.

This book has, as its aim, to find where 'preaching God's love for us' was to be part of the coming of the New Covenant, making the books of the Old Testament not really relevant. But if they were, the Song of Solomon - a grouping of love poems, is considered by many as a book of God's love for us. Although this was not a universal understanding for Israel.

CONCLUSION:

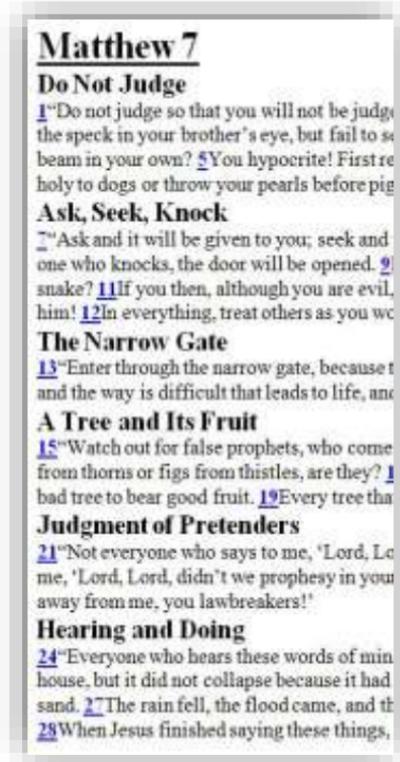
☒ Any New Testament book about this = No, none of the NT books were written for the purpose of teaching about God's love for us.

Again, yes God love us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

See how Scripture does not show an emphasis on God's love for us, unlike what we 'sort of, kind of remember' it does.

CHAPTER 22. ANY NT PASSAGE WITH THIS TITLE?

Many Bibles have passage titles, that sum up what the passage is about, like this:



Let us see how many of these, address this topic specifically.

These headings are not Scripture, they are merely the learned translator's view of the passage in a nutshell. They are not a precise measurement and sometimes they seem to be inaccurate, but it does give us a general idea of the content.

I will use the headings from two different Bible versions:

The Net Bible contains 653 passage headings in the New Testament:

Only 2 of them are about God's love:

- God is Love ([1John 4:7-5:4](#))
- God Is Love So We Must Love One Another ([1John 3:11-24](#))

That's **0.31%** about God's love
99.69% about other subjects

The **English Standard Version (ESV)** is more detailed and contains 907 passage headings in the New Testament:

Only 3 of them are about God's love:

- For God So Loved The World ([John 3:16, 21](#))
- God's Everlasting Love ([Romans 8:31-39](#))
- God Is Love ([1John 4:7-21](#))

That's **0.33%** about God's love.
98.77% about other subjects

This deception we carry, is worse than you think. Because it is so deep, it affects every word we hear. Think about this; even when we do preach on 'worry' it is very different from how Jesus or the Bible does.

We say things like "Don't worry, God is always with you, He loves you and will not forsake you. God does not want you to worry, He wants you to rest in Him, just enjoy His presence, don't you remember that Jesus said 'I came to give life and life abundantly' so try not worry."

We might preach on holiness, but then we add the special 'nice' sauce to make it less challenging, well, less convicting really. We might preach on persevering but then add a 'spoon full of sugar, to help the medicine go down.' Something like, 'God is planning to use us mightily and He is using this to prepare us for it.'

What about preaching like Jesus did "Stop worrying! Have you no faith after all you have seen me do?"

This way urges one on, the former merely pampers one into a 'social welfare' state of thinking where I do not have to really try for myself or grow.

Even when we DO NOT preach about 'God's love for you' or even add the special 'nice sauce', we are still reinforcing the concept. Why? Because for Christians, after hearing about it so much for so long, it has become our paradigm - we all believe that's how God works, it is our assumed worldview. It is the foundation supporting every sermon, it is what our church believes. It is the impression behind our every sermon, it is the assumed overriding truth by all the people. It is just a split second away from being declared yet again, in case one may think or say we are too hard. It is the constant 'greatest fact' that our everything is built on. It is the great deception of the Post-modern Church.

When people come to church assuming something false as truth, they interpret everything that is said through that belief or prism - they incorrectly interpret the preaching and reading of the Bible, even without anyone stating it.

And of course, if hell or hard things are raised, the instinctive and immediate response, is 'what about God's love?' There is no time to consider or reason toward a more Biblical assessment.

We just do not realize the depth and reach of this deception.

CONCLUSION:

☒ New Testament passages dedicated to this = no evidence in the passage headings to support any over-emphasis.

CHAPTER 23. TOTAL VERSES SAYING 'GOD LOVES US?'

How often does the New Testament clearly state that God loves us, what is the frequency?

What is the percentage of all the verses? 1%, 5%, 10%, 18%, 25% or 35%?

Back to that small survey of 28 people from 3 different church groups on 'what percentage of the verses in the New Testament state that God loves us?':

Large conservative Pentecostal church	Conservative Baptist	Well known conservative mission group
100%		
90%		
80%		80%
	70%	
60% x 2	60%	
	50%	
33%		30%
20%	20%	
15%	15% x 2	15%
10% x 2	10% x 4	10% x 3
	5% x 2	

The way we Christians talk and preach, you would think that God's love for us was talked about all the way through the New Testament. And indeed, that is what many do think.

NOTE:

A Note on "Love" Frequency in Proclamation and Church Instruction Scope and Method.

"Frequency" here means explicit phrasing (**love-lexemes** (ἀγαπάω/ἀγάπη/φιλέω) of 'God loves you' and similar, applied to God's love toward people) used (a) in Jesus' **public, crowd-facing proclamation** in the Synoptics, (b) in the **apostolic sermons** recorded in Acts, and (c) in the letters/**epistolary instruction** addressed to churches (Romans–Jude). Uses that speak of **our** love (for God or for one another) are not counted toward divine-love frequency; nor are adjacent benevolence terms (χάρις, ἔλεος, χρηστότης, οἰκτιρμοί) or narrative demonstrations of love without the lexeme. This deliberately **tight** scope tests whether the NT

models a **repeated refrain** such as “God loves you” as a rhetorical staple.

Findings.

1. In Jesus' public preaching (Synoptics) and the apostolic public sermons (Acts), there is **no recurring formula** that tells unbelieving crowds “God loves you.” The consistent headline is the **kingdom, judgment**, and the summons to **repent and believe** (Matt 4:17; Mark 1:14–15; Acts 2; 3; 17; 20:21).
2. Within the **epistles**, explicit second-person address that functions as a **direct refrain** (“God loves you”) is likewise **not common**. The letters certainly teach God's love (e.g., God's love **demonstrated** in the cross: Rom 5:8; God being “rich in mercy... because of the great love”: Eph 2:4–5; the manifestation of love in the sending of the Son: 1 John 4:9–10), and they repeatedly command **mutual love** within the church (e.g., Rom 12:10; 1 Thess 4:9; 1 John passim). But they do **not** employ a continuous, slogan-like **second-person** refrain directed at the congregation (“Church, God loves you”) as the main rhetorical driver of exhortation.

Stated Limits.

This conclusion does **not** deny the centrality of divine love in salvation history or doctrine. It simply observes that, at the level of **rhetorical habit**, the NT typically **expounds** God's love (often in third-person theological assertions grounded in the cross) and **derives imperatives** from it (holy living, mutual love), rather than repeatedly addressing believers or unbelievers with a bare “God loves you” formula.

Discourse Control: Frequency Paired with Function.

Where divine love is explicitly stated, it consistently carries **theological and moral freight**:

- **Teleology to repentance/faith:** God's **kindness** leads to **repentance** (Rom 2:4).
- **Grounding in the cross:** “God shows his love... in that while we were still sinners, **Christ died for us**” (Rom 5:8).
- **Ecclesial formation:** God's love poured out by the Spirit (Rom 5:5) generates **holy obedience** and **brotherly love** (Eph 5:1–2; 1 John 4:11).

Now, continuing on.

But when you take the time to go through the NT and count up how many verses actually say or strongly infer this, you find that **only about 1% of all the NT** even mentions it.

Wow, that is a huge difference from our assumptions.

- Why then do we talk about it so much?
- Why is it the main thing by which we measure God?
- Why is it that if one talks about how the Church needs to expose sin, there is a chorus of, "But God loves us too you know and He wants us to focus on loving one another"

Whenever one briefly speaks of God's wrath and is accused of 'not keeping it in balance' in fact it is they who hold an extreme position on God's love and are not in balance. **How can 1% be a foundation on which to call anybody 'back into balance' about anything?**

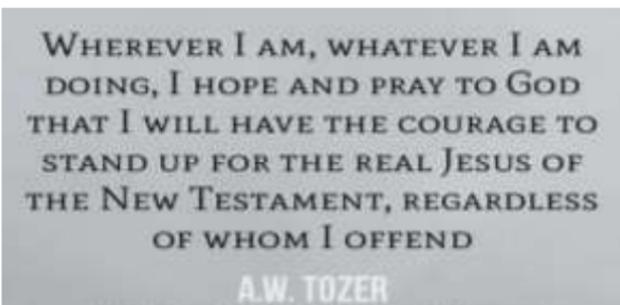
This survey exposes our extreme belief in something that is wrong. Of course, it is going to then skew and compromise our ability to understand who God is, who Jesus is, what the Bible is saying, how to live, how to evangelize, how to minister, how evil sin is, how holy holiness is, etc....

You can see how we have a huge discrepancy here, which is a huge problem because it greatly changes our view of God and the Bible. This is a huge 'paradigm-framing' concept.

It **MUST** be addressed and it **MUST** be corrected or we cannot honestly claim to serve the God of the Bible, but rather a god of our own making.

Pastor? Why haven't you alerted your congregation of this huge paradigm-framing concept? Why haven't you warned about this value system flaw? Why haven't you addressed this 'frame of reference' skewer, with Scripture? Your people have built this into their basic assumptions and you did not warn them. This 'point of reference' has been anchored in the wrong location and you were too afraid to expose it for the glory of God.

Tozer is correct:



I too, endeavor to stand up for **the real Jesus** of the New Testament. How about you?

We can totally change the way we view God. It would enable us to serve Him so much better, even to 'please' Him.

Do you want to please God?

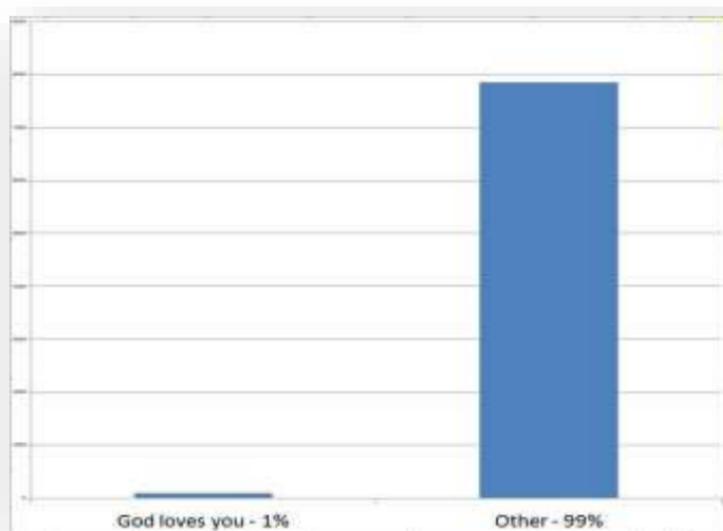
Continuing on. Interestingly:

7942 verses in the New Testament.

87 or **1.1%** love of God for us.

7855 or **89.9%** General teaching & narrative.

It looks like this:



And even then, when the love of God is spoken of, it is mostly a 'by-the-way-mention,' for instance:

Jude 1:1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ.

Rom. 1:7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

So many times when I am talking or writing about God, I have well meaning Christians stop me and say, 'Well yes, God does want to mature us, but He loves us too you know. We have to be careful not to go to the extreme and only talk about maturing. We need to keep it in balance by talking about God's love too.'

It makes me want to weep.

We already talk more about God's love and care for us, and how He restores our hurt emotions, etc... so much

of the time, but if one talks a little about going on to maturity, they are going to the extreme.

We have just seen that the NT only mentions God's love for us in 1% of all the verses, yet when we talk about challenging on to maturity for maybe 5% of the time, supposedly we are being extreme.

No, if we take our cue from Scripture, we should be talking, teaching and challenging each other 99% of the time and teaching about God's love only 1% of the time. So, if we talk more than 1% about God's love, we are being extreme, right? That is if we believe Scripture is the Word of God, as we say we do.

We need to stop it and truly grow up.

Our Christian life is supposed to be 'missional' being that we have a focus on the Great Cause - making disciples for the King, but we have more of a 'nice Christian existence' mentality. This nice Christian existence mentality encourages us to look for and dwell on everything nice that God has for us.

Being missional in mentality causes us to forget about ourselves, sacrifice the inward looking, in order to further the Great Mission.

What we do not realize is that the way we view God and His Word through our man-made prism of 'He loves us soooo much' does the very opposite of what we are wanting to achieve. And it certainly is contrary from what God wants.

Let me explain.

I just mentioned that following Christ (being a Christian) is the 'Great Cause'. There is no cause like it, nothing that can compare in any way, to the eternal value of His unfolding plan.

When we amplify God's love so much, over His truth and justice, we remove the dynamic in it, of the deepest most meaningful cause that is worth dying for. We have turned it around, into a 'comfortable life for me.' Yet, mankind knows intuitively that a 'Great Cause' is not self-centered and so there is something missing. It leaves one feeling somewhat empty.

Now in this era, people are so bombarded with superficial, plastic, empty experiences, which leaves many who are looking for something more meaningful, feeling empty. These are those who want a genuine cause and would be very committed to that cause. We see young people getting caught up in radical causes and I believe this is part of the attraction to Islam in the West and Leftwing social justice activists.

However, when we dumb down God's great cause with self-centered traditions of men, we take away the very

thing that cause-seekers are looking for and we attract instead, those who want to be self-centered.

We repel sheep and attract goats.

We are in fact, **devangelizing**⁸⁷ not evangelizing.

We give them enough of the Gospel to make them far more accountable before God, but not enough to truly be saved. We give them enough of the gospel to make them spiritually sick. We bring in another goat and pat ourselves on the back.

Deep down we know this, but we do not want to think about it enough and bring it into our full consciousness, for then we might need to change.

You know what Jesus called that? Hard hearts.

We certainly do have hard hearts, we will turn away from anyone taking the Bible literally and insisting that we live by the Bible.

Getting back to the subject of this chapter - how many verses in the New Testament state that God loves?

Let's go a little further.

Here is the process of how we arrive at this problem:

All at the same time, we unconsciously combined '[..God IS love..](#)⁸⁸' with '[..the greatest of these is love..](#)⁸⁹ and '[..love is kind..](#)⁹⁰ in order to come up with this '**God IS kind and only kind**' concept.

Or what could be called the Sola Tenere gospel - God only tender.

It outworks in life something like this:

God is love + greatest of these is love = God **IS** love.

God **IS** love + Love is kind = God **IS** kindly.

Therefore: Kindliness = love

Therefore: Love = kindliness

Therefore: anything that appears unkind is **NOT** love.

Therefore: anything that appears unkind is **NOT** of God.

Therefore: anything that appears unkind is sin.

Therefore: anything that appears unkind is not being like Jesus.

⁸⁷ **devangelise** - verb (used with object)

1. to attempt to spread Christianity (evangelical or otherwise) so poorly that it has the opposite effect to what is intended.

2. to cause, or attempt to cause, someone to leave the Christian faith. verb (used without object)

3. to lose interest in the Christian faith.

⁸⁸ **1 John 4:7** Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God....**16** We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. NLT

⁸⁹ **1 Cor. 13:13** *Three things will last forever--faith, hope, and love--and the greatest of these is love.* NLT

⁹⁰ **1 Cor. 13:4** Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud. NLT

Therefore, if one corrects sin in the camp, they are judgmental and evil.

Therefore, you may break the one last law we have, of 'not judging' by judging this person as wrong, and that their very 'Christianness' is in serious doubt for all to see.

We have an unshakable belief that God's love is ONLY kindly, and we get very angry if anyone challenges that particular tradition of men.

Of course we would never say out loud, that God is only kindly, because we know that is wrong, but we do believe it, and live by it, and judge all things by it. We are very happy to keep any suspicion about this tradition of men in our 'peripheral thoughts' - don't ever let them come to the surface where they might be questioned or exposed. We are on a good thing, and don't let anyone challenge it.

If, God were only kindly, why would He say, "Do not grieve over my rejection of Saul?"

1 Sam 16:1 *One day he said, "Samuel, I've rejected Saul, and I refuse to let him be king any longer. Stop feeling sad about him.*

Put some olive oil in a small container and go visit a man named Jesse, who lives in Bethlehem. I've chosen one of his sons to be my king." CEV

And God instructs Israel to show no pity, not even to your dear wife if she tries to entice you to worship idols:

Deut. 13:6-10 Someone else may say to you, "Let's worship other gods." That person may be **your best friend, your brother or sister, your son or daughter, or your own dear wife or husband.** But you must not listen to people who say such things. **Instead, you must stone them to death.** You must be the first to throw the stones, then others from the community will finish the job. **Don't show any pity.** CEV

And it is not just the OT that speaks of God in this way:

2 Peter 2:4 **God did not have pity on the angels that sinned.** He had them tied up and thrown into the dark pits of hell until the time of judgment. **5** And during Noah's time, **God did not have pity on the ungodly people of the world.** He destroyed them with a flood, though he did save eight people, including Noah, who preached the truth.

6 God punished the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and this is a warning to anyone else who wants to sin.

7-8 Lot lived right and was greatly troubled by the terrible way those wicked people were living. He was a good man, and day after day he suffered because of the evil things he saw and heard. So the Lord rescued him.

9 This shows that the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their sufferings and to punish evil people while they wait for the day of judgment.

10 The Lord is especially hard on people who disobey him and don't think of anything except their own filthy desires. They are reckless and proud and are not afraid of cursing the glorious beings in heaven.

CEV

Again, this is the very image of the 'God of the Old Testament' that people try to pretend is not the 'Jesus of the New Testament'.

If you do not know God, you will not understand such a command. Under the New Covenant, we are supposed to have the same fervor against sin in our lives.

Why 'stop feeling sad' and 'show no pity'?

Because it will affect one's judgment and they will not be strong enough to follow through on what God commands.

Our immediate response to a perceived victim is to show pity, while God's first response is, 'what is true and righteous?' But, God's integrity is protected by His justice. Our sentimental ideas prevent us from following through on God's commands.

We are called to expose sin, but we excuse sin, and we employ all sorts of sentimental, comforting encouragements. Why? Because this sinner 'had a bad childhood' or 'is so offended by something' or

Like Samuel, we feel **more sad for the sinner than for God's broken law**. Contrary from the OT pattern, we show **great pity for the sinners and leave God to 'get over it.'**

Oh, how arrogant we are.

This is one of the main reasons that our law and order is breaking down so badly now – judges too, have taken on the sentimental idea of showing so much 'pity' that they hand down woefully inadequate sentencing.

It now matters little to us that God is deeply offended by the sin. What is really important to us are people's feelings.

[Billy Graham](#) is right and he is talking about the world!

**Our society strives to avoid any possibility
of offending anyone - except God.**

~ Billy Graham

But what is far more tragic, it's true in the Church too.

It starts with the pastors who refuse to offend their members but do not mind offending God.

The God they preach about each week is the God who gave His one and only Son to be brutally treated and killed for us. I find it difficult to understand how they can even call themselves Christians - followers of Christ, let alone pastors and shepherds of His flock.

Our favourite verse in the Bible surely is John 3:16, but it seems that God's favourite OT verse is something quite different and only focused on Christ, certainly not us.

OT verse most quoted in the NT:

[God's Favourite Bible Verse](#) -Dr Joel McDurmon:

*Most students of the Bible realize that the New Testament quotes from the Old quite often. It does so several hundred times, actually (2,300 if you count allusions and paraphrases). From this we can rightly infer that **God takes God's word seriously**. But did you know there is one verse God quotes from himself far more than any other? I mean way more.*

Just for comparison, the second most frequently-quoted verse is this important doozy: "love your neighbor as yourself" ([Lev. 19:18](#)). This shows up in seven different places in the NT. The vast majority of other verses quoted appear a couple times, or only once. But there is one that blows even [Leviticus 19:18](#) away in frequency. It is this:

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool" ([Psalm 110:1](#)).

*Not only may that seem surprising, but the numbers will, as well. **This verse is quoted or alluded to 23 times in the NT. It is quoted in 11 out of 27 NT books, and by 7 of the 9 NT authors.***

Indeed, if we may take just a little license and judge by such frequency, we may say that [Psalm 110:1](#) is indeed God's favorite Bible verse.

And since this verse appears over three times as often as something so important as "love your neighbor as yourself," we may consider that its repeated emphasis has some great importance—perhaps that we've overlooked. . .⁹¹ (Emphasis added)

Thank you Dr McDurmon. You can read more of his piece here:

<https://americanvision.org/1909/importance-of-psalm/> This is a great observation and one on which the Church needs to take note.

Jesus is the Centre of all things. God's focus, is rightly, on God, His Kingdom and His unfolding plan. That is where our focus ought to be too.

So not only is John 3:16 NOT God's favourite verse, but most - about 99% of the New Testament verses do NOT clearly state that God loves us.

Let us take ourselves down off the pedestal and put God truly at the centre of our lives. It is only natural. It is abiding by cosmic, eternal laws.

CONCLUSION:

☒ New Testament Statistics = does not show any particular emphasis on God's love for us. In fact **it is dramatically lower than what we think**. Rather, we see an urging on to holiness, maturity and mission.

Again, yes God love us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

See how Scripture does not show an emphasis on God's love for us, unlike what we 'sort of, kind of remember' it does.

⁹¹ <https://americanvision.org/1909/importance-of-psalm/>

CHAPTER 24. HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK

Now let us take a look at the work of the beloved Holy Spirit. Does the Bible describe His role as telling of God's great love for us?

Succinct sum up by Jesus:

***John 16:7** But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. **8** And when he comes, **he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.** **9** The world's sin is that it refuses to believe in me. **10** Righteousness is available because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more. **11** Judgment will come because the ruler of this world has already been judged. NLT*

Think about this.

Conviction is exposing your wrong thinking and actions. It is discipline by the Holy Spirit. It is not 'lovingly nice' of the Holy Spirit by our estimation.

Yet it is **true love**.

Notice that Jesus does not only say 'convict the world of sin?' He specifies the three important aspects or stages that a person needs to clearly understand in order to be truly saved. It is a mini gospel message:

Step 1 - convict of sin

Step 2 - show them the righteousness of God

Step 3 - show them the punishment of sin

But we want to emphasize to people how much God loves them and has a wonderful plan for their lives.

You can see that it is here in black & white. I am not making anything up or twisting Scripture.

But, we take away the clear Scripture, and dumb down the unpleasant parts, so the Holy Spirit **cannot** convict people!

In fact, much of the time, we are an obstacle to what God is trying to do in a person's life. It's true, when someone is suffering in some way, we rush in to tell them that God loves them, that they are special and God has a wonderful plan for their life.

In the midst of their problems where God has an opportunity to break things down and reveal Himself, we rush in and remove any pain and suffering we can, protecting them from God's maturing work in their lives, with our poor 'Sunday school theology.'

Let us look at a very brief summary, from the extensive study by Rev. Dr. Kevin Conner. He is a wonderful student of the Word and teacher:

[The Foundations Of Christian Doctrine](#)⁹²:

B. The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Believer

The life of the believer follows that example of the Lord Jesus.

1. The new birth is brought about by the Spirit.
 2. The Spirit indwells the believer's spirit.
 3. The Spirit gives assurance of salvation.
 4. The Spirit fills the believer with Himself.
 5. The Spirit, by the baptism in the Spirit.
 6. The Spirit speaks to the believer.
 7. The Spirit opens the believer's understanding to the things of God.
 8. The Spirit teaches the believer, and guides him into all truth.
 9. The Spirit imparts life.
 10. The Spirit brings about renewal.
 11. The Spirit strengthens the believer's inner being.
 12. The Spirit enables the believer to pray.
 13. The Spirit enables the believer to worship in spirit and in truth.
 14. The Spirit leads the believer.
 15. The Spirit enables the believer to put fleshly deeds to death.
 16. The Spirit produces Christ-likeness in character and fruit in the believer's life.
 17. The Spirit gives a calling to the believer for special service.
 18. The Spirit guides believers into their ministry.
 19. The Spirit empowers the believer to witness.
 20. The Spirit imparts spiritual gifts to the believers as He wills.
 21. The Spirit will bring about the resurrection and immortality to the believers' bodies in the last day.
4. The Holy Spirit performs personal acts:
- a. The Spirit works
 - b. The Spirit searches
 - c. The Spirit speaks
 - d. The Spirit testifies
 - e. The Spirit bears witness
 - f. The Spirit teaches
 - g. The Spirit instructs

⁹² The Foundations Of Christian Doctrine. ISBN 949829 09 9.
Kevin Conner. <http://www.kevinconner.org/books-by-kevin/>

- h. The Spirit reproves
- i. The Spirit prays and makes intercession
- j. The Spirit leads
- k. The Spirit guides the believer into all truth
- l. The Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ
- m. The Spirit brings about regeneration
- n. The Spirit strives with men
- o. The Spirit convicts men
- p. The Spirit sends messengers from God
- q. The Spirit calls men into ministry
- r. The Spirit directs men in the service of Christ
- s. The Spirit also imparts spiritual gifts to the members of the Body of Christ⁹³

Of course the Holy Spirit does everything in love, we know that, but it is not the kind of 'love' that we attribute to Him.

He administers all God does for man in love, but **we do not see any emphasis at all on telling or giving some kind of kindly love** in the way we speak of it today.

On the contrary, by our new traditions, the Holy Spirit is 'not very Christ-like' or even very nice:

He wants to:

'convict (discipline) the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment' [John 16:7](#)

"Thank you Father for Your precious gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. To discipline and help us grow in You.

Thank you most precious Holy Spirit for all you do."

CONCLUSION:

Holy Spirit's work = no emphasis on telling man of God's love for them at all.

⁹³ The Foundations Of Christian Doctrine. ISBN 949829 09 9.

Kevin Conner. <http://www.kevinconner.org/books-by-kevin/>

CHAPTER 25. ACTS PREACHING

We saw that Jesus commissioned the disciples to:

*"Go and **make disciples** . . . baptizing them . . . teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you . . . remember, I am with you . . ."*

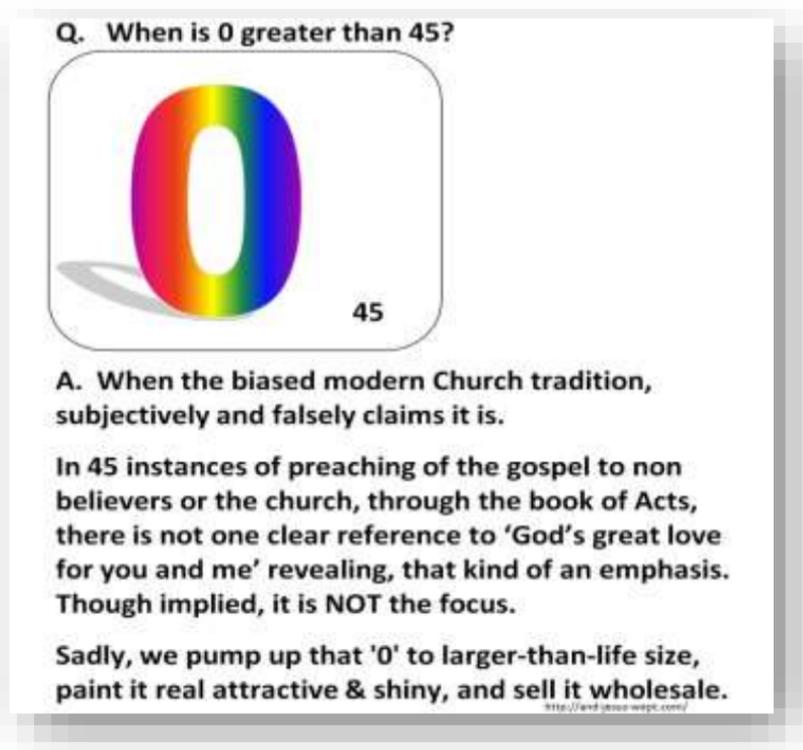
And then when we observe what the disciples then did as apostles in Acts, we find that they copied this command. **They did NOT go and preach that 'God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.'**

Some years ago, I wanted to know this for myself, so I went through the book of Acts and noted down every instance of the apostles preaching, teaching or sharing with unbelievers and believers, to look for each time that they spoke of 'God's love for you.'

I found there were 45 instances of preaching and NOT one instance even mentioned God's love.

That is: 0 - 45

This is the meme I put on Facebook to highlight our error:



As I was finishing this book, a friend I had been talking with, sent this to me:

W.E. Best – Born Again Phenomenon:

*The book of Acts records all the missionary journeys of the apostles, the establishment of many local assemblies (churches), and Peter's famous sermon on the day of Pentecost. **Not once in the entire***

book is anything said about God loving you and Christ dying for you.⁹⁴ (Emphasis added)

Best makes a correct observation about what the apostles preached in the book of Acts. Better than I, he even observed that the apostles did not declare that 'Christ died for you'. The apostles were fully Christ-focused, not man-focused, with God serving us, as we are.

Mike Perry also makes this observation:

In all of Paul's travellings in Acts, and his letters, and Peter as well – not once did they say to any individual 'God loves you' not once!

Look how Paul typically shares the gospel:

Acts 10:42 *"He commanded us to preach to the people and to warn them that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead."* NET

Acts 24:25 *While Paul was discussing righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for now, and when I have an opportunity, I will send for you."* NET

Paul preached on righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment in a way that frightened Felix.

Why do we consider such a thing to be wrong and that 'we might scare people off if we do that?'

Because we believe in this over-emphasis on God's love for us, we try to get them in the church first, and then later tell them the harder things. That is NOT what Jesus did. Jesus preached the hard things and as a result, those who refused to die to self would not accept His word and would not come in.



**What are we declaring the Gospel to be?
Sadly, quite a lot of what will just get them in.**

⁹⁴ <http://www.webbmt.org/books-html/Born-Again-Phenomenon.html>

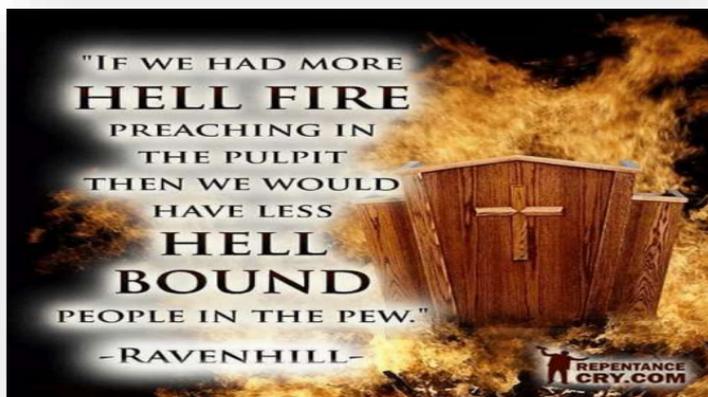
If we care to admit it, we do think that 'we just have to get them in and have them make some confession of faith' and that's enough.

And if anyone says anything about your sin being vile to a holy God and it causes a new prospect to back off, they are scolded because they have done the wrong thing and chased that person away.

Peter, is a friend who founded [Go the Extra Mile](#) which unapologetically raised money for Christian missions. A 'good' Christian leader from one of our 'good' churches came to Peter and advised him to dumb down the clear declaration on the website of it being a Christian charity because 'if you do, you will get a lot more people in.' Peter refused to do it.

Just like what the Church does. It 'dumbs down' the true message and required commands, while preaching God's love, just to get more in. And to keep them in.

No wonder the Western Church is full of unbelievers - those who came in because 'God loved them so much,' but their sin was never dealt with.



It reminds me of the young couple with the *Children of God* sect, I met in the 1970's. They told me that they used sex to get people in. Really! We are not much better and the result is virtually the same - a Church full of 'Christianized non-Christians.'

We preach all the advantages of being a Christian - that's preaching idolatry! We are to be telling people that they have sinned against the Holy God of the universe and need to **repent**.

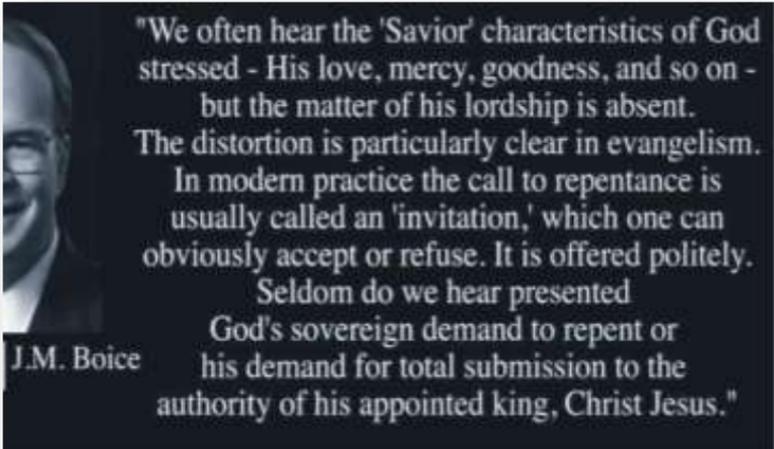
We must introduce people to the Holy Creator and Divine Judge, so that they recognize their sin, repent and be saved. If we emphasize God's love for them, they come in to be loved by God, this is a selfish reason. It could well be argued that this is a form of idolatry - 'self wants to be loved by the Great God' but not serve that same Great God.

Why do we think preaching God's love is the basis of our evangelism when the apostles did NOT? Think

about that! Why have we made it the major element in evangelizing?

We need to completely overhaul our evangelism mentality, tactics and gospel tracts.

Consider the words of J. M. Boice:



Yes, that is a far more Biblical perspective.

Can you now see that this is NOT what the Bible tells us to do? God specifically told us to preach 'repentance.'

[David Pawson](#) states this:

'Christians in the New Testament only talked about God's love among themselves; that neither Jesus nor the apostles ever preached it publicly'⁹⁵

Christians 'talked about it among themselves'.

Just like in John 3:16; and 'God is love' and 'lavished His love on us' in 1 John, is John writing to 'the church'.

No, when you share the gospel with an unbeliever, don't tell them that God loves them (unless maybe they are a very broken person) that only reduces your effectiveness and encourages that person to 'buy into a good deal' something that is focused on them rather than on the Holy Gracious God.

Tell them about the great Creator God who is totally holy, who calls them to repent of their rejection of Him, and the evil things they do daily. God was so good that He even sent the Only possible sacrifice that could save mankind - His only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Acts preaching = no mention of preaching God's love for you.

⁹⁵ <http://davidpawson.org/resources/series/what-about-john-316>

CHAPTER 26. PAUL'S 'IMPORTANT POINTS' - GOSPEL

Did Paul Preach God's Love?

No, he basically taught repentance, just as he reminded the leaders of the church at Ephesus:

Acts 20:20 how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of **repentance toward God** and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. ESV

He **emphasized** the rulership of God:

Acts 28:23 ...When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the **kingdom** of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both **from the Law of Moses** and from **the Prophets**...

31 proclaiming the **kingdom** of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance. ESV

23 expounding, testifying fully the **reign of God**
31 preaching the **reign of God**

Young's Literal Translation

23 he explained the **Reign of God** to them

31 preached the **Reign of God**

Moffat's NT

There are only 32 times that I could find that Paul **mentions** God's love for us. He did not preach or teach about the love of God for us, as a subject or a teaching of itself. Here are a few examples:

In a general letter greeting:

Rom. 1:7 To all in Rome **who are loved by God** and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. NIV

While describing growth through perseverance:

Rom. 5:5 And hope does not disappoint us, because **God has poured out his love** into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

NIV

Rom. 5:8 But God demonstrates **his own love for us** in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. NIV

While speaking of joyful victory in persecution and love for one another:

Phil. 2:1 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from **his love**, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion.. NIV

While speaking of walking in unity:

Col. 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and **dearly loved**, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. NIV

As part of the salutations or Christian greetings in a letter:

1Thess. 1:4 For we know, **brothers loved by God**, that he has chosen you NIV

Included in his request for them to stand firm in the faith:

2Thess. 2:16 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, **who loved us** and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope... NIV

In a description of how God had taken us from a sinful life and washed us clean for Himself:

Tit. 3:4 But when the kindness and **love of God** our Savior appeared... NIV

Do you notice how these are all 'a mention', when speaking on another subject?

The complete list of 32 instances are in the endnotes here^{viii}

What Did Paul State Were The More Important Aspects Of The Gospel?:

1Cor. 15:1 *My friends, I want you to remember the message that I preached and that you believed and trusted. 2 You will be saved by this message, if you hold firmly to it. But if you don't, your faith was all for nothing. 3 I told you **the most important part of the message** exactly as it was told to me. **That part is: Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures say. 4 He was buried, and three days later he was raised to life, as the Scriptures say.***

5 Christ **appeared to Peter, then to the twelve.**

6 After this, he **appeared to more than five hundred other followers. Most of them are still alive, but some have died.** 7 He also **appeared to James, and then to all of the apostles.**

Nothing about God's love for us, let alone 'great' love for us and 'a wonderful plan for our lives.'

To Timothy, Paul also says:

1Tim. 2:4 God wants everyone to be saved and to know **the whole truth, which is,**

5 **There is only one God, and Christ Jesus is the only one who can bring us to God. Jesus was truly human, and he gave himself to rescue all of us.** 6 **God showed us this at the right time.** CEV

The 'whole truth' that Paul states here, that he puts in it's barest form, does not include what we believe to be THE most foundational truth - God loves us.

Why?

And in the next chapter, Paul describes the 'Great Mystery' of our religion:

1Tim. 3:16 Here is the great mystery of our religion: Christ came as a human. The Spirit proved that he pleased God, and he was seen by angels. Christ was preached to the nations. People in this world put their faith in him, and he was taken up to glory. CEV

And in the next chapter, Paul says to Timothy:

1Tim. 4:6 If you teach these things to other followers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus. You will show that you have grown up on the teachings about our faith and on the good instructions you have obeyed. CEV

So, Paul in this letter of instruction for Timothy doing pastoral work, says nothing about 'God loves you' as part of the instruction for Timothy or for his congregation. But says '**If you teach these things to other followers, you will be a good servant of Christ' and 'You will show that you have grown up on the teachings about our faith.'**

The only reference to God's love in this letter, was in the introduction(1:14) where Paul **mentions only**, that God loves him.

There are however, about 24 verses where Paul says something that is hard or unpleasant - you know, the kind of things that would provoke a reaction from us like 'well, that's not a very nice thing to say' or 'that was unnecessary' or 'we need to encourage people' or 'we need to be more Christ-like'. Ignoring of course, the fact that Paul was being completely Christ-like in this way. Which is unlike us.

Let us look briefly at these 24 harsh or unpleasant things that Paul says, so that you get a clear idea of how you have believed a lie about how much the Bible says that God loves us, but at the same time, have failed to see not-nice things clearly stated.

I will use the NIV for these because so many people use that version, so these are the very words they read but do not see:

1Tim. 1:3 *As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may **command** certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer*

1Tim. 1:7 *They want to be teachers of the law, **but they do not know what they are talking about** or what they so confidently affirm.*

1Tim. 1:9 *We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,*

1Tim. 1:15 *Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--**of whom I am the worst.***

1Tim. 1:20 *Among them are **Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.***

1Tim. 2:9 ***I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes,***

1Tim. 2:11 ***A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.***

1Tim. 2:12 ***I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.***

1Tim. 2:14 *And Adam was not the one deceived; **it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.***

1Tim. 4:11 ***Command** and teach these things.*

1Tim. 5:6 *But the widow who lives for pleasure **is dead even while she lives.***

1Tim. 5:8 *If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family,*

he has denied the faith and **is worse than an unbeliever.**

1Tim. 5:9 *No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, **10** and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.*

1Tim. 5:13 *Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, **but also gossips and busybodies**, saying things they ought not to.*

1Tim. 5:20 *Those who sin are to be rebuked **publicly**, so that the others may take warning.*

21 I charge[command] you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.

1Tim. 6:4 *he is conceited and understands nothing.* He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions

1Tim. 6:9 *People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.*

1Tim. 6:13 *In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, **I charge[command] you 14** to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

1Tim. 6:17 *Command those who are rich in this present world **not to be arrogant** nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.*

18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, **and to be generous and willing to share.**

NIV

Paul does a lot of **commanding** here, that would not be tolerated by Christians these days.

How gutless and weak we are, especially pastors and elders.

He **hands people over to Satan to be taught a lesson** (that too sounds very much like the 'God of the OT').

He would be sacked today, by us, the gutless, politically correct Christians of the 21st century.

Consider the words of Dr Michael Brown who wrote about the weakness of pastors recently in an article titled:

[Too Few Pastors Spoke Up. It's the Real Reason We're in This Mess Today](#)

...But I am talking about pastors and leaders becoming prophetic. I am talking about us speaking the truth in love, regardless of cost or consequence. Confronting sin in the church as well as in the society. Conforming to the image of God rather than the image of the world. Concentrating on obedience more than relevance, on pleasing God more than entertaining people...

I've had publishers tell me, "Your book is great, but we can't possibly touch it."

I've had PR firms tell me, "This is too hot a topic for us today."

*I've had major Christian ministries say, "There's no way we can go near this. It's way too controversial..."**Yet so much of this has happened because the Church has been largely silent.**⁹⁶*

(Emphasis added)

Continuing on with Paul.

He **tells women to be submissive** and generalizes terribly by saying that women with free time are prone to gossiping. Whoa! That would tear our snowflake churches apart, sending people scuttling off in all directions in search of their 'safe places.' (I make no comment on the two sides of the debate about women preaching in the Church, I only highlight some things Paul said that would not be tolerated today.) Women would leave (along with a bunch of sissy men whose main aim in life is to protect the rights of every seemingly victimized group, rather than confront the affront to God.) Paul would be condemned for being so sexist and so offensive. Oh, and not being 'like Christ.'

To those who sin, he says to **rebuke in public.**

We, are virtually forbidden from rebuking a sinner in private, but he says do it in public. This is now the ultimate sin in the modern Church. We are far, far from this command.

He confesses to being **the worst of sinners**, which by our measure is so negative - putting himself down and failing to understand how special he is, which might offend someone who struggles with a low self-esteem.

⁹⁶ <https://stream.org/pastors-spoke-real-reason-mess-today>

And then Paul says that some are **conceited and ignorant**. That is, those:

1Tim 6:3 . . . people will teach what is false and will not agree with the **true teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ**.

That is you.

Paul is speaking to us. We change **the true teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ** and replace it with a Sola Affectus gospel. We teach and push things that are not in the Bible. Paul is speaking to us.

So, getting back to the original question - why is God's love missing from what Paul preaches, when we believe it is so very important?

The simplest answer and a reasonable assumption surely would have to be that, **either, Christians do not read their Bible or they are so conditioned by the traditions of men, that they cannot even see what is written in black and white. Even most pastors.**

Or they are people who know the truth but dishonestly push a 'nice gospel' just to get more people into their church. Oh, what lengths we will go to, to get more people into 'MY' church.

Beware pastors and church leaders.

People, beware of your leaders, of pastors who give up on obeying their conscience in the seemingly small things. They are far more likely to sin in greater things simply because their hardened heart is less restrained over all.

2Cor. 4:4 *The god who rules this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers. They cannot see the light, which is the good news about our glorious Christ, who shows what God is like. 5 We are not preaching about ourselves. **Our message is that Jesus Christ is Lord**. He also sent us to be your servants.*

Paul preaches 'Lord', not 'love'.

Yet, we preach 'love' and 'barely Lord'. Why?

We reject the nagging doubts, because surely it could not be wrong, everyone else does it too, even the pastors.

Moving on, Paul says he is called to do what?:

Rom. 1:1 *Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, **called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3 regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of***

David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. 5 Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. NIV

Again, nothing about God's love for us.

And further on in verse 16, Paul says it is this gospel that saves:

***Rom. 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. **17** For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”*

So, we do not come to God because **He loves us and accepts us**, we come to **repent and die to self** - a life dedicated to God.

And in verse 17 we are told it is by faith (not just a 'relationship with God'.)

***Rom 1:17** For in **the gospel** the **righteousness of God is revealed**—a righteousness that is **by faith from first to last**, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”*

Oh, how we are fixated on 'a relationship with God'. We love to elevate it as the only really important thing or the most important aspect of being a Christian.

We reject the idea of having a 'church-going head knowledge' but go on and live that very way, with a little daily prayer and Bible reading thrown in - it allows us to live relatively freely from any real demands. We do not really have to give up sin and BE holy, we watch filth and rubbish on TV, we hold onto the unforgiveness as long as it is not obvious to others etc.....

Where is it really at for Paul?:

***1 Cor. 2:1** And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. **2** For I resolved to **know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.** **3** I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. **4** My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, **5** so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.*

We need to be like Paul and resolve to know nothing else and preach nothing else, not even 'love' but Christ and Him crucified.

CONCLUSION:

☒ What Paul said were the important points of the gospel = no emphasis on God's love for us at all but a certain emphasis on repentance, the rulership of God and Christ crucified.

Again, yes God love us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

See how Scripture does not show an emphasis on God's love for us, unlike what we 'sort of, kind of remember' it does.

CHAPTER 27. BASIC DOCTRINES OF HEBREWS 6

The outlined doctrines of Hebrews 6 are often held up as the basic doctrines to be taught to new Christians. It seems to be a short list to me, however, what does it tell us about this question?:

Heb. 6:1 *Therefore we must progress beyond the **elementary instructions** about Christ and move on to maturity, not laying this foundation again: **repentance from dead works** and **faith in God**, **2 teaching about baptisms**, **laying on of hands**, **resurrection of the dead**, and **eternal judgment**.*

Net Bible

God's love for us is not even mentioned here - **it is less than a basic teaching. Hear that? Less than elementary teachings.** It is so basic that it is not even listed in the **baby food section**.

But we keep going back to it, over and over again - it's an addiction.

Even when we are not talking or preaching specifically about God's love for us, we keep coming back to it, by adding it to the end of our preaching about most everything else - troubles, trials, worship, servanthood, church, ministry.....

This is not discipleship! Discipleship challenges people to grow up. This is weekly therapy for those whom you want to keep coming.

We somehow came to the strange belief that everyone is fragile and must be handled with kid gloves. Jesus and Paul did not. Yes indeed, we have been 'conformed to this world' and it's 'victim mentality.'

We are teaching things to our people, even those 50 years in the faith, that is less than the most basic foundations. **We think we are spiritual people, but we teach and dwell on things that are lesser than the 'milk of the Word.'** We expect this '**Sunday school theology**' to grow them in Christ and maturity?

We need to do what the next verse tells us:

Heb. 6:3 *Let's grow up, if God is willing.* CEV

And that means the pastors and leaders, before we even think about the congregation.

CONCLUSION:

☒ Basic doctrines of Hebrews 6 = no mention of God's love for us, let alone an over-emphasis.

CHAPTER 28. EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

Let's look at the early Church Fathers' writings to see if they taught 'God's great love for us.'

Obviously, these writings are not Scripture and many of the Church Fathers had some less than evangelical positions, but it will give us an idea of how important they thought this kind of thinking was.

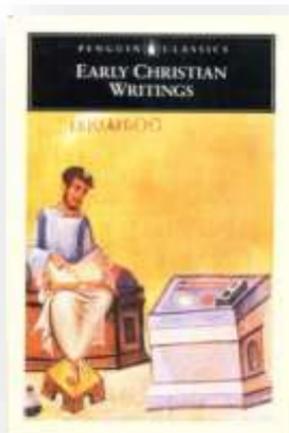
The Apostolic Fathers:

Clement of Rome, Mathetes, Polycarp, Ignatius, Barnabas, Papias (95–120AD), Justin Martyr, Irenaeus:

- Clement 80-140AD
- Letters of Ignatius of Antioch 105–115AD
- Polycarp to the Philippians 110 –140AD
- Letter of Barnabas 80-120 AD
- Martyrdom of Polycarp 150-160 AD
- Letter of Mathetes to Diognetus 130-200 AD
- The Didache 50-120 AD

I bought *Early Christian Writings*, a book of these writings many years ago.

It has 199 pages. When I remove from that count, all the pages of the introduction of the book, the background descriptions of these works, added notes, maps and blank divider pages, we are left with 125 pages.



I have not gone through these works meticulously to find all references to God's love for us, but using an online version, did a basic word search on the term 'love' and read the context of each, to find those related to God's love.

1 in 125: Out of the volume of these writings - 125 pages of small text, **all that I could find was one reference to God's love for us:**

[Letter of Clement to the Corinthians:](#)

CHAPTER 49 -- THE PRAISE OF LOVE.

Let him who has love in Christ keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the [blessed] bond of the love of God? What man is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be

*told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love bears all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base, nothing arrogant in love. Love admits of no schisms: love gives rise to no seditions: love does all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. **In love has the Lord taken us to Himself. On account of the Love he bore us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave His blood for us by the will of God; His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls**⁹⁷.*

So, for the Early Church Fathers, the rate seems to be around: 1 in 125 = **0.8%**

That rather simplistic method of calculation gives us a similar percentage to the NT occurrences - which was 1.1%.

What about **The Didache**?

The Didache also known as 'The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles' 50-120AD, is a brief anonymous early Christian treatise, dated by most modern scholars to the first century.

It outlines the basic rules for the Christian way of life:

The Didache:

- Chapter 1. The Two Ways and the First Commandment.
- Chapter 2. The Second Commandment: Grave Sin Forbidden.
- Chapter 3. Other Sins Forbidden.
- Chapter 4. Various Precepts.
- Chapter 5. The Way of Death.
- Chapter 6. Against False Teachers, and Food Offered to Idols.
- Chapter 7. Concerning Baptism.
- Chapter 8. Fasting and Prayer (the Lord's Prayer).
- Chapter 9. The Eucharist.
- Chapter 10. Prayer after Communion.
- Chapter 11. Concerning Teachers, Apostles, and Prophets.
- Chapter 12. Reception of Christians.
- Chapter 13. Support of Prophets.

⁹⁷ From an online version of this letter:

<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/1clement-roberts.html>

Chapter 14. Christian Assembly on the Lord's Day.

Chapter 15. Bishops and Deacons; Christian Reproof.

Chapter 16. Watchfulness; the Coming of the Lord.



Again, these writings and teachings are not Scripture, but they give us a some idea of 1st century Christianity.

Most certainly there is no emphasis on God's love for us, **it is not even mentioned**, but there is plenty about our responsibilities, just as Scripture does.

The Didache = 0%

CONCLUSION:

Apostolic Fathers = No emphasis on God's love for us.

CHAPTER 29. CHURCH HISTORY

Here are just a few thoughts from prominent preachers and scholars through-out Church History:

Notice here that **Ignatius** while mentioning the love of Jesus entreats them to hold to truth, he then goes on to warn of mixing our own ideas of who Jesus is with heresy/poison. The very thing we do.

THE EPISTLE OF IGNATIUS - (c. 35 – c. 107)

TO THE TRALLIANS CHAPTER 6

ABSTAIN FROM THE POISON OF HERETICS

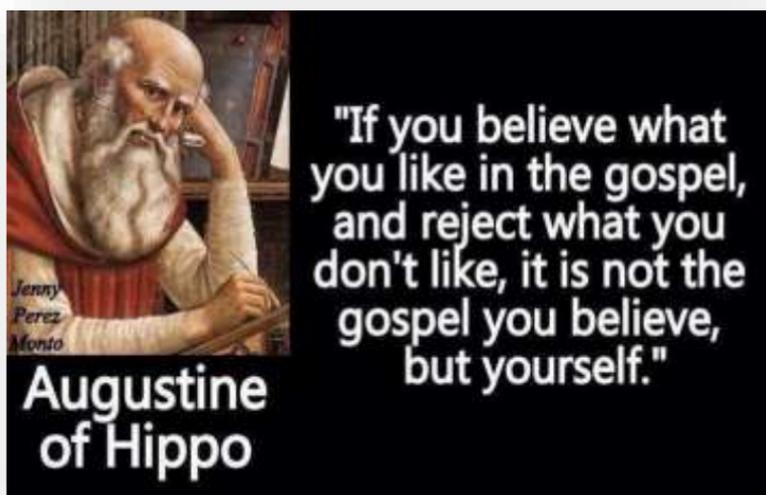
I therefore, yet not I, but the love of Jesus Christ, entreat you that ye use Christian nourishment only, and abstain from herbage of a different kind; I mean heresy. For those [that are given to this] mix up Jesus Christ with their own poison, speaking things which are unworthy of credit, **like those who administer a deadly drug in sweet wine, which he who is ignorant of does greedily take, with a fatal pleasure leading to his own death.**

I therefore, yet not I, out of the love of Jesus Christ, “entreat you that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.” For there are some vain talkers and deceivers, not Christians, but Christ-betrayers, bearing about the name of Christ in deceit, and “corrupting the word” of the Gospel; while they intermix the poison of their deceit with their persuasive talk, as if they mingled aconite with sweet wine, that so he who drinks, being deceived in his taste by the very great sweetness of the draught, may incautiously meet with his death. One of the ancients gives us this advice, “Let no man be called good who mixes good with evil.” **For they speak of Christ, not that they may preach Christ, but that they may reject Christ; and they speak of the law, not that they may establish the law, but that they may proclaim things contrary to it.**⁹⁸ Emphasis added

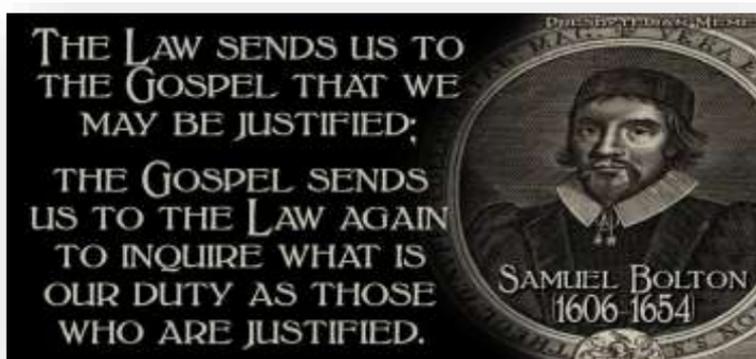
Yes, we preach a 'nice' Christ who is all caring in order to reject his wrath. We do indeed preach 'another' Jesus and reject the divine Jesus.

⁹⁸ <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/ignatius-trallians-roberts.html>

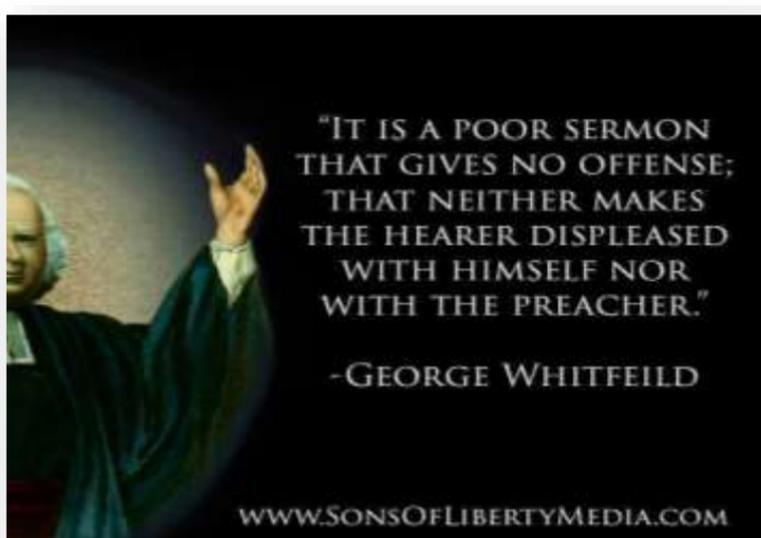
300's



1600's



1700's



1800's

Says Finney, "We learn from what has been said, one reason why there is so much spasmodic religion in the church. They have mistaken conviction for conversion, the sorrow of the world for that godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of. I am convinced, after years of observation, that here is the true reason for the present deplorable state of the church all over the land."



Joseph Parker (English preacher, 1830 – 1902):

"The man whose little sermon is 'repent' sets himself against his age, and will for the time being be battered mercilessly by the age whose moral tone he challenges. There is but one end for such a man – 'off with his head!' You had better not try to preach repentance until you have pledged your head to heaven."



"Here is the reason why we have such a host of stillborn, sinewless, rickety, powerless spiritual children. They are born of half-dead parents, a sort of sentimental religion which does not take hold of the soul, which has no depth of earth, no grasp, no power in it, and the result is a sickly crop of sentimental converts. Oh! the Lord give us a real, robust, living, hardy, Christianity, full of zeal and faith, which shall bring into the kingdom of God lively, well-developed children, full of life and energy, instead of these poor sentimental ghosts that are hopping around us." Catherine Booth



Charles H. Spurgeon (1856 –1892):

"Learn, then, that if you take Christ out of Christianity, Christianity is dead. If you remove grace out of the gospel, the gospel is gone. If the people do not like the doctrine of grace, give them all the more of it! Whenever its enemies rail at a certain kind of gun, a wise military power will provide more of such artillery. A great general, going in before his king, stumbled over his own sword. "I see," said the king, "your sword is in the way." The warrior answered, "Your majesty's enemies have often felt the same." That our gospel offends the King's enemies is no regret to us."

Billy Sunday (1862-1935)

"The backslider likes the preaching that wouldn't hit the side of a house, while the real disciple is delighted when the truth brings him to his knees."



J. D. Jones (1865-1942) said, "All the calls of the gospel are calls to hardship, to sacrifice, to battle. Christ would have no man follow him under the delusion that he was going to have an easy time of it."

A.W. Pink (1886- 1952):

"The nature of Christ's salvation is woefully misrepresented by the present-day evangelist. He announces a Savior from Hell rather than a Savior from sin. And that is why so many are fatally deceived,

for there are multitudes who wish to escape the Lake of fire who have no desire to be delivered from their carnality and worldliness."



The Gospel of Satan

The gospel of Satan is not a system of revolutionary principles, nor yet a program of anarchy. It does not promote strife and war, but aims at peace and unity. It seeks not to set the mother against her daughter nor the father against his son, but fosters the fraternal spirit whereby the human race is regarded as one great "brotherhood." It does not seek to drag down the natural man, but to improve and uplift him. It advocates education and cultivation and appeals to "the best that is within us." It aims to make this world such a comfortable and congenial habitat that Christ's absence from it will not be felt and God will not be needed. It endeavors to occupy man so much with this world that he has no time or inclination to think of the world to come. It propagates the principles of self-sacrifice, charity and benevolence, and teaches us to live for the good of others, and to be kind to all. It appeals strongly to the carnal mind and is popular with the masses, because it ignores the solemn facts that by nature man is a fallen creature, alienated from the life of God, and dead in trespasses and sins, and that his only hope lies in being born again



AW Pink

Reformed Spirit 

1834-1892

THEY MUST BE
**SLAIN
BY THE LAW**
BEFORE THEY CAN
BE MADE
**ALIVE
BY THE
GOSPEL**

- SPURGEON

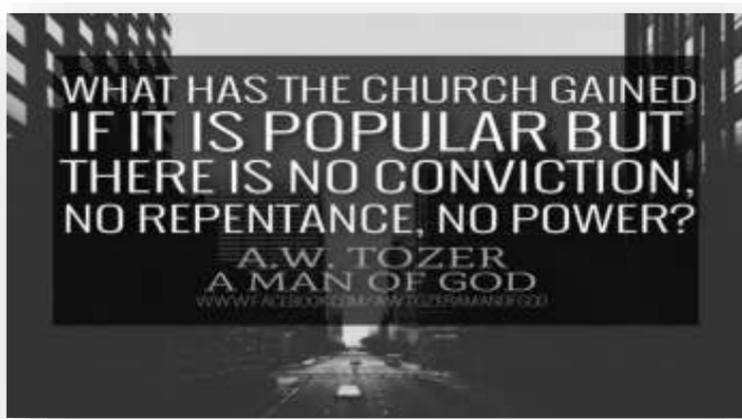
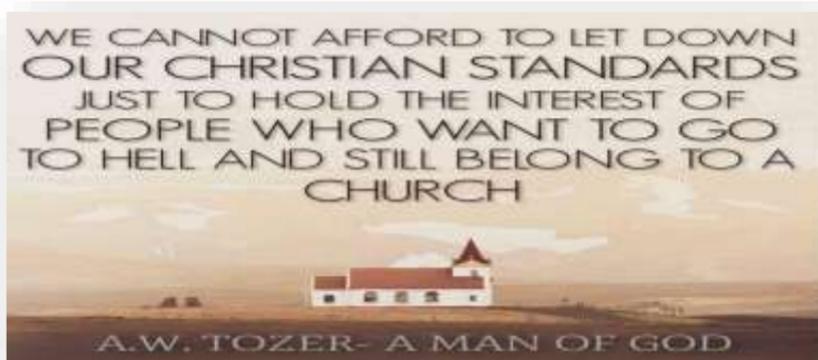
1816 - 1900

"THERE IS A COMMON,
**WORLDLY
KIND OF 'CHRISTIANITY'**
IN THIS DAY, WHICH MANY HAVE -
**A CHEAP CHRISTIANITY WHICH
OFFENDS NOBODY,**
AND REQUIRES NO SACRIFICE -
WHICH COSTS NOTHING, AND IS
WORTH NOTHING."

— J.C. RYLE

Preach the Gospel .org

1900's



A.W. Tozer (1896-1963):

"To accept Jesus and not demand a transformed man or woman will result in actually rejecting the Christ of the New Testament. All over the country, evangelists blaze abroad the message, 'Accept Jesus', which has become in our day nothing more than a theological zombie. It is a voice out of the tomb, which means nothing to this generation. The outworking of this 'receive' doctrine is nothing short of a tragedy."

"The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions."

"I wonder also how many Christians in our day have truly and completely abandoned themselves to Jesus Christ as their Lord. We are very busy telling people to "accept Christ"-and that seems to be the only word we are using. We arrange a painless acceptance."

"Our God tells His people that they need cleansing (Isa. 1:16-17). Too many church members have been starched and ironed without being washed. The cleansing process was never started right." Vance Havner, *When God Breaks Through*



The devil is not fighting religion; he's too smart for that. He is producing a counterfeit Christianity so much like the real one that good Christians are afraid to speak out against it.

Vance Havner

OH! TO REALIZE THAT PRECIOUS, NEVER DYING SOULS, ARE PERISHING ALL AROUND US!

ETERNALLY LOST!

AND YET TO...

FEEL NO ANGUISH!

SHED NO TEARS!

KNOW NO TRAVAIL!

HOW LITTLE WE KNOW OF THE COMPASSION OF JESUS!

THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

OSWALD SMITH



Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession.

Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

askdrbrown.org

Jim Elliot:

"We are spiritual pacifists, non-militants, conscientious objectors in this battle-to-the-death with principalities and powers in high places. Meekness must be had for contact with men, but brass, outspoken boldness is required to take part in the comradeship of the Cross. We are "sideliners" -- coaching and criticizing the real wrestlers while content to sit by and leave the enemies of God unchallenged. The world cannot hate us, we are too much like its own. Oh that God would make us dangerous!"

1912 - 1984

Francis Schaeffer:

"If I had one hour with every man, I would spend the first 45 minutes talking to them about God's law, and the last 15 minutes talking about His great salvation."

"Men haven't changed, not one bit. For a man to think that he can preach the Word of God today and not experience the true price of the cross of Christ in the sense of not being accepted by the culture ... any man who thinks he can speak truly of the things of God today into such a culture as our own and not have such words spoken against him is foolish. It is not possible. ...To think one can give the Christian message and not have the world with its monolithic post-Christian culture bear down on us is not to understand the fierceness of the battle in such a day as Jeremiah's or such a day as our own."

Leonard Ravenhill (1907 - 1994):

"When there's something in the Bible that churches don't like, they call it legalism."



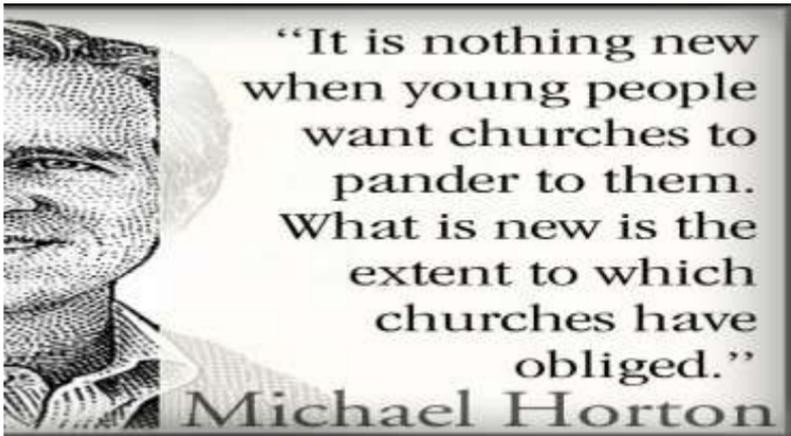
John Stott (1921 -2011):

“Tolerance is not a spiritual gift; it is the distinguishing mark of postmodernism; and sadly, it has permeated the very fiber of Christianity. Why is it that those who have no biblical convictions or theology to govern and direct their actions are tolerated and the standard or truth of God’s Word rightly divided and applied is dismissed as extreme opinion or legalism?”

“I hear some ministers today who continually preach only a positive message. To hear them tell it, every Christian is receiving miracles-everybody is getting instant answers to prayer-everybody's feeling good, living good, and the whole world is bright and rosy. I really wish all those good and healthy things for God's people, but that's not the way things are for a great number of very honest and sincere Christians. How sad to hear such shallow theology being pushed from pulpits today. It's an insult to a lowly Jesus who became poor, who died a failure in the eyes of the world. It is this kind of materialistic preaching that has so ill-prepared an entire generation of Christians to endure any kind of pain.” David Wilkerson



Current

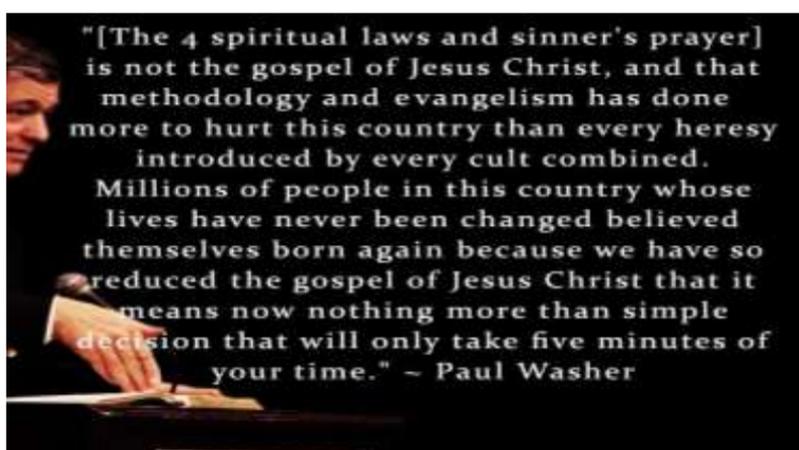


D. A. Carson:

'[T]his widely disseminated belief in the love of God is set with increasing frequency in some matrix other than biblical theology.... I do not think what the Bible says about the love of God can long survive at the forefront of our thinking if it is abstracted from the sovereignty of God, the wrath of God, the providence of God, or the

personhood of God—to mention only a few non-negotiable elements of basic Christianity. The result, of course, is that the love of God in our culture has been purged of anything the culture finds uncomfortable. The love of God has been sanitized, democratized, and above all, sentimentalized.

“People do not drift toward holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated.”



John MacArthur

Was Jesus Always Nice?

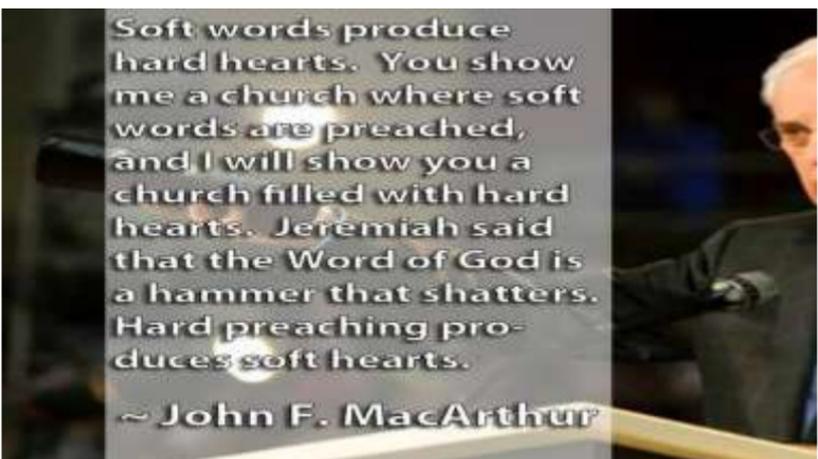
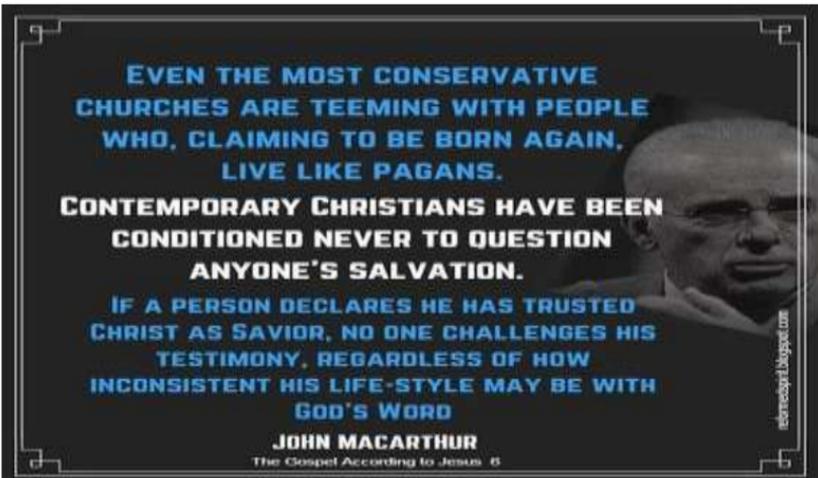
'I never could believe in the Jesus Christ of some people, for the Christ in whom they believe is simply full of affectionateness and gentleness, whereas I believe there never was a more splendid specimen of manhood, even its sternness, than the Savior; and the very lips which declared that He would not break a bruised reed uttered the most terrible anathemas upon the Pharisees.' –Charles Spurgeon

“Modern writers, agnostic academics, and liberal theologians *always* stress the kindness and gentleness of Christ. Their Jesus—not the One found in Scripture, but the one concocted from their own

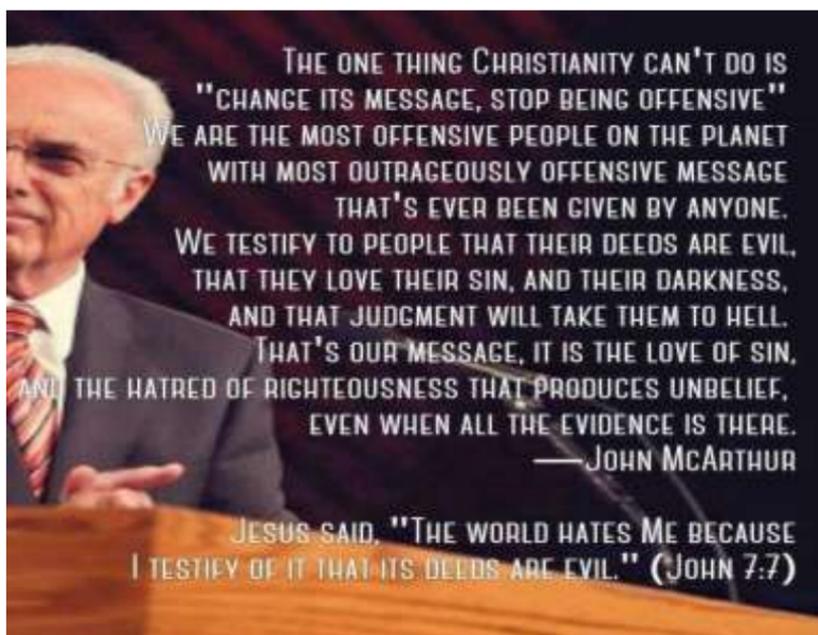
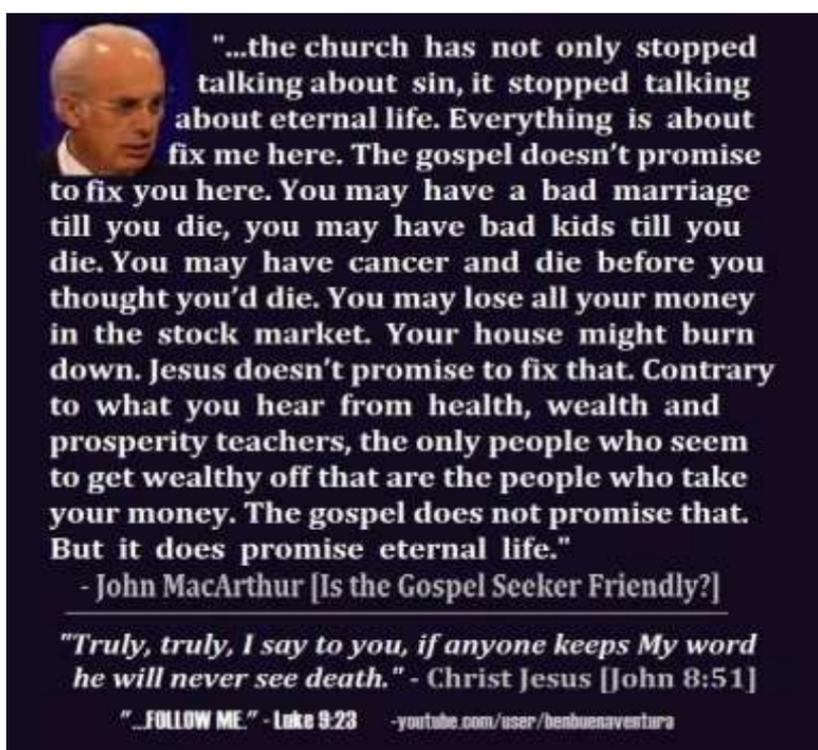
imaginations and preferences—is effectively an ideological and theological pacifist. He preached only love and self-sacrifice, never judged or discriminated, and wasn't dogmatic about the truth. In effect, the Jesus they've manufactured pleads "Can't we all just get along?" with people of all faiths.

That perspective betrays a deep and dangerous ignorance of the truth about Christ, the exclusivity of the gospel He preached, and how He confronted religious error. Even the kindest, gentlest shepherd sometimes needs to throw rocks at the wolves who come in sheep's clothing.

The Great Shepherd Himself was never far from open controversy with the most conspicuously religious inhabitants in all of Israel. Almost every chapter of the gospels makes some reference to His running battle with the chief hypocrites of His day, and He made no effort whatsoever to be winsome in His encounters with them. He did not invite them to dialogue or engage in a friendly exchange of ideas...."⁹⁹



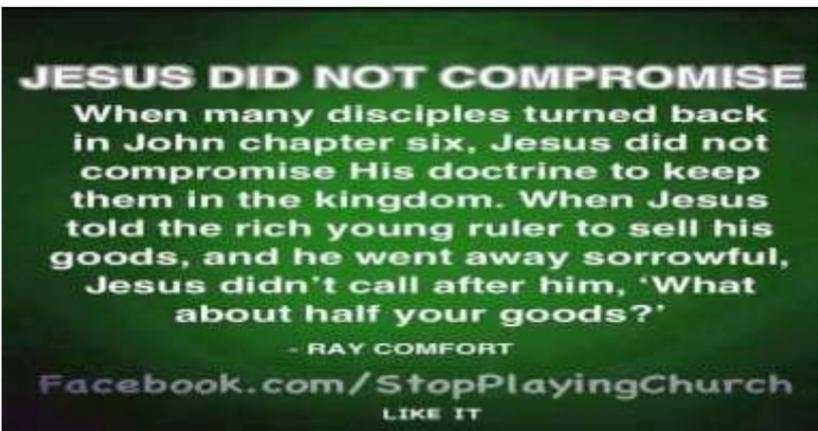
⁹⁹ <http://www.gty.org/blog/B130912/was-jesus-always-nice>



Dave Hunt (The Berean Call):

"So, you think I'm too negative, or I'm too concerned about apostasy, I haven't begun to be concerned. Look at Paul, three years, night and day I cease not to warn every one of you with tears. You haven't seen me crying and warning like that, night and day. Do you think I've got a one track mind, that this is my only message? No, I talk about all kinds of things. But when I consider the concern of the apostle Paul, because grievous wolves are going to enter into the church. That some of his own elders would begin to speak perverse things to draw disciples after themselves. Yes this concern is very much on my heart, but I must confess I fall far, far short of the concern that I ought

to have, and it really is a matter that grieves me much. The purity of the church, the purity of sound doctrine, because this is the container of truth. Jesus said, If you continue in My word, then you are My disciples, indeed you will know the truth, the truth will set you free. But we've gone away from the Word of God. Most of the epistles were written to correct error in the church. Is that not a concern that we ought to have today because it's far worse than it was in Paul's day? Not that we just want to hammer away on bad news, but we have a concern that is on the Lord's heart, He prayed for His own. I hope that we can arouse that concern in more people out there. Write letters, talk to your pastor, do something. Don't just take it in and shrug your shoulders, but do something to help in this area of the slide into apostasy."





Ray Shaw quotes¹⁰⁰:

Barna Research:

'Statistics from George Barna indicate that possibly as many as **65% of those sitting in church pews every Sunday are not truly born again.**

Billy Graham:

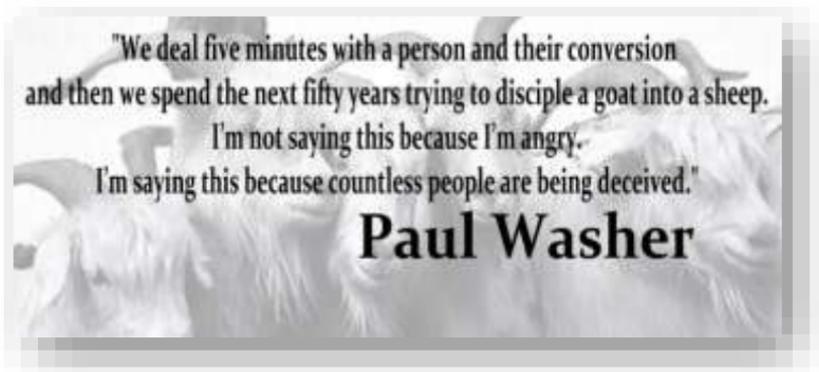
Billy Graham felt that only **one in four** who came forward at crusades were really saved.

A.W. Tozer:

A. W. Tozer felt that as many as **90% of church members** were unsaved.'

Leonard Ravenhill states:

"I don't believe that **5% of the Christians** in America are even born again, let alone filled with the Holy Ghost. And that goes for England. And for Australia."



¹⁰⁰ <http://www.aflameforchrist.org/pages.asp?pageid=41273>

“When a true revival of God's Spirit comes, ‘I expect millions will come to realize they’ve never been born of God.’”

- Richard Owen Roberts

Dr Everett Piper¹⁰¹ Walking in God's image:

“.....Yes, Christians in the Wesleyan tradition elevate love as evidence of God's grace in our lives. Loving God, our neighbor, and ourselves, however, demands we hate sin. Sin is anathema to love and love is anathema to sin. John Wesley taught over and over again that the walk of holiness: the obedient, “methodical” (thus, Methodist) path of sanctification, is one that condemns sin at every turn.....John Wesley never watered down scriptural authority and certainly never questioned the Bible's clear definition of right and wrong. “Oh, give me that book. At any price, give me the book of God. I have it: Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one book.”.....How can we do anything less? Selling our soul for the sake of cultural approval dishonors our mission, our message, and our very reason to exist. If we become nothing but pale copies of the secular world, why in the world would anyone want to buy what we are selling?

Anything short of a unified stand for the essentials of our faith will doom any denomination or church or college to the ash heap of history. Compromise will be our demise and, consequently, we will be “thrown out and trampled underfoot” by a culture that laughs at our irrelevancy. We are supposed to preserve

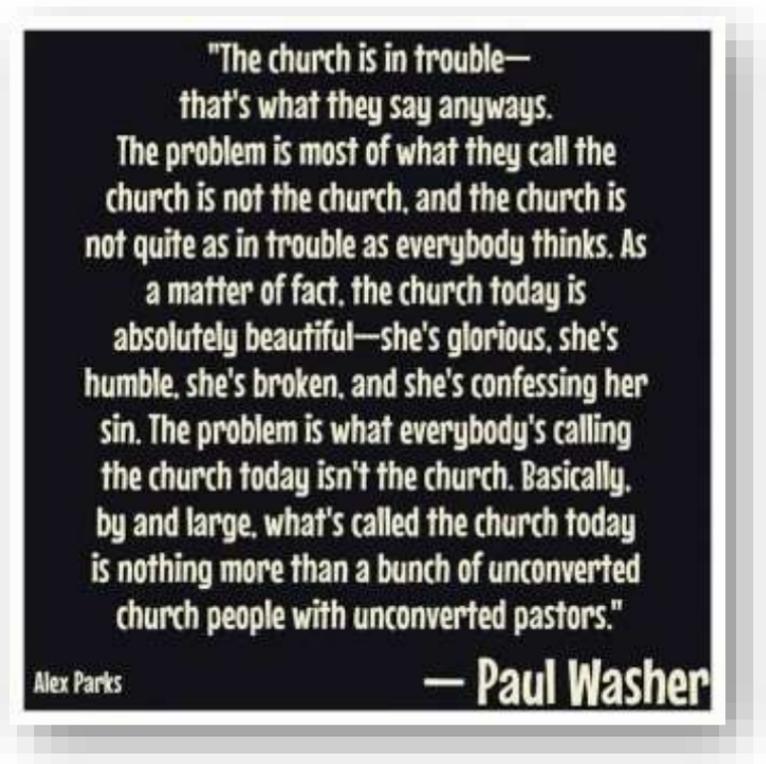
¹⁰¹ Everett Piper, president of Oklahoma Wesleyan University, is the author of “Not A Day Care: The Devastating Consequences of Abandoning Truth” (Regnery 2017).

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/jan/28/walking-in-gods-image/>

culture, not take part in its rot. We are supposed to shine a light on darkness, not have a conversation about it. We are supposed to confront sin, not capitulate to it.

May God help us if we have really come to the point where the church actually thinks our salvation comes from negotiating a compromise with a world that hates our Lord and His Gospel.

There is no "middle way" with Christ. He is the "only way."¹⁰²



CONCLUSION:

☒ Church History = no genuine movement in Church history had this over-emphasis.

Again, yes God love us. All I am saying is that we over emphasize this truth to the dumbing down of the other essential attributes and realities of God.

¹⁰²<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/jan/28/walking-in-gods-image/>

CHAPTER 30. SATAN'S AIMS DESCRIBED IN THE BIBLE

We really do not need to go into this thought too deeply. We only want to identify the basics.

If the Holy Spirit's role is to come and convict the world of sin, then obviously Satan's aim is to do something opposite - blind us to the evil of sin, to tempt humans away from 'God thinking', to destroy whatever is pure and good.

Basically, to rob, kill and destroy. To deceive us about who God is and what God says.

And he will do it with anything he can:

2 Cor. 4:4 *The god of this age has **blinded the minds of unbelievers** so they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
NIV

Satan uses many ways to do this and one of the main ways is to encourage the lie that God loves us soooo much, while we virtually ignore proper teaching on the holiness of God; of how evil sin is, how sinful we are and how terrible hell really is and many other truths of what God is really like.

And of course, this era is by no means the first time Satan has tempted man to be so self-centered. He tried and succeeded with Adam and Eve. But today, we have made an art form of excusing it to defend ourselves from the conviction of the Holy spirit.

It is not only the unbelievers that he has blinded, we too, want to be blinded in order to justify a comfortable life, with no real conviction, with no real discomfort and with no real sacrifice.

Satan used these vile temptations on Jesus¹⁰³ and Adam¹⁰⁴ – lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life¹⁰⁵.

When he used them on the modern church, we swallowed it hook, line and sinker. We love to be special, we love material prosperity and we pride ourselves on our higher, 'more evolved' education and modern ideas. We are not stuck in 'the past.'

¹⁰³ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+4%3A1-13&version=CEV;KJV;NIV;ERV>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=gen+3&version=CEV;KJV;NIV;ERV>

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A16+&version=CEV;KJV;NIV;ERV>

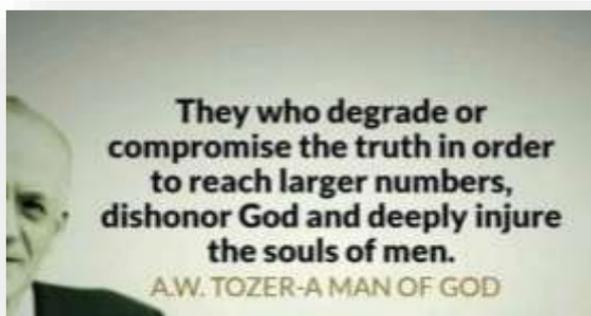
Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

I was discussing these things with another believer as I was writing this chapter. She challenged me and asked "Well, who is the Head of the Church?" I replied "Jesus is not the Head of your church." She was shocked to hear me say it. I continued, "Any pastor who declares from the pulpit that 'while he does not personally approve of homosexuality, yet homosexuals are welcome into his church and he will just love them as they are', Christ is NOT the head of that church."

She had no answer to that as the reality hit home.

That pastor, like so many today, is deceived by the evil one. The Bible clearly tells us to 'put the immoral one out from you' and to 'treat them as a tax gatherer.'

If Christ is not the head of your church/congregation, leave, get out now.



"If a man preaches grace without repentance, he succeeds only in causing many to march toward hell with complete peace."

CONCLUSION:

☑ Satan's Aims = yes, among Satan's aims, is to deceive people into thinking they are more special than they are. Beginning with Adam, he continues this strategy.

CHAPTER 31. ANY PROPHECY OF THIS TO COME?

Yes, there are prophecies concerning such things in latter times:

2 Tim. 3:1 *You should know this, Timothy, that **in the last days there will be very difficult times.***

2 For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. NLT

2 Tim. 4:3 *For the **time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching**, but having itching ears **they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions.*** ESV

The Church of Laodicea is recognized by many as the church of this current era:

Rev. 3:15 *"I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! **16** But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth!*

17 You say, '**I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!**' And **you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.** **18** So I advise you to buy gold from me—gold that has been purified by fire. Then you will be rich. Also buy white garments from me so you will not be shamed by your nakedness, and ointment for your eyes so you will be able to see.

Blind yes. But we have no idea of how spiritually blind and wretched we are, because our spiritual conceit is so strong. We are 'special' to God and nothing can shake that belief.

Notice here how Jesus is on the outside of the Church, not the inside.

So it is today.

CONCLUSION:

Are there prophecies of such things coming = yes.

CHAPTER 32. ARE WE FULFILLING THESE PROPHECIES?

Yes, man has been fulfilling these aims of Satan and these prophecies throughout all of history. But in this final era, these attacks have been extremely successful against the whole Western Church, which then, has had a dramatic effect on the world Church.

As [Chek](#)¹⁰⁶, a friend and not-so-retired pastor said recently at a prayer seminar:

"I tell Chinese pastors, the West has nothing to offer you, do not look to them."

Tragically, Chek is right and unless your eyes are opened to see what we have become, you cannot understand such a statement.

When one considers these types of attacks on the early church, that we have forgotten about, we feel we know so much better than they, and surely we could not be deceived by such heresy. We consider the early forms of the concept of wrath as unworthy of God.

Note what **Tony Lane** says of **Marcion**, 144AD, in his chapter, *Wrath as an Aspect of God's Love*, [page 142](#)¹⁰⁷:

The second way, more sophisticated than philosophical denial, is the theological approach of Marcion, the Christian thinker who took the principle of Christological concentration with full seriousness, really believing that God is revealed only in Jesus Christ. Marcion differentiated between the wrathful God of justice revealed in the Old Testament and the merciful God of love revealed in those parts of the New Testament that remained after he had, as Tertullian put it, exercised textual criticism with the knife rather than the pen.[vii] Tertullian describes the Marcionite gospel in words that might well apply to much contemporary preaching: "a better god has been discovered, one who is neither offended nor angry nor inflicts punishment, who has no fire warming up in hell, and no outer darkness wherein there is shuddering and gnashing of teeth: he is merely kind. Of course he forbids you to sin – but only in writing."[viii] Tertullian is biting in his critique. Marcion views God as a being of simple goodness, to the exclusion of other attributes (like

¹⁰⁶ *Journey in Prayer* with Pastor Chek Chia goo.gl/nzxVNz

¹⁰⁷ goo.gl/Jc3VJD

*His wrath), which are transferred to the Creator God. **Marcion has removed from God "all functions involving severity or criticism."** But when Marcion's God delivers humanity, he rescues us from a rival God, the Creator God of the Old Testament. This rivalry must, says Tertullian, involve ancillary passions, such as anger, hatred, and displeasure. (Emphasis added)*

So, I ask you, what is different from Marcion's heretical beliefs as challenged by Tertullian here, and ours today?:

"a better god has been discovered, one who is neither offended nor angry nor inflicts punishment, who has no fire warming up in hell, and no outer darkness wherein there is shuddering and gnashing of teeth: he is merely kind. Of course he forbids you to sin – but only in writing."

Yes, we have turned Jesus into 'another Jesus' because we had itching ears to hear something nicer.

Having professed ourselves to be wise, we became fools and were doomed to repeat history.

If this does not frighten you in the least, you have not understood the depth of this error. Nor, how displeased God is by our willing embrace of a 'nicer gospel'. Our hard hearts did not want to die to self, or rouse ourselves to think critically and biblically about these things and persevere in the true Faith.

And again, **Tony Lane** says of another heretic - **Lactantius**, 313 AD, in his *Wrath as an Aspect of God's Love*, [page 142](#):

Interestingly, the idea that wrath is unworthy of God is nothing new. Lactantius in 313 or 314 wrote one of the very few Christian books devoted to this theme, his *De ira dei*. He begins by recording the opposition of Greek philosophers (Stoics and Epicureans) to the idea:

*Many persons hold this opinion, which some philosophers also have maintained, **that God is not subject to anger**; since the divine nature is either altogether beneficent, and that it is inconsistent with His surpassing and excellent power to do injury to anyone; or, at any rate, He takes no notice of us at all, so*

that no advantage comes to us from His goodness, and no evil from His ill-will.

And then of course we had the Latin and the Germanic Mystics.

Bernard of Clairvaux, 1090 - 1153 AD - *The History of Christianity*, page 260:

*Bernard (1090-1153) the Abbot of Clairvaux, was the most influential Christian of his age. He bridged two worlds: the ages of feudal values and of the rise of towns and universities. He was the first of the great medieval mystics, and a leader of a new spirit of ascetic simplicity and personal devotion. . . . Bernard wished to turn his back on the world and its comforts, and lead a life of prayer and self-denial. **He emphasized God's love and believed that Christians came to know God by loving him.** . . . His writings remain a source of comfort and inspiration to thousands of modern Christians.¹⁰⁸*

Yes, his writings do remain as a source for many today, but they are built on a false premise. They are gaining new popularity in this age of self, perfect to build on it, a Solar Affectus theology.

Mysticism is an attempt to have close communion directly with God, but much of its framework is unbiblical. The suffering Christ replaced God the Judge, and salvation was gained by a deep mystic experience. Do you see any similarities to the Christianity of today? A 'deep relationship with God' is of utmost importance; the aspect of 'God as a Judge' is largely dispensed with in favour of other preferred aspects of God's character.

If we could possibly step back and look objectively at what we do, we would see that much of our modern singing worship is based on this idea of 'a deep mystic experience' being the true validation of whether I am a Christian or not. We live in a era where the 'right' words are enough to validate anyone; our actions and obedience to God count little any more.

It is not a deep mystical experience with God that validates our salvation, or matters that much, because it can be false. It is **obedience** to God that is commanded and that is what matters:

John 15:14 *And you are my friends, if you obey me.*
CEV

¹⁰⁸ The History of Christianity (A Lion Handbook) Tim Dowley (Editor), Pat Alexander (Editor), page 260.

1 John 2:3 *When we obey God, we are sure that we know him.* **4** *But if we claim to know him and don't obey him, we are lying and the truth isn't in our hearts.* **5** *We truly love God only when we obey him as we should, and then we know that we belong to him.* **6** *If we say we are his, we must follow the example of Christ.* CEV

John 14:21 *Those who really love me are the ones who not only know my commands but also obey them. My Father will love such people, and I will love them. I will make myself known to them."* ERV

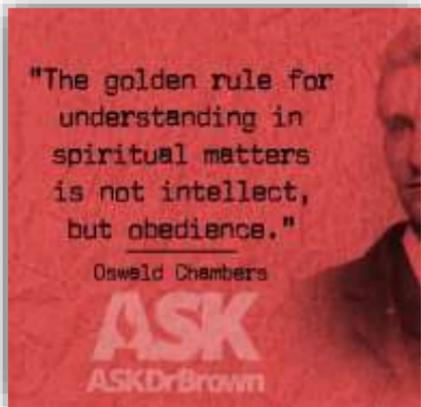
James 2:14 *My friends, what good is it to say you have faith, when you don't do anything to show that you really do have faith? Can that kind of faith save you?.....***17** **Faith that doesn't lead us to do good deeds is all alone and dead!** CEV

A proper and deep relationship with God results from obedience (because it causes reconciliation and salvation) not the other way around. If you are truly obedient to God, you WILL have a good, deep relationship with Him.

Whereas, we now have millions who have a so-called deep relationship with God - they sing in the worship time and feel warm-fuzzies, but there is little real obedience in their lives. They do not die to self, or give up running after prosperity, or defeat sin in their lives as a lifestyle, or share the gospel or spend quality time in the Word and in prayer.....

No, the greater priority in relationship with God, is **obedience to God.**

In a similar way, look at what Oswald Chambers says is the key to 'understanding spiritual matters':



We often quote 'If you forget history, you are doomed to repeat it' and go right on forgetting Church history thinking we are theologically superior, while repeating these very heresies.

We are more like the Marcionites, Lactantius and the Mystics of the 11th and 12th century, than the evangelical Church of 100 years ago who followed evangelical theology.

Moving on, - is there any evidence today, that **the world** and **the Church** are conforming to an over-emphasis on God's love, and a greater emphasis on self-love and affirmation? Yes, let's look at these briefly.

1) The World

You see, this big emphasis on 'God loves us soooo much,' does not come from the Bible; it comes from **Humanism, New Age and human nature.**

It just sounded so much nicer to be preaching the Gospel that way and made it much more 'acceptable' to people. It even sounded more sophisticated in the 20th century. After all, if we preach repentance and hell, that would make us look like silly people, and that of course, would not be good for the image of Christianity. Oh how carnal our thinking really is.

Let's look briefly at a few areas of interest.

Humanism

[The Humanist Manifesto II](#) of the 1962, fifth article:

THE INDIVIDUAL Fifth: The preciousness and dignity of the individual person is a central humanist value.

Individuals should be encouraged to realize their own creative talents and desires. We reject

all religious ideological, or moral

codes that denigrate the individual, suppress freedom, dull intellect, dehumanize

***personality.** We believe in maximum individual autonomy consonant with social responsibility.*

Although science can account for the causes of behaviour, the possibilities of individual freedom of choice exist in human life and should be increased.

¹⁰⁹ (Emphasis added)

That is where our over emphasis on 'God's love for me,' really started. Anti-God humanists and atheists told us that we MUST treat everyone 'nicely' despite their foulness of character and behaviour. And we believed it. We Christians, who came out of the world to be God's ambassadors, believed the lie of the world. That really is how silly this all is.

¹⁰⁹http://manybooks.net/pages/americanhumanistassociationother08humanist_manifesto_II/5.html

So, don't preach about sin, hell, judgment, and sacrificial holiness. Or if you do, you must keep it very 'low key', and also tell the people how much God loves them too, and wants to comfort them all along the way.

And you must tell people how valuable and special they are to the world.

It is easy to sell the Devil's methods to a people caught up in the flesh. Sadly, unlike Jesus and how He dealt with the Devil's methods of achieving the Kingdom on earth, we bought it 'lock, stock and barrel.'

The New Age

New Age teachings tell us that we are a god. That we are all moving toward godhood. We are 'special'.

New Age teaching says,

“Do not expose sin in anyone, it is an offense against the god person – the divine self. If you do, you are not in tune with the universe - or as we Christians say, 'you are not being like Jesus' or 'You should model Christ.'”

Model Christ? If Christians and pastors actually did model Christ, the Jesus of the Bible, we would not be in this mess. And they would lose their job fast, but oh how the gospel would be truly preached.

Human Nature

This is also, where our over-emphasis comes from.

We are rebellious humans who love our sin, we hate to have to give it up and serve God in lowliness. Self-centeredness comes naturally to us and that's why we were told to put the flesh to death. Daily.

In [1997, in the May issue of Family World News](#), I read this article on the neo-orthodox theologians influence, that gained a new power in the Christian world and Bible colleges:

In my days of being a theological student we had to examine the current theological views: Karl Barth, Neibuhr, Pannerburg, Black and Paul Tillich. We relished Tillich in his short and manageable books, "Shaking the Foundations" and "Courage to Be". The phrase Tillich left you with was "you are accepted".

I remember our theological lecturer raising the question of Tillich theory – “where is his doctrine of sin?” Tillich comes towards one, but it then becomes illusive. All seemed to be gathered up in the terms “the courage to be”, “you are accepted”, “unconditional acceptance”.

Then our lecturer in the subject of Pastoral Care taught us the latest counseling techniques.

One was by Richard Harris called "I'm OK, you're OK". It was the practical expressions of Tillich's theology "unconditional acceptance". It was madly popular with social workers through the 1970's and 80's. It saved no one.

Then in 1976, Paul Tillich suddenly died. Three weeks later his wife revealed that while proclaiming his theology from the pulpit in New York, he had been living an adulterous life for over 25 years. Paul Tillich's theory never quite came to the subject of repentance. Now we know why. Unconditional acceptance was meant to cover everything. Repentance – turning away from your sin was not really dealt with.

Today, Tillich's theory has become the popular view of the western world. I am accepted by God and mankind. God loves me unconditionally, therefore you must love or accept me unconditionally.

This is a welcomed thought for a grateful world. It means that God accepts me now in the thoughts and ways I am living. If the Bible challenges the way I am living and thinking, then the Bible should be ignored. Since God accepts me, he could only have created me to be able to enjoy living a life which the world accepts – even if the Bible and the Christian Church proclaims it sinful. The world has conceded to such thinking. Therefore, there is no more guilt. I can declare it – and the world will understand – though Christians may not.

Millions now embrace this thinking. It can be the mental deductions for "living together", defacto relationships, practicing homosexuality, and more. Homosexuals have embraced the theology. It suits their aggressive pursuit of activity. Guilt has been banished. They declare that they are free – but are they? Their lives tell us otherwise.

The Christian Church has been given the Good News of deliverance through Jesus Christ. It is the Commission of Jesus. We are to call the world to repentance, to turn from its ways and to return to God who made them. It is a radical remedy, so it is a remedy the world understands. To a world that considers SIN of NO consequence, repentance through Christ is its only hope and it is our message to them in this generation. (emphasis added)¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/21858/20020110-0000/www.pastornet.net.au/fwn/1997/may/art03.htm>

*Rev David Robson. Presbyterian Church of Australia
– Parish of Shoalhaven*

'I WILL live a life of shallowness, lukewarmness and deceit, and I will not talk about sin. Oh, and if there are those in the church who live in immorality, I will say nothing, I will just 'love them.'" (Yeah well, Jesus showed true love and warned them of hell.)
Everyone MUST be accepted as they are.
Don't you know that God loves everyone as they are?
So, you must accept me as I am, without judging me.

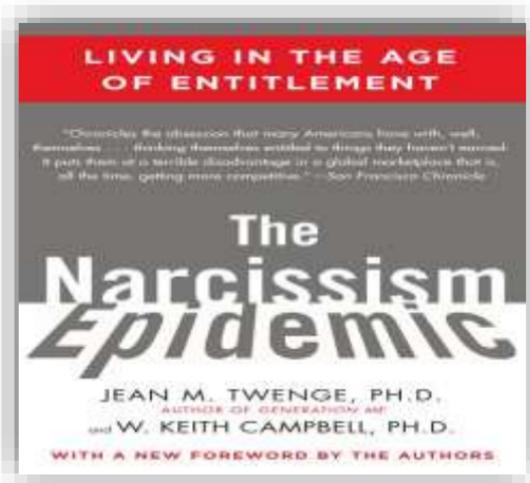
And that is why we hear so often the great copout misquote 'Judge not, lest you be judged'.
God might love you as you are, (though that statement is too simplistic to accept on face value) but if there is no real change after salvation, dare not presume you were saved at all.

Come on pastors, stop being gutless and do the job you were called to do. We have been warned over and over again through the years, by a brave voice calling out in the wilderness, somewhere, sometime, or that 'still small voice', but we refuse to change.
So you might lose your job. Big deal, Jesus and millions of others lost their lives not just their jobs.
"Oh, Father please deliver us from such persistent hard hearts."

So, is there evidence that our culture and Church is conforming to 'people will love only themselves?' [2Tim. 3:1](#)

Absolutely and the 'selfie' generation confirms it so.
Consider the research and work of two prominent doctors in the field:

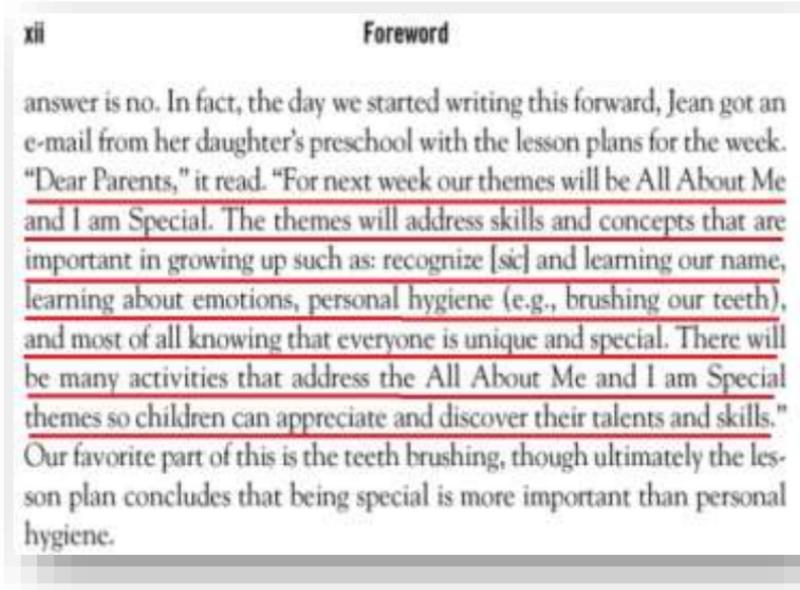
[The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement](#)



Published in April 2009

Narcissism—an inflated view of the self—is everywhere. Public figures say it's what makes them stray from their wives. Parents teach it by dressing children in T-shirts that say "Princess." Teenagers and young adults hone it on Facebook, and celebrity newsmakers have elevated it to an art form. And it's what's making people depressed, lonely, and buried under piles of debt.¹¹¹

A portion from the foreword of this book:



You get an idea of the problem by reading the chapter titles:

CHAPTER TITLES:

Introduction: The Growing Narcissism in American Culture

Chapter 1: The Many Wonders of Admiring Yourself

Chapter 2: The Disease of Excessive Self-Admiration and the Top Five Myths About Narcissism

Chapter 3: Isn't Narcissism Beneficial, Especially in a Competitive World?: Challenging Another Myth About Narcissism

Chapter 4: How Did We Get Here?: Origins of the Epidemic

Chapter 5: Parenting: Raising Royalty

Chapter 6: Superspreaders!: The Celebrity and Media Transmission of Narcissism

Chapter 7: Look at Me on MySpace: Web 2.0 and the Quest for Attention

¹¹¹ <https://www.amazon.com/Narcissism-Epidemic-Living-Age-Entitlement/dp/1416575995>

Chapter 8: I Deserve the Best at 18% APR: Easy Credit and the Repeal of the Reality Principle

Chapter 9: Hell Yeah, I'm Hot!: Vanity

Chapter 10: The Spending Explosion and its Impact on the Environment: Materialism

Chapter 11: Seven Billion Kinds of Special: Uniqueness

Chapter 12: The Quest for Infamy and the Rise of Incivility: Antisocial Behavior

Chapter 13: The Chocolate Cake Trap: Relationship Troubles

Chapter 14: All Play and No Work: Entitlement

Chapter 15: God Didn't Create You to Be Average: Religion and Volunteering

Chapter 16: The Prognosis: How Far, and for How Long. Will Narcissism Spread?

Chapter 17: Treating the Epidemic of Narcissism¹¹²

Psychologists now tell us that the popular practice of praising our children so much, is part of the problem. I was a part of that too, unfortunately.

About 20 years ago I was attending a church that met in a secondary school hall. It saddened me to see a big poster of the popular poem by Jessica Hickmott, for all the teens in the school to feed on.

Here are a few lines from it:

I AM SPECIAL

I see the positive side of me,

I believe I could do anything I put my heart to,

...I am a good person.

I am myself always,

I dream to become a superstar,

...I am superstar.

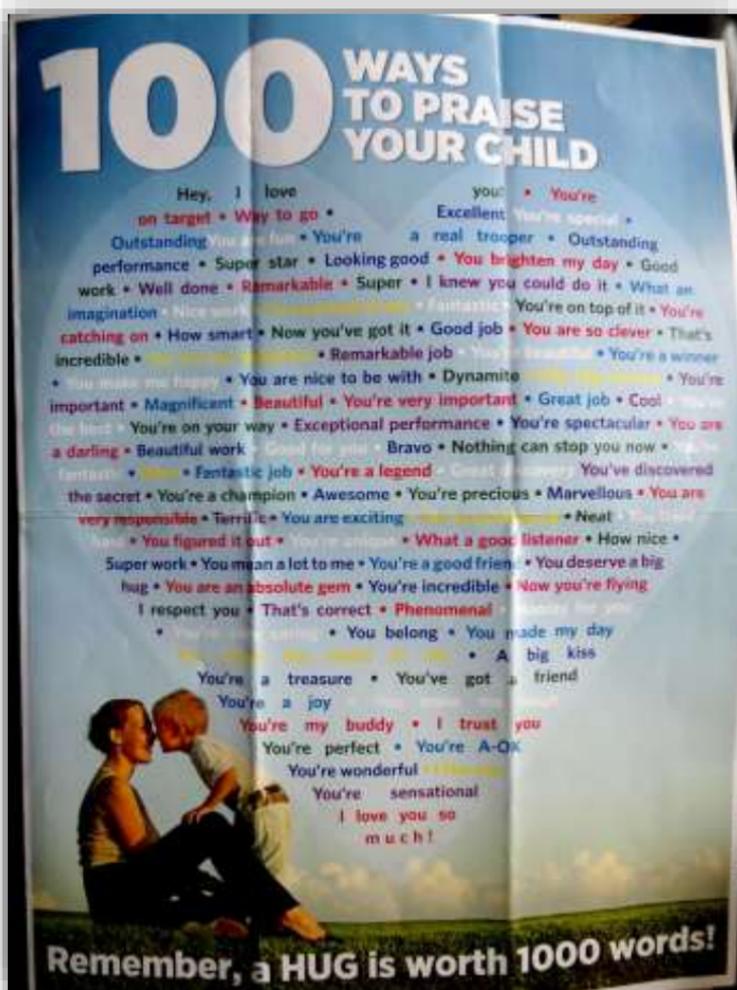
...I am special.¹¹³

A while ago I saw a local electoral campaign leaflet with this printed on the back. It was another sign of how deep this belief and practice is, for it to be on a political leaflet with seemingly no connection. It was just sentimentality and popular appeal.

So, I took a photo of it:

¹¹²https://books.google.com.au/books?id=wRSSXXqqEh8C&pg=PP1&pg=PP1&focus=viewport&hl=pt-BR&output=html_text

¹¹³ <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/i-am-special-2/>



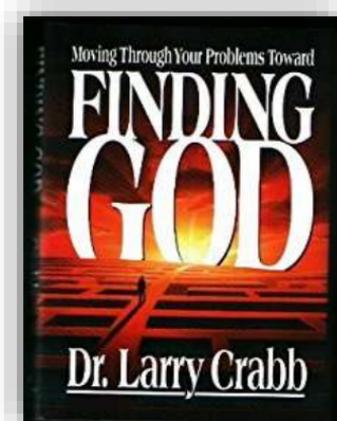
We adults too, ought to break the addiction to 'encouragement' and be cured of the allergy of 'correction'.

2) The Church

Then the question must be asked, have we been conformed to these things in the world?

Is the move to 'self-worship' in the world, influencing the Church?

Dr. Larry Crabb a leading Christian counselor thinks so.



It was about 25 years ago that I was discussing these things with someone who was constantly going to counseling and reading books about overcoming low self-esteem, yet constantly talking about God's wonderful love for us. "Oh you should read Larry

Crabb's book, *Finding God*¹¹⁴ she said and I was handed the book opened at page seventeen.

She has read it, knows what it says, but does not understand it. There is a veil over her eyes, and without some startling revelation, she will not get it. We are like that.

How much worse is the problem in the Church now than it was 25 years ago?:

Thankfully, many have heard our Lord's invitation to come as we are, with an ache in our souls that won't go away. As never before, the church is aware that its people are in pain. But this welcome sensitivity has backfired. Rather than drawing others, this sensitivity has made us more aware of how intensely we long to feel better about ourselves and more determined to find ways to do so! The spotlight has fallen on us as abused, wounded, needy people, and God has been cast as the great Higher Power, waiting in the wings for his cue to come heal our hurts and restore us to responsible living.

Feeling better has become more important to us than finding God.

Helping people to feel loved and worthwhile has become the central mission of the church. We are learning not to worship God in self-denial and costly service, but to embrace our inner child, heal our memories, overcome addictions, lift our depressions, improve our self-images, establish self-preserving boundaries, substitute self-love for self-hatred, and replace shame with an affirming acceptance of who we are. Recovery from pain is absorbing an increasing share of the church's energy. And that is alarming. Although the gospel does bless us with a new dignity that was meant to be enjoyed, it calls us to higher values than self-acceptance, values like turning the other cheek, esteeming others as greater than ourselves, going the second mile, enduring rejection and persecution, living not for the pleasures of this life but for those of the next one, and clinging to the promises of God when we don't feel his goodness. But these higher values, the kind that make people of whom the world is not worthy (Heb. 11:38), have fallen on hard times. We have become committed to relieving the pain behind our problems rather than using our

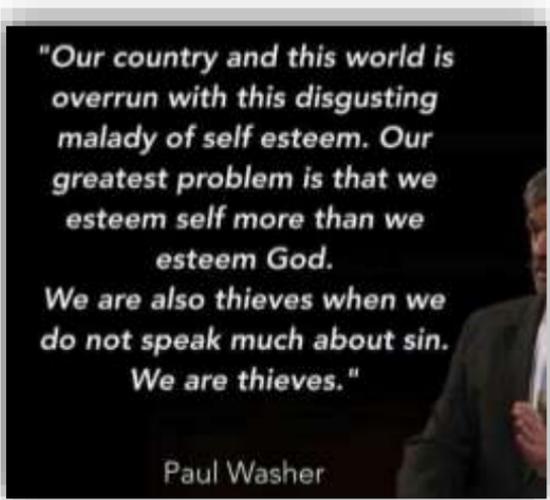
¹¹⁴https://books.google.com.au/books/about/Finding_God.html?id=RsxTSGiASEMC&redir_esc=y

pain to wrestle more passionately with the character and purposes of God.

Feeling better has become more important than finding God. *And worse, we assume that people who find God always feel better. As a result, we happily camp on biblical ideas that help us to feel loved and accepted, and we pass over Scripture that calls us to higher ground. We twist wonderful truths about God's acceptance, his redeeming love, and our new identity in Christ into a basis of honouring ourselves rather than seeing those truths for what they are: the stunning revelation of a God gracious enough to love people who hated him, a God worthy to be honoured above everyone and everything else. We have learned to praise God the way we tip a specially attentive waiter. Good treatment we accept, but exceptional treatment deserves special recognition. And certainly God qualifies for extra notice: he has gone to great trouble to feed our souls and bolster our self-esteem. We therefore leave him a big tip, feeling benevolent and noble, and he, in turn, beams with humble appreciation as he hears us say, "Well done! You have served us well."*

*But this is backwards! We have rearranged things so that God is now worthy of honor because he has honored us. "Worthy is the Lamb," we cry, not in response to his amazing grace, but because he has recovered what we value most: the ability to like ourselves. **We now matter more than God.*** (Emphasis added)

Then is it no wonder that we do not even truly know God anymore? How could we?



"Our country and this world is overrun with this disgusting malady of self esteem. Our greatest problem is that we esteem self more than we esteem God. We are also thieves when we do not speak much about sin. We are thieves."

Paul Washer

Nicolás Gómez Dávila was an interesting character and of the people of the post-modern era, he insightfully stated:

*"The only attribute that can without hesitation be denied man is **divinity**. But that sacrilegious pretension, nevertheless, is the ferment of his history, of his destiny, of his essence."*

"Humanizing humanity again will not be an easy task after this long orgy of divinity."

(Emphasis added)

Nicolás Gómez Dávila (1913-1994)

How profound.

Just like Adam, we really want to be gods.

Yes, the New Agers really do believe that they are a god, despite the vileness of mankind's sin. The Humanists believe they are a god, and can determine their own value system, while outlawing God.

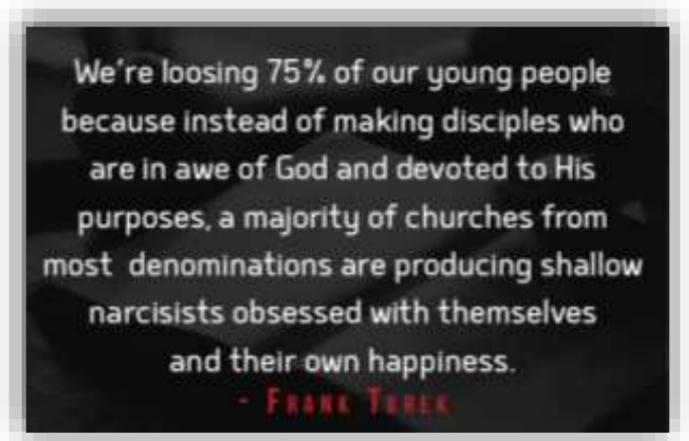
And we Christians too, have taken on their lies and believed that we are special. So special in fact, that we have become, kind of, well...divine, in a way. We feel that God is so 'in love' with us, so besotted with us, because He died for us.

Even though we continue to sin daily, we are determined to read the New Testament as saying that we really are special. Whatever happened to the idea that we are to humble ourselves now and God will exalt us in the end?

1Peter 5:6 And God will exalt you in due time, **if you humble yourselves** under his mighty hand.

NET

We are so very wrong.



We're losing 75% of our young people because instead of making disciples who are in awe of God and devoted to His purposes, a majority of churches from most denominations are producing shallow narcissists obsessed with themselves and their own happiness.

- Frank Tocco

Yes, we are 'producing shallow narcissists obsessed with themselves.'

That's why we hate correction, or being 'judged', we are essentially narcissistic, conceited children of God.

And why we want to continually hear about God's love, encouragement and care for us.

And that is also why we do not want any talk about sin or judgment - it reminds us that we are mere fallen humans and that we have an evil sin nature.

That's why we hate the idea of capital punishment, it reminds us of how sinful mankind is and that such punishment is for sinful creatures, such as we.

No, we do not want to be just a mere 'creature' we want to be soooo much more than that, even a little divine. We want to be a hero while despising the idea of being average. That's why we post so many silly 'self-potential' memes on Facebook.

That's why we have built a whole theology in our modern Church of how special we are. We over state verses that say that we are 'seated in heavenly places' and play down the verses about how we are 'slaves obeying as we ought'.

We refuse to allow anyone to 'judge' another, in any way shape or form, and then we force 'love is kind' into a context of God's judgment and discipline, to thwart it almost completely.

To humble ourselves in tears of repentance is too low for us. No, we would rather talk about how God loves us and wants us to have a 'good self-esteem.'

We feel so spiritual when we tell others that they are 'awesome' and we love them. We feel as though we have done a high good and a very spiritual thing.

We are merely 'drug addicts' on the mind-altering drug of 'God loves me soooo much.' In our state of stupor, we have no idea that our thinking and judgment is impaired and our vision is blurred. Our cognitive dysfunction intensifies our perceptions, reinforcing 'our truth' deep within. It causes an unsteady gait - we cannot walk spiritually straight. There are moments of euphoria, particularly when we participate in the Church 'concert' we call 'worship' or yet again, another alter call of emotion that will provoke no real change.

We need to go cold turkey and truly find God.

And if one silences a straight talker from exposing this sin of over emphasis on God's love, we feel so proud of doing the highest possible good, because Jesus would never correct wrong thinking.

Nonsense, we are **not** doing what Jesus would do at all.

We stand in God's way to protect our exalted 'Christian correctness.' Unaware, that political correctness is merely 'peer group pressure' for adults. 'Christian correctness' is NOT sanctioned by God! Though it certainly is by man.

If we do what we currently believe 'what Jesus would do' we will be most acceptable in the Church and considered to be a lovely Christian But, if you truly do '**What Jesus would do**' you will be shunned like a leper.

Again, let me quote **Søren Kierkegaard**, he hits the nail on the head when he said of Christians:

“The matter is quite simple. The Bible is very easy to understand. But **we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly.** Take any words in the New Testament and forget everything except pledging yourself to act accordingly. My God, you will say, if I do that my whole life will be ruined.” (Emphasis added)

Yes, that sounds like us.

I happened upon this devotional by Rick Warren:

[Personalize God's Word to Change Your Life](#)

OCTOBER 23, 2016

*How do you make God's Word personal? Try the **personalize-it method** of Bible meditation. Anybody can do it. You don't need any special tools or advanced theological training.*

You simply put your name in the place of pronouns or nouns in Scripture. For example, if I were personalizing John 3:16, I'd write something like this: "For God so loved Rick, he gave his one and only Son so that Rick would not perish but have everlasting life."

Am I really at the centre of God's universe?

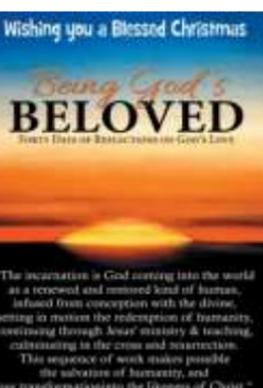
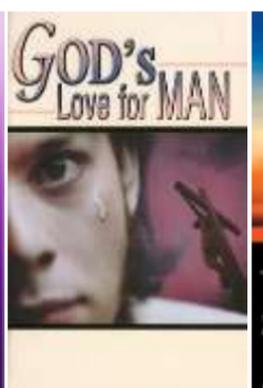
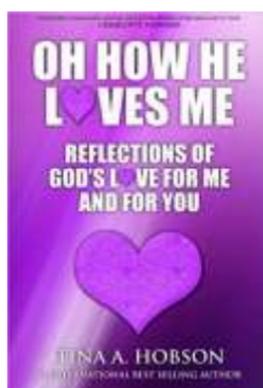
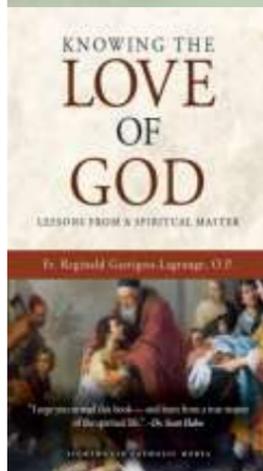
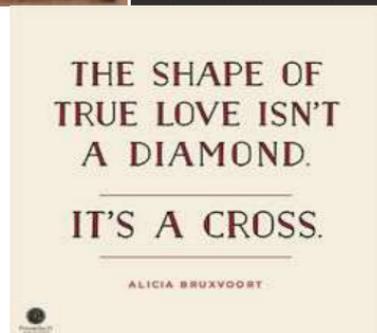
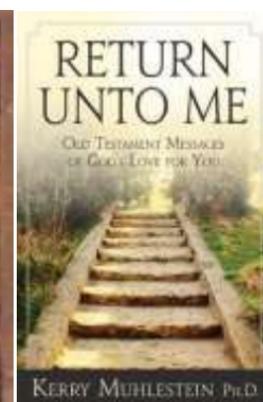
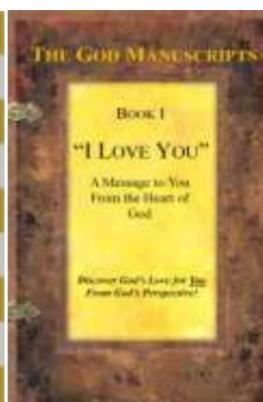
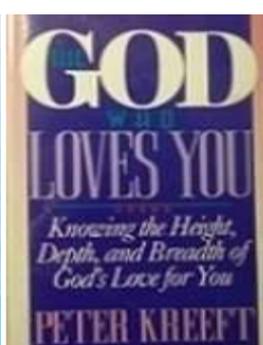
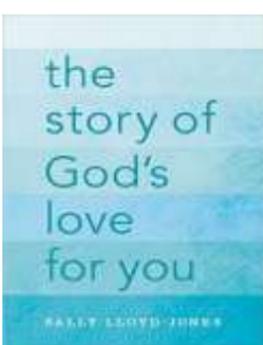
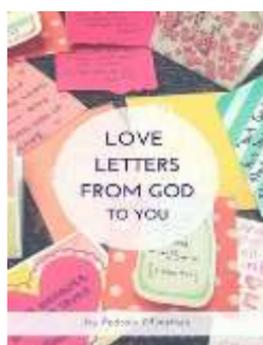
Why put such a focus on 'God loves me so much' when the Bible does not do it?

We know that the prosperity preaching churches major on telling people the nice things they like to hear and we disapprove. But the good old conservative, evangelical churches are following suite too. They may not talk about material prosperity, but emotional prosperity? Absolutely, and good times prosperity, and psychological prosperity, and self-esteem prosperity. And so many more.

There's a constant flow of books and preaching about it to feed our insatiable desire to be affirmed.

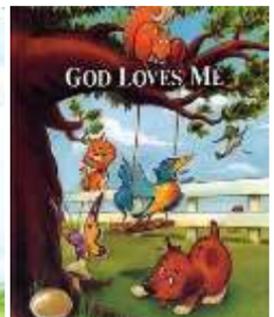
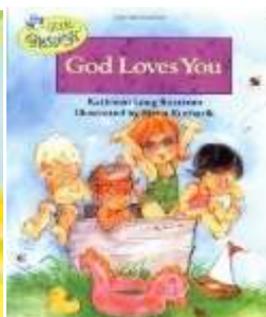
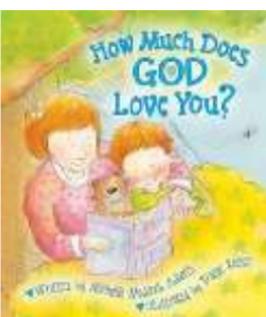
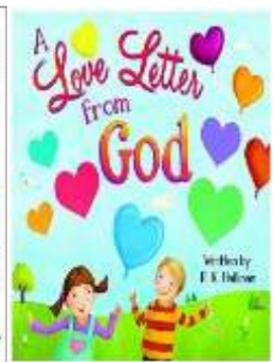
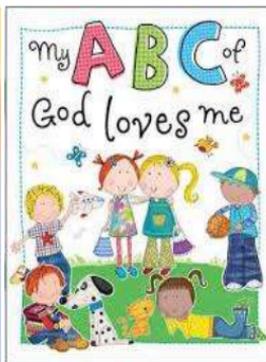
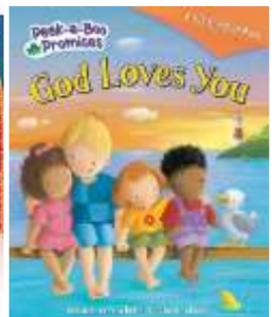
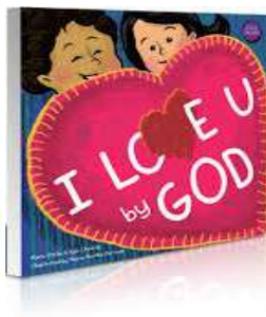
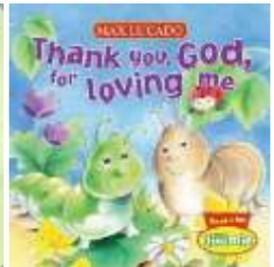
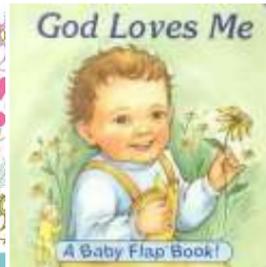
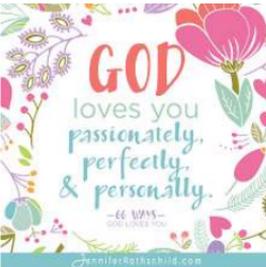
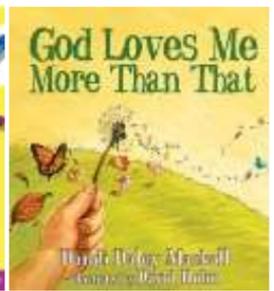
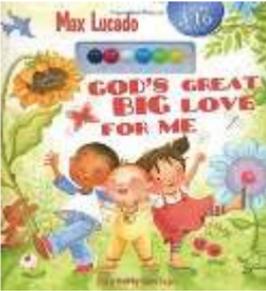
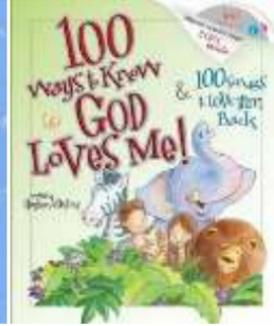
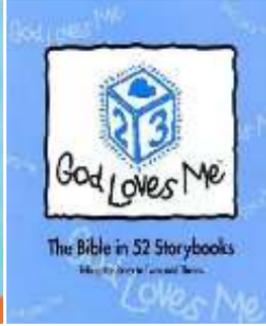
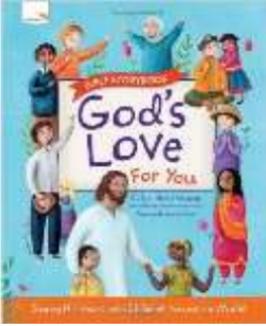
I did a quick online search for Christian books about God's love, this is just a few that came up:

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake



Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

And we feed our children and grandchildren on a diet of the same. Here is just a few of them:



What do our churches teach on a weekly basis? I do not know, there is no data that I know of. So, I just did a quick internet search to find generally what sermon podcasts are uploaded. These figures are very general - we cannot make any more of these figures than observe a general trend:

GENERALLY A FOCUS ON MAN

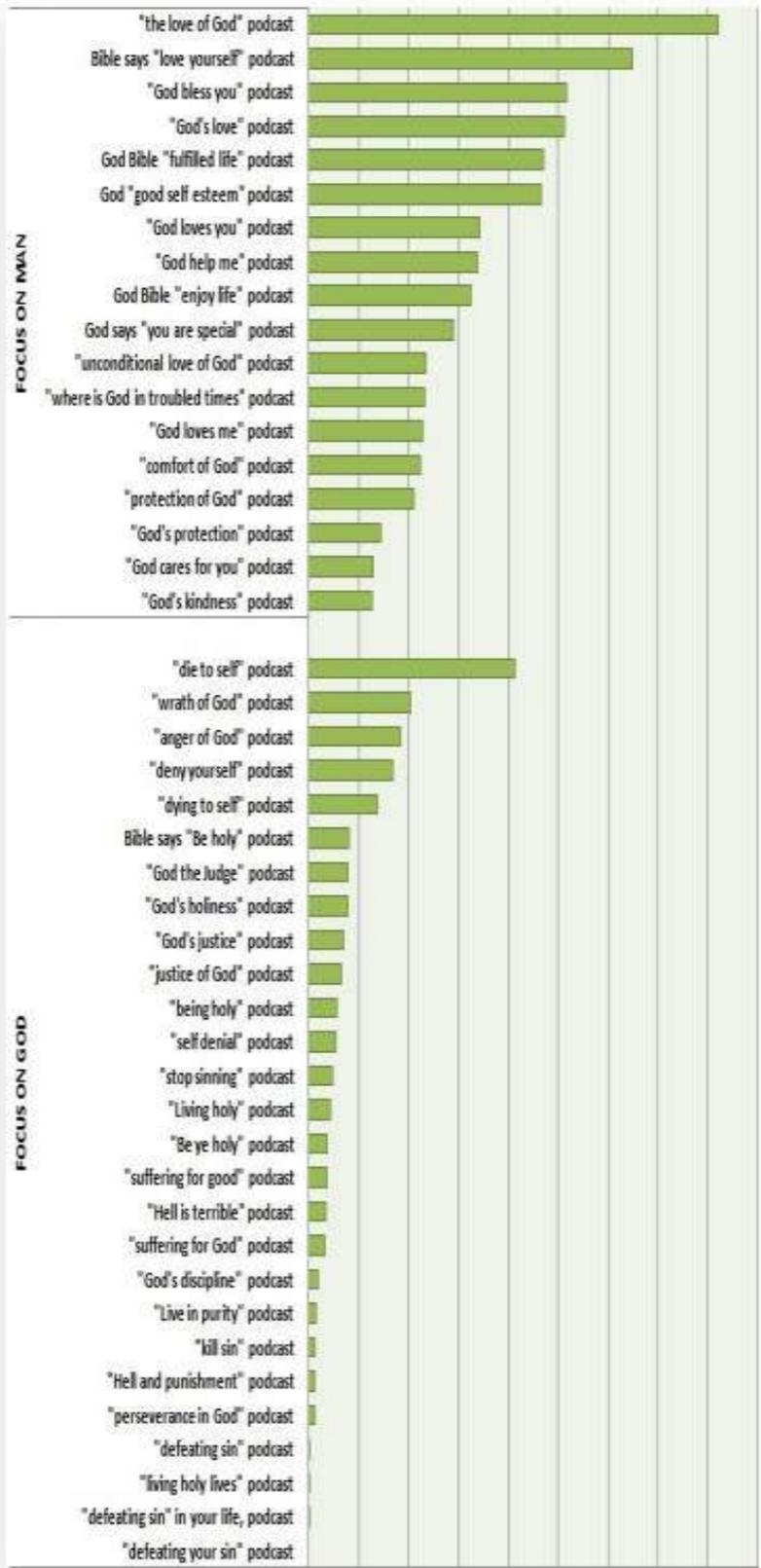
"God loves you" podcast =	about 343,000 results
"God's love" podcast =	about 513,000 results
"God loves me" podcast =	about 228,000 results
"the love of God" podcast =	about 822,000 results
"unconditional love of God" podcast =	about 234,000 results
"comfort of God" podcast =	about 223,000 results
"God's kindness" podcast =	about 127,000 results
"God cares for you" podcast =	about 129,000 results
"God's protection" podcast =	about 145,000 results
"protection of God" podcast =	about 211,000 results
"where is God in troubled times" podcast =	about 232,000 res
"God help me" podcast =	about 339,000 results
"God bless you" podcast =	about 518,000 results
Bible says "love yourself" podcast =	about 649,000 results
God says "you are special" podcast =	about 289,000 results
God "good self esteem" podcast =	about 467,000 results
God Bible "enjoy life" podcast =	about 325,000 results
God Bible "fulfilled life" podcast =	about 470,000 results

GENERALLY A FOCUS ON GOD

"God's justice" podcast =	about 69,600 results
"defeating sin" podcast =	about 2,020 results
"God's discipline" podcast =	about 19,200 results
"God the Judge" podcast =	about 79,500 results
"God's holiness" podcast =	about 77,500 results
"justice of God" podcast =	about 65,800 results
"perseverance in God" podcast =	about 12,400 results
"being holy" podcast =	about 56,200 results
"suffering for good" podcast =	about 35,700 results
"suffering for God" podcast =	about 33,200 results
"defeating sin" in your life, podcast =	about 1,540 results
"anger of God" podcast =	about 185,000 results
"defeating your sin" podcast =	0 results found
"self denial" podcast =	about 55,300 results
"deny yourself" podcast =	about 168,000 results
"wrath of God" podcast =	about 205,000 results
"dying to self" podcast =	about 934,000 results
"Be ye holy" podcast =	about 36,600 result
"Hell and punishment" podcast =	about 12,800 results
"Hell is terrible" podcast =	about 35,400 results
"Hell is real" podcast =	about 174,000 results
"perseverance in God" podcast =	about 12,300 results
"Live in purity" podcast =	about 14,400 results
"Living holy" podcast =	about 42,700 results
Bible says "Be holy" podcast =	about 79,900 results
"kill sin" podcast =	about 12,800 results
"stop sinning" podcast =	about 47,200 results
"die to self" podcast =	about 414,000 results

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

Let's look at that data in a graphic form to get a better idea of the trend:



Ok, so let me get this straight:

- We are the army of God;
- We are in a war that is not against flesh and blood;
- We were commanded to die to ourselves daily;
- We were to grow in maturity and strong in perseverance;

In order to devote ourselves to building the Kingdom;
Maintaining a Kingdom perspective - a missional focus;
But, we feed ourselves and our congregations, on pampering preaching that grows no one?

Logically, how does that even work?
Jesus did not do that, nor did the apostles.

Tragically, Christians (and yes, pastors too) demand of me, the evidence of my claims. WHAT? No, the onus is on them to explain to God and the Church, upon what basis and truths, do they build and practice their strange theology.

If an athlete is going to be able to perform, they MUST exercise. Their coach MUST take them through hard workouts to help them get stronger, fitter and develop real endurance.

But pastors claim they want to train the church to be stronger, spiritually fitter and develop real perseverance, by feeding them a diet of, 'nice' sappy preaching, with no genuine challenge.

And Christians claim they want to follow Christ - to be stronger, spiritually fitter and develop real perseverance, but they only allow the pastor to feed them a diet of, 'nice' sappy preaching, with no genuine challenge.

What is hard to understand in a clear Scripture like this?:

James 1:2 *My friends, be glad, even if you have a lot of trouble. 3 You know that you learn to endure by having your faith tested. 4 But you must learn to endure everything, so that you will be completely mature and not lacking in anything......*

21 You must stop doing anything immoral or evil.

CEV

'You MUST learn to endure. And be glad about a lot of trouble. You MUST stop doing evil.'

This is typical of what the NT teaches and commands of us.

But this is not what we preach. We preach about how God wants to comfort and He wants to encourage you in all your hard times. Over and over. We dare not put such 'pressure' on people to grow or even to stop sinning. We do not put any pressure on people to grow. We protect them from any pressure or discomfort, by preaching soothing words of God's comfort.

Jesus on the other hand, made sure that those who followed Him felt pressure to live up to their

commitment. He understood, as we once did long ago, that to disciple and grow someone, there must be a certain level of expectation and pressure. That was once common sense and normal.

Jesus would never get a job in our churches.

What is going on?

Yes, we have become conformed to this world:

Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
NIV

We not only conform to the world, we sanctify it, develop it further, then give it back to the world as a weapon against God. "No upsetting people with your conviction, God. Can't You be more loving like Jesus?"

We are supposed to be teaching and training soldiers for God, but we are child minding. Child minding a therapy group, where we keep them warm and comfortable and ineffective until the Lord returns.

Pastors, if you are feeling burnt out, I do feel sorry for you. You have a very difficult job these days.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ My suggestion is to dump the 'job' part of the deal and stick with the 'ministry' part only. The general job description that is handed to pastors, really is a 'management job' with a whole lot of expectations attached, many unspoken. You must grow the church at 10% a year. Oversee all the many outreach ministry groups in your church. Oversee all the internal groups like prayer meetings and Bible study groups for each age group and gender. Etc....then there are the unspoken requirements as well, like, 'do not have any damaging conflicts in your church'. 'No immorality in your church'. 'You must keep the people happy so we do not have any complaints'. 'Do not preach on things that will upset people'. 'Do not be unavailable whenever any bleating sheep needs you'. 'But you must also be a good husband, father and role model for your family and the church.'

Hmmm, is it any wonder pastors suffer from depression and burnout?

These are all typical 'corporate job' expectations, not those of a Biblical shepherd. And now with the added unreal, politically correct expectations as well.

Biblical Shepherds preach the straight, tough Word. They take the time to heal a sheep when it is required, and only when it is genuinely required. At first, generally, he will tell them to grow up, until they do. And they will, or leave.

Humans are quite good at being trained when there is some incentive. No, not with treats like you do for a dog, treats do not tame the sin nature.

When a member does leave because of a hard heart, a biblical shepherd says 'Let them alone' and sleeps well at night. He does not stress about these kinds of things because, all he is called to do

Double-think is normal in Christianity today. We say one thing, while believing and acting another. We have developed a sophisticated, though subjective theology to handle all the objections.

This atheist meme going around the internet, rightly challenges, even defies the 'God loves us soooo much' theory:



This will cause a mini crisis of conscience for many of us, because we no longer have a theology that can explain this atheist challenge.

We are theologically ill-equipped.

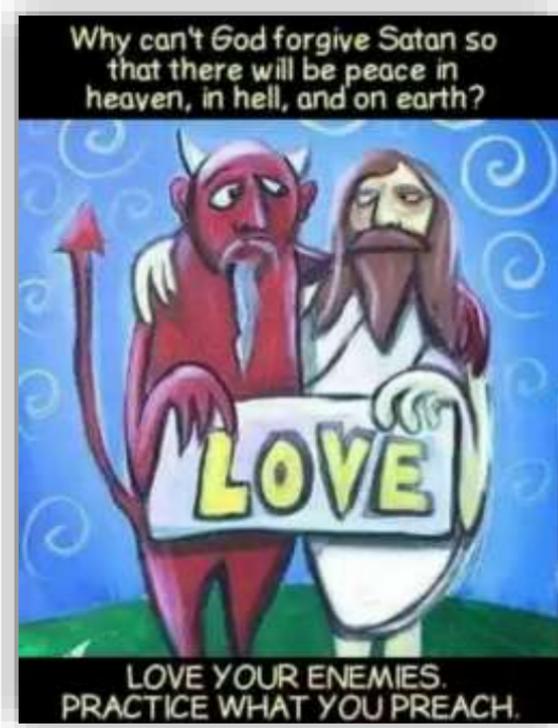
That is because we view God as 'only' loving and it results in double-think (holding two opposing views at the same time without seeing any contradiction between them) - 'God loves us soooo much' and 'the Flood' are somehow compatible.

is to be obedient, hour by hour. He is NOT responsible for the success of all things, just to obey the simple commands of the Father and let everything else go. If he starts to stress, he is taking on a 'job' once again and is feeling the pressure to perform for 'the boss' - church board, denominational head or personal goals. If hardly anyone turns up for the prayer meeting, that's ok, bring revival with the couple you do have. And if revival does not come this year, so what. There is always next year. You are NOT responsible for results, you are responsible only to be obedient to faithfully teach, faithfully pray...

This is very freeing concept to any leader who can catch it and humble himself to live by it. Pastors preach that if you are 'worrying' you are not 'taking on responsibilities God never gave you.' Hmmm, practice what you preach pastor.

Free yourself today of the job and take on a ministry. Hey, you might lose your job, but then you can really do the ministry part, pleasing the Father so much more. But that's just my suggestion.

God's justice is extreme. We cannot change that.
Or this foolish anti-God meme:



Many, many church-going Christians would not know how to articulate a reasonable answer to this challenge. Yet it was we, the Church, who gave this weak, impotent god to the world. Tragic. We were supposed to give the true God of the Bible to the world.

God's holiness, truth and justice is extreme.

In fact, it is so extreme that it is frightening. Hence the 'beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.'

In the modern age of 'niceness' we really do not want to hear or know about Hell, because it is so extreme. Just a glimpse of it and our knees buckle and we are pleading with God for help.

Yet, any time the 'fear of God' is advocated, there is a chorus of "No, not fear of God, but respect for God, reverence for God."

Many times the Bible tells us that 'the **fear** of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' A healthy fear of God allows us to understand the Bible, God and life correctly. But we have watered down this idea to become, mere 'respect' or 'reverence' for God. No wonder there is no fear of God in our culture now, why would there be, we have removed any responsibility to fear God in the Church.

We failed to be basic witnesses of God to a fallen world.

God's justice and His holiness are extreme, but we do not want to know about that, nor do we know who God is any more.

We say "That makes God sound so harsh and unfeeling, that is not going to help."

****Sigh****

No, I am talking common sense. If God is 'kind and severe' as Paul says, then the best thing to do is to alert people to the reality of the situation, in order that they might live accordingly. We cannot change who God is, or the reality of life as it is, so it is foolish to pretend to unbelievers and Christians that things are not as they are. How is that going to help them? People will always come to terms with the truth, given so time and coaching. This is the theme of many movies through the decades. Once a person is alerted, they can adjust their thinking and their lives in order to flow with the greater reality and safety, rather than live happy and dangerously ignorant.

Think of it this way: A huge tornado is approaching the resort where you are enjoying a beautiful long holiday. Should you be notified of the impending disaster, upsetting the rest of your holiday plans, or should you be left happily unaware of the 'true reality' of the situation?

How can you adjust to the 'true reality' of the situation if you are not told about it?

Yet this is what we do. We try and guard non-Christians and Christians from the 'true reality' of the situation, protecting them from the truth, because it might not make them feel so attracted to being a Christian.

Just as we are theologically ill-equipped to answer that meme, **we are ill-equipped to live the true Christian life and ill-equipped to preach it.**

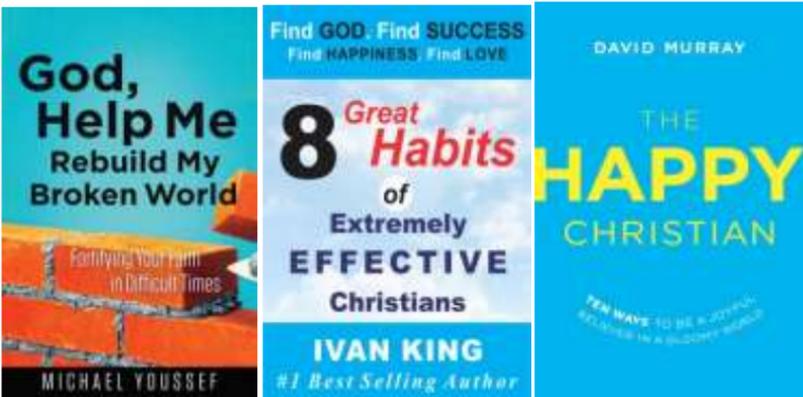
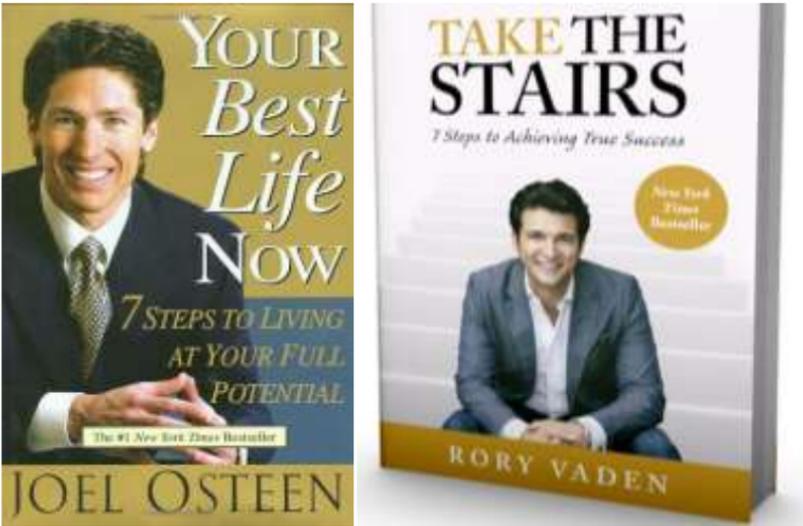
Our version is so compromised, it is to be considered to be a 'false' gospel, so STOP preaching and talking about God's love for us!

Yes, the Western Church, is indeed being conformed to the world. We value mankind more highly than we ought, and believe ourselves to be the worthy benefactor of God's great love and special attention.

CONCLUSION:

Are we being conformed to something in our culture? = Yes we are.

Just a note about all the popular Christian self-help books around these days:



You get the idea.

Forget about all the latest popular books, written by popular Christian authors. Go back to the Bible. Truly, it is in the Bible that you find the best answers.

It takes work, we hate work, but the power of the Holy Spirit and the Bible to break through is huge. Pray that God will give you understanding as you read and that the Holy Spirit will move powerfully in your life as you do. He will. And if He does not at first, then persevere until He does. Have the attitude of Jacob - "I will not let the Bible go until God blesses me" or as Jesus said to keep on asking the evil judge until you get justice.

And if you say that you find it hard to understand the Bible, get a modern translation and devour it. Get a Contemporary English Version (CEV). Read it over and over and when you read something that does not sound right, check with your regular Bible.

If a chapter seems to be saying something to you, but you cannot quite get it, read it over again, ten more times if necessary.

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

Take the time to read whole books of the Bible in one sitting. This helps develop an overview of a letter or work.

Take the time to listen to the New Testament on audio in 2 sessions, or 10 sessions. You can listen to the NT in two 11 hour sessions and it will open your eyes to the most wonderful overview of the NT, God and the Kingdom of God.

Get another person to join you or a group of friends. This will help you to complete the NT.

Just a note: do not sit and listen to it, you will fall asleep. Set up a very simple task that requires little to no thinking, to keep you active and you can go all day.

If you want to listen to the Old Testament, which I highly recommend, it takes 5 days of about 11 hours each.

Where You Can Download An Audio Bible:

<https://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/audio-bibles/download/eng/engsvn2da>

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CHAPTER 33. THE NT ALREADY HAS AN OVER EMPHASIS ON GOD'S LOVE

The NT most likely already has an over-emphasis of God's love for man, and we do not need it in the same way as the people of the 1st century.

We need to tone it down a little if anything.

Bear with me while I explain.

The New Testament must be read in connection with the Old Testament; they go together.

It can rightly be stated that the Old Testament is the 'context' of the NT.

When reading the NT, we need to understand the important aspect of OT context in order to correctly understand the NT.

Consider for a moment how the letter to the Galatian church was hard on false teachers, and this was entirely correct. The Judaisers were causing real problems.

Imagine if Paul had sent that letter to the Thessalonian church in their time of intense persecution, instead of 2Thessalonians. It would have caused all sorts of confusion. It would have produced bad theology in the receivers as they tried to come to terms with its theological significance. This is because it came from a very different context.

Conversely, if Paul's much warmer letter to the Philippians had been sent to the badly erring Corinthian church, the same would occur - being taken from a different context would give rise to bad theology, and sin in the church would be tolerated.

Consider for a moment, the seemingly contradictory teaching of Paul to both Corinth and Galatia:

1 Cor. 7:19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. **Keeping God's commands is what counts.**

But he seems to say something very different from what he said to the Galatian Church:

Gal. 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. **The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.**

Why? Because Corinth was liberal and undisciplined, requiring discipline, while Galatia was affected by legalistic teachings, which required a very different

emphasis. They needed to be told that it is not Laws that save us, but faith in God alone.

In short, a document written to a specific situation, needs to be interpreted from the viewpoint of that situation.

Think of it this way; if someone comes to you, having a very deep-seated self-hatred, after advising them to repent of this, you will naturally emphasize God's acceptance of them. While another who comes in pride, needs to be humbled before a Holy God and be brought down to a more realistic view of themselves. It's the same God we serve, but with an emphasis on the proper aspect of God's character for each situation.

Now, also, to better understand the New Testament, we need to understand the background of the New Testament times and how they viewed God, in order to understand how much they would emphasize certain concepts; i.e. God's love for us.

What Is The Background Of The NT Concerning This?

I propose that:

Israel in Old Testament times, did not know of, or understand the concept of a God of love, hence love is more emphasized in the New Testament.

Let me lay out why I would suggest this concept.

The NT writers were leading the new Christian Jews out of Judaism and it's legalistic way of thinking.

Often, the Jews' relationship and view of God, certainly in the NT times, was a cold relationship with a distant, hard-of-hearing God.

This is what people in the Old Testament heard about the God they worshipped:

Deut. 7:6 *"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. **The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.***

7 It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples,

*8 but it is because the **LORD loves you** and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast

love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, 10 and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face.

11 You shall therefore be careful to do the commandment and the statutes and the rules that I command you today. ESV

Ok. So, God loves us (Israel) because He made a promise to our forefathers, hmmm, but we have to obey His rules and He will protect us. However, if we do not, He will destroy us. Right, ok. That sounds more like a duty than a warm kind of love. God would save them **if** they were obedient.

Hence, thankfulness, awe and at times, fear, seemed to typify their relationship with God.

Israel had no concept of God as a father.

Jesus introduced the concept of calling God "our Father".

In the same way that they did not have a developed theology on 'heaven', so to, Israel did not have a developed theology or concept of God as loving. They understood God to be strict. But they also understood God having great mercy, if they repented. But they did not perceive God as a 'loving' God.

GRACE - [Zondervan Bible Encl. Vol 2-799](#):

"Before Bethlehem the concept of a God of grace who gives himself, appears nowhere."

It is not that the OT does not use the term 'love' of God for his people, because it does, I list a few below.¹¹⁶ But it also needs to be understood that it was not a developed concept or theology.

So, when Jesus came along calling God his Father and says that we should also call him 'Father' it was a radical concept, that sounded very strange to the Jewish hearers, especially the Jewish leaders.

¹¹⁶ [Psa. 86:15](#) But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and merciful God. You are patient and demonstrate great loyal **love** and faithfulness.

[Zep. 3:17](#) The LORD your God is in your midst; he is a warrior who can deliver. He takes great delight in you; he renews you by his **love**; he shouts for joy over you."

[Prov. 8:17](#) I **love** those who love me, and those who seek me find me.

Commentary Series on the Bible - Dr. Peter Pett:

John 3:16. The reason that Jesus has come is because “**God loved the world** so much that He gave His only Son”. **This is the amazing new revelation that surpasses all that has gone before**, that God was such that He had not only seen man's need but has met it in the only way possible at greatest cost to Himself. ‘In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us, and gave His Son to be a propitiation for our sins’ (1Jn_4:10).¹¹⁷

Expositions of Holy Scripture - Alexander MacLaren on John 3:16:

Before Jesus Christ came into this world no one ever dreamt of saying ‘God loves.’ Some of the Old Testament psalmists had glimpses of that truth and came pretty near expressing it. But among all the ‘gods many and lords many,’ there were lustful gods and beautiful gods, and idle gods, and fighting gods and peaceful gods: but not one of whom worshippers said, ‘He loves.’ (Emphasis added)

MacLaren then goes on to make a vital point, especially for us to understand in this era. I urge you to read this carefully :

Once, it was a new and almost incredible message, but we have grown accustomed to it, and it is not strange any more to us. But if we would try to think of what it means, the whole truth would flash up into fresh newness, and all the miseries and sorrows and perplexities of our lives would drift away down the wind, and we should be no more troubled with them. ‘God loves’ is the greatest thing that can be said by lips.¹¹⁸ (Emphasis added)

Exactly, we cannot even conceive of a God who does not love us, so very much **now**, because we have had it drummed into us for so many years.

While the Jews had little concept of a God of love, who gives Himself, we now, have **NO** concept of a God who could NOT love and give Himself to us and for us. **It has become the baseline of our expectations of God, rather than the most precious revelation, held in the highest regard with gratefulness.**

¹¹⁷ <https://www.studyight.org/commentary/john/3-16.html>

¹¹⁸ goo.gl/1y8XPq

We need to regain a deep awe for God, for the fact that God would even take the time to consider saving such evil creatures. We must regain and fight for the original concept of God as the fearsome God who can destroy the soul as well as the body, just as Jesus advised:

Matt. 10:28 Don't be afraid of people. They can kill you, but they cannot harm your soul. **Instead, you should fear God who can destroy both your body and your soul in hell.** CEV

Once we have **captured the concept of a fearsome holy God, we will begin to truly understand the love that God does have for us.** And we will not again be presumptive on God and take Him for granted. We will no longer feel so very special. This new illumination would give way to a deep sense of humility before God. For the simple reason that He loves us, alone, without any other benefit. We ought to feel so privileged and never ever complain about any suffering or even a catastrophe again. That ought to be our baseline response to God.

Yet sadly, it is never enough for us. We want to be happy, feel good about ourselves, get a parking spot now, or somehow life has let us down and even God has let us down.

Of all the truths of the Bible, this is the most taught and deeply held by us. It causes us to maintain the great emphasis we do, on top of an already greater emphasis of God's love.

It is very destructive in many ways.

I look at just some of these ways, later in this book.

CONCLUSION:

☐ New Testament has a greater emphasis on God's love for us, than what we need to hear = It would seem so, yes.

We then ought to be very careful not to focus on God's love for us, any more than the New Testament does, as a minimum.

SECTION 3 THE CONSEQUENCES

CHAPTER 34. DEPTH OF DECEPTION

So, let us look at our checked list now:

Myth Busters Chart

**Does the Bible support our Gospel-destroying
'God loves me soooo much' fixation?**

Background

New Testament emphasis

ETERNAL:

God Is Love - 1John 4:8

OLD COVENANT:

Names of God

Angels Declarations in Heaven

OT Prophecies

NT Prophetic Words

John the Baptist

JESUS:

Jesus' first recorded words in ministry

Jesus' inaugural speech: Sermon on Mount

Jesus' teaching

Jesus was kindly with people

Jesus was kind to the sick, sad & needy

Jesus runs after people to help & guide them

Jesus and the Bible said about his work

Jesus' instructions to 70 disciples

John 3:16

The love the Father lavishes upon us

Does God love everyone?

Why did Jesus come - Biblically?

Unconditional love of God

Great Commission

NEW TESTAMENT:

Any New Testament Books About It?

Teachings/Paragraphs in New Testament

How many verses state God loves us?

Holy Spirit's work

Acts preaching

Paul's 'more important points of gospel'

Basic doctrines of Hebrews 6

POST BIBLICAL:

Early Church Fathers

Church History

Satan's Aims described in the Bible

Are there prophecies of coming such things?

Are we fulfilling these prophecies?



As you can see, we have all the ticks and crosses in the wrong boxes. We need to get serious, throw off the pride, 'despise the shame' as Jesus did, admit we have seriously screwed up and repent in brokenness before God and one another.

So, if there is no emphasis on preaching and teaching about God's love shown in all these areas we have looked at, where does it come from?

The world!

Please Explain:

Pastors and church leaders, upon what basis have you preached and affirmed 'God's love for you' so much?

What evidence do you have from Scripture to make such a call?

The general impression most Christians now have of Jesus' ministry, was that he went around preaching the love of God to people.

This 'Jesus' who they say went around 'loving & encouraging' people is a figment of their imagination. It's the new improved Jesus of the Sola Affectus gospel, created by a few out-of-context verses and a whole lotta modern feel-good imagination.

When we lose the simplicity of the gospel, we are already compromised.

When we want to create exciting new programs to reach people, we are already compromised.

When I see a brother or sister 'binding the enemy' and 'taking the land for God' I know that that have been distracted from the simple gospel message.

The gospel message that Jesus and the apostles presented was simple and without 'attractive measures'.

When I see a Christian trying to make Christianity seem 'exciting' or 'attractive to non-Christians' I know that they are peddling the gospel rather than preaching Christ and Christ crucified in truth. They try to re- envision the call of Christ to a life of persecution and hardship for the Kingdom, as a trendy, fun lifestyle.

The spirit of this is all wrong. It is focus and attitude, the attraction is all for how Jesus helps me. The opposite of what Jesus was and commanded of us. He came to give all for the Kingdom and He told us to as well.

You do not see our kind of focus anywhere in the New Testament. Not Jesus, not the apostles, not any character committed to Christ.

This is just so wrong.

You have been 'conformed to this world' just as you were instructed not to do.

We made it up. By trying to please man, we focused on all the nice things and we came to believe it ourselves as 'good' theology.

I was asked why God in the OT was such a fearsome God, but in the NT He is seen as loving?

The problem is in our false perceptions, not in Scripture or the nature of God.

The fact is God NEVER changes!

Heb. 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

To say that Jesus is different in the New Testament than the God of the Old Testament, is simply wrong. It shows that one does not even know the Jesus of the New Testament. But we do not even see it when we read the New Testament. (Of course, there is the aspect, that once a person has been born again, the power of the Holy Spirit can empower us to change. Whereas, in the Old Testament, Israel did not have the Holy Spirit and there was the need for a stronger hand, with severe warnings. Now, we are not supposed to need such severe warnings.)

2 Cor. 13:2 *During my second visit I warned you that I would punish you and anyone else who doesn't stop sinning. I am far away from you now, but I give you the same warning.*

*3 This should prove to you that I am speaking for **Christ. When he corrects you, he won't be weak. He will be powerful!*** CEV

We live under a false sense of security, thinking that God really is different from He appears in the Old Testament.

So, when I say that we do not really know God any more, I really, really mean it.

God is seen as more committed to being 'kind' than to being holy or just or saving people from hell by confronting sin. This is an utterly false view of God.

As Xue, a friend of mine said, **'if you continually feed a child only the nice things they want, rather than**

what they need, the child will not grow properly and will be very unhealthy.'

Exactly! You end up with a self-centered, spoilt brat, who does not like to suffer anything in the least unpleasant. This is our Western Church today.

Essentially we have taken the message of this:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.*



Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus DOUBLE CLICK HERE TO PLAY.mid

We have rewritten this song to be more like:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look at only His wonderful grace,
And things that are hard will grow strangely dim,
In the warmth of His glorious embrace.*

Christian authors and scholars write commentaries on the Bible, and books about all kinds of subjects from this skewed over-emphasis, arriving at shallow interpretations. Is it any wonder that Christians who are aware of this are returning to the commentaries of the old masters - those who truly saw God as the great holy God who must be honoured as well as being seen as a loving God.

Walter Chantry - Today's Gospel. Authentic or Synthetic?¹¹⁹:

Differences between much of today's preaching and that of Jesus are not petty; they are enormous...Incredulity may grip you. Can so many evangelicals be so wrong? Can it be true that Christian people are misleading the souls of men in regard to salvation? Is it really that bad...Evaluate the teachings of Bible schools, the evangelical literature, the tactics of

¹¹⁹ <https://books.google.com.au/books?id=AA23Db8-yfgC&q=%22Differences+between+much+of+today%E2%80%99s+preaching+and+that+of+Jesus+are+not+petty;+they+are+enormous%22&dq=%22Differences+between+much+of+today%E2%80%99s+preaching+and+that+of+Jesus+are+not+petty;+they+are+enormous%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjnhunnsb3gAhWJTX0KHeQyAcEQ6AEIKDAA>

organizations working with young people. **Examine them in the light of Jesus' preaching, and you will have to agree – the church is far from the New Testament message.** Oh, and don't forget to look at your own preaching and teaching.

All are not in error, but **great hosts are.** All have not perverted the gospel to the same degree, but **many are terribly far from the truth.** All those who 'make decisions' are not deceived but **great numbers are.** And above all, **few care to recover the Gospel message.** (Emphasis added)

Chantry wrote this in 1970, how much worse it is now.

We are looking at the depth of our deception in this chapter, so continuing on, let's look at a just few differences in the Jesus we serve:

Lord Jesus Christ of God, revealed in the Bible	Jesus of the modern Church
Loves us enough to discipline us and tell the truth	Sentimental love – comforts us with a lie
Preaches 'Repent'	Preaches 'I love you'
Tells us to forsake material prosperity	Tells us He will bless us with material prosperity
I came into this world to be a judge John 9:39 (not a civil judge)	Never judged anyone - did not come to judge in any way
He is greatly concerned for Kingdom's work	He is greatly concerned about our every little hurt
He is immutable - unchanging	He is not the God of the OT
He is sometimes angry with us	He is never angry with us
Exposes sin in Church Eph 5:11	He welcomes unrepentant sexual sinners of all types
He disciplines us	He only encourages us
He was severe at times Matt. 11:20 , Luke 9:41 , Rom 11:22	Was only kindly with people
He wants us to mature	He wants us to have a good self-esteem
He is holy and commands us to be holy as He is	He understands that we are only human so don't stress too much about sin
He requires that we are	He is only really interested

obedient	in a relationship with us
Jesus was like God	Jesus is like man
Lord Jesus Christ of God, revealed in the Bible	Another false Jesus of so many Church congregations Gal. 1:6

Our modern Church Jesus, is another Jesus:

[2Cor. 11:4](#) *We told you about Jesus, and you received the Holy Spirit and accepted our message. But you let some people tell you about **another Jesus**. Now you are ready to receive another spirit and accept a different message.* CEV

And this 'another Jesus' is presenting 'another gospel':

[Gal. 1:6](#) *I am shocked that you have so quickly turned from God, who chose you because of his wonderful kindness. **You have believed another message(gospel)*** CEV

The real Jesus of the Bible was NOT concerned if someone was offended by the truth, unlike our 'another Jesus'. The real Jesus DID say harsh things when it was necessary; and it was necessary often. That's why so much of Jesus being hard and so little of Him being so tender is in the gospel accounts.

Let me put it another way.

We say that Jesus would not be hard on people today. We say that Jesus does not judge people (falsely declaring that Jesus did not judge the woman caught in adultery. Jesus did judge her as wrong, but He did not judge her to death.)

We say Jesus would just 'love' gays and accept them as they are, without correcting their sin.

But, **Jesus declared "I AM the truth."**

How can the Holy Son of God who is the Truth, now deny Himself by 'not correcting sin' as He did before? He would have to first admit that He got it wrong when He preached and lived with us.

Can you see the utter contradiction of such thinking?

We insult the most Holy Son of God by attributing false thinking and false ways to Him.

Surely this applies to us today?:

[Jer. 17:9](#) *You people of Judah are so deceitful that you even **fool yourselves**, and you can't change.* CEV

The Lord Jesus Christ is to be the Head of the Church:

[Col. 1:18](#) **He is the head of his body, which is the church.** . . . CEV

[Eph. 5:23](#) . . . as **Christ is the head** and the Savior of the church, which is his own body. CEV

Col. 2:19 . . . of Christ, who is the head of the whole body. CEV

Eph. 1:22 *God has put all things under the power of Christ, and for the good of the church he has made him the head of everything.* CEV

But, the Lord Jesus Christ is NOT the head of most church congregations today. He is not even 'the truth' any more when he differs from our 'Christian correctness.' No, we present 'another Jesus' on those occasions. We, in our arrogance, developed 'better ideas' which we have no right to do!

The head of most church congregations today, is man.

And man has conjured up a convenient form of a Jesus to preach and worship just like when Aaron made the golden calf to worship to keep the people happy.

The Church is full of spoilt, undisciplined, self-centered brats.

This is a picture of us:

Matt. 15:6.....***You ignore God's commands in order to follow your own teaching.***

7 And you are nothing but show-offs! Isaiah the prophet was right when he wrote that God had said,

8 "All of you praise me with your words, but you never really think about me.

9 It is useless for you to worship me, when you teach rules made up by humans." CEV

This 'sacred cow', must be destroyed for the survival of a genuine Church. Otherwise the 'remnant' who leave 'the Church' will be the only true Church.

I have endeavoured to present hard evidence that refutes our accepted Church traditions on this, in the hope that, it may cause some to question what they have blindly always believed.

Now, take a look at the pictures we saw at the beginning of this book:

sweet wine, which he who is ignorant of does greedily take, with a fatal pleasure leading to his own death.

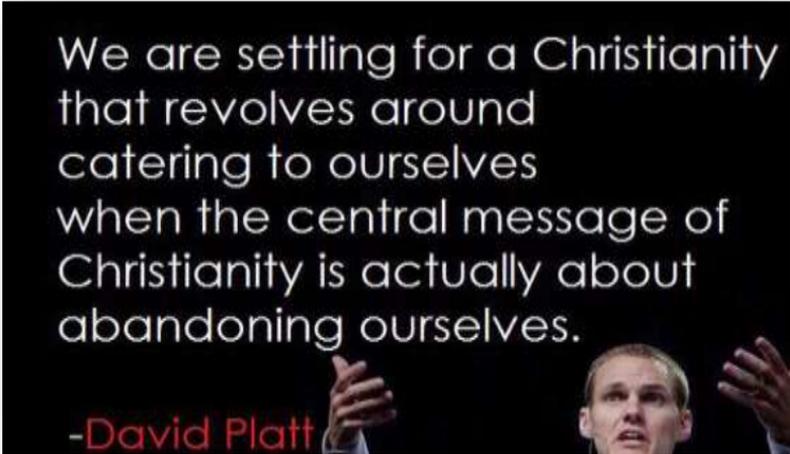
I therefore, yet not I, but the love of Jesus Christ, "entreat you that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." For there are some vain talkers and deceivers, not Christians, but Christ-betrayers, bearing about the name of Christ in deceit, and "corrupting the word" of the Gospel; while they intermix the poison of their deceit with their persuasive talk, as if they mingled aconite with sweet wine, that so he who drinks, being deceived in his taste by the very great sweetness of the draught, may incautiously meet with his death. One of the ancients gives us this advice, "Let no man be called good who mixes good with evil." For they speak of Christ, not that they may preach Christ, but that they may reject Christ; and they speak of the law, not that they may establish the law, but that they may proclaim things contrary to it.¹²⁰

Yes, we add the sweet poison of heretics. The poison of the Liberals – the hardhearted rebellion against God. And the poison of the well-meaning Conservatives - the blind, weak self-preservation and compromise.

In general, in the Western Church, the older members have forgotten who God really is. The younger members have never known who God really is. They only know and accept, some things about Him and there is precious little genuine seeking of God to know the truth.

¹²⁰ <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/ignatius-trallians-longer.html>

CHAPTER 35. CONSEQUENCES OF THIS DECEPTION



We are settling for a Christianity that revolves around catering to ourselves when the central message of Christianity is actually about abandoning ourselves.

-David Platt

Yes we are!

We give such great honour to one who is so kind and never has a strong word for anyone. This type of Christian is considered to have reached the pinnacle – the Christian version of 'nirvana'. Oh, how we all want to be that kind of Christian.

Our hero image ought to be one who fearlessly speaks out like Jesus did, like the apostles did, as well as having a loving heart.

You see, one who never speaks out like that, shows a compromised love, not true love.

When you say that speaking truth might upset someone, or is going to scare people away, or that it is not helpful or **it does not achieve anything**, tell me;

What is it that you want to achieve?

What is it that Jesus told us to achieve?

Our job is NOT to just get people into the Church.

Our job is to preach the full uncompromising gospel, disciple those who come to Christ, and to discipline those who do not obey the commands of Christ.

Let us very briefly look at a few of the consequences of this Sola Affectus gospel, things affected.

We find that :-

- **Now, God utterly hating sin is not understood**

It petty-izes sin, because supposedly God cares so much about my every little hurt or even discomfort rather than vile sin.

And yet as [Bill Muehlenberg](#) points out sin really is very serious:

Given God's holy hatred of evil, how greatly must we fear offending him? The fear of the Lord is indeed the beginning of wisdom. No wonder we read so much about fearing God in the Bible. Offending a holy God is the last thing any of us should want to do.¹²¹

I hear pastors leading the 'sinners prayer' something like this as the basics:

'Father, I surrender my life. I choose to follow Jesus. Wash away my sin. Please come into my life and make me new. I thank you for saving me.'

Where is there any request for mercy from a Holy God?
Where is there any REAL repenting of our vile sin?

The 'sinners prayer' really should be abandoned. To pray a repentant prayer when one hardly knows the Holy and Just God, is a bad idea. It is like the presumptuous, cute girl up on murder, flirting with the judge to get off lightly.

A shallow prayer of repentance and consecration is more dangerous than effective. Rather, we should **live** the 'sinners prayer' daily. Our faithfulness in a daily commitment being the evidence of our genuine devotion to God.

How many hundreds of thousands of people, not properly understanding God's hate for sin, have prayed this supposedly 'almost magical' formula, thinking they are saved, when they changed nothing?

- **Now, God being extremely Holy is not properly understood**

Upon what basis does the world demand that God be 'loving' and not judge anyone to hell?

Why, must God be a loving god, why cannot God be harsh and cruel?

Where did they get such a strange idea, in a world that, from the beginning has fashioned mostly cruel or indifferent gods to worship?

Who is at fault?

¹²¹ <https://billmuehlenberg.com/2016/08/10/one-dare-not-offend/>

Since the beginning of time, the gods that man thought up, have never been loving and benevolent. Here are just a few of the many false gods of this world i.e.

- Baal
- Asherah
- Dagon
- Marduk
- Moloch
- Adrammelech
- Amun
- Anat
- Anammelech
- Ashima
- Astaroth
- Astarte
- Baal Berith
- Baal Peor
- Baal-zephon
- Beelzebub
- Bel
- Belial
- Dumuzid
- Gad
- Hauron
- Inanna
- Kamoš
- Melqart
- Milcom
- Moloch
- Mot
- Nabu
- Nehushtan
- Nergal
- Nibhaz
- Ninurta
- Nisroch
- Qos
- Queen of Heaven
- Remphan
- Resheph
- Rimmon
- Shahar
- Shapash
- Succoth-benoth
- Teraphim
- Yam
- Yariikh
- Aker
- Arnon
- Anubs
- Apis
- Aton
- Atum
- Bes
- Edijo
- Geb
- Hathor
- Khepri
- Khnum
- Khons
- Maat
- Meskhenet
- Min
- Mut
- Nekhbet
- Nut
- Osiris
- Ptah
- Ra
- Sekhmet
- Selket
- Seshat
- Seth
- Shu
- Sobek
- Sothis
- Thermuthis
- Thoth
- Zeus
- Hera
- Poseidon
- Hades
- Demeter
- Athena
- Apollo
- Artemis
- Ares
- Aphrodite
- Hephaestus
- Hermes
- Jupiter
- Juno
- Minerva
- Neptune
- Pluto
- Ceres
- Diana

- Mars
- Venus
- Vulcan
- Mercury

None of these love humans, and are self-sacrificing for humans.

Typically, these gods were: capricious, demanding to be worshiped, they used humans for their own ends, they were indifferent to human suffering, they used power dynamics, they had character flaws, they displayed only occasional benevolence, and were justice and punishment orientated.

So, upon what basis does the world demand that God be 'loving' and not judge anyone to hell?

The more logical construct of a god, would have been more like one of the gods of Greek mythology.

Perhaps of all the man-made gods, the closest to Yehovah, is Ahura Mazda (the primary deity in Zoroastrianism, one of the world's oldest continuously practiced religions, prominent in ancient Persia, especially during the Achaemenid Empire - Cyrus) He is Considered wise, benevolent, and just.

Even God, JHWH, of the Israelites in the OT, was not seen as a god of love. Despite the description 'loving-kindness' used of God, it was not a developed concept. (While רַחֲמִים (chesed) is often translated as "loving-kindness," it's more accurately understood as "covenant faithfulness" or "steadfast love," which doesn't negate God's justice or wrath.)

What was firmly in the minds of Israel concerning the nature of their God, was that He was absolutely just, even harsh in His justice, but He was also very merciful. Neither one of these aspects diminished the other.

Then Jesus came as JHWH in the flesh and He presented a rather radical concept of the just and merciful God, also as a Father, who truly loved humans. (Note: this concept has roots in the Old Testament (e.g., Hosea 11:1).

Yet, with this new perspective of their God, Christians, like Israel of old, did not elevate either the love or the justice of God to the diminishing of the other.

In NT Christianity, Ananias & Sapphira were guilty of lying to the Holy Spirit and experienced the death penalty.

Paul cursed the Judaizers and those who believed them in the Galatian church. He handed a sinning member of the Corinthian church over to the Devil for death.

So again, upon what basis does the world demand that God be 'loving' and not judge anyone to hell? Why would they demand to know "I thought your God was a God of love?"

Where did they get such a strange idea, that in this world, where from the beginning man has fashioned many gods to serve and worship?

Who did it?

The answer: modern Christians did it, largely over the last 100 years or so (even before, by some, but now it has become the standard theology for most Christians) and we are still doing it.

We teach, preach, talk, pray, write, meme, think, eat, sleep 'God's great love' for humans. And unlike the ancient Israelites, and the Church of earlier eras, we do elevate one to the detriment of the other. We refuse to teach and talk the whole of the counsel of God, thinking that we are doing God Most High, a favour, by trying to get more people in with a lot of half-truths about God and the Bible.

As I said, the more logical construct of a god, viewed as God, would have been more like one of the gods of Greek mythology. But it's not, and you know why? Because the objections are not based on genuine enquiry, but personal comfort. And tragically, we modern Christians indulge the world in their deception, refusing to tell them the eternal truth. We virtually condemn them to hell, because we are too compromised by worldly 'niceness' to tell them the whole truth that saves.

Obviously, that the same argument can be used for modern Christians too, in that, God 'must' be a nice God of love. He could not possibly be harsh in His justice, and if one tries to show that from Scripture, it is met with the typical "Well, that's not the God I serve, or the God of the Bible."

Let us awaken each other, correct each other and do the work of the ministry.

Hebrews 10:24 And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works... NET

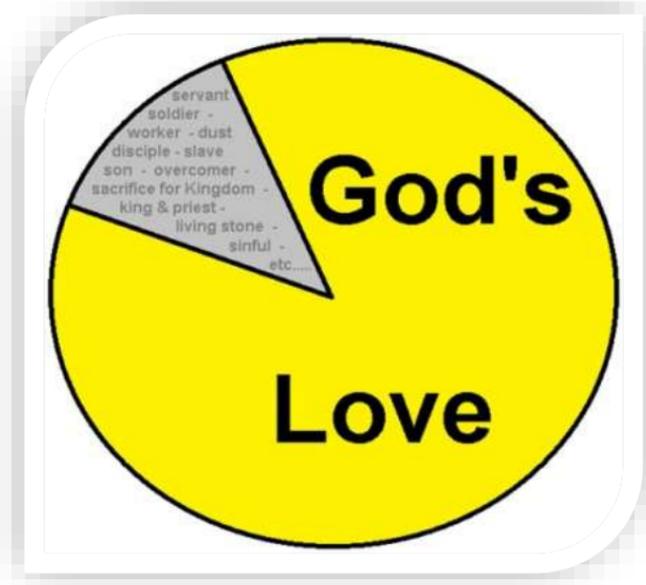
Mandy, in a discussion on Facebook lifted my spirits with this:

Listening ONLY to Grace based teaching kept me insensitive to sin in my life . The

*consequences of which were huge. It's not that I found it encouraged me to sin loads, but more that it didn't direct me towards a cleaner life- and **desensitized me to it all. I never considered Gods disapproval.** I feel so thankful to have repented and turned my life on track towards the truth and the straight and narrow way. Emphasis added*

- **Now, God loves us soooo much has supposedly made 'relationship with God the only thing that matters'**

Something like this:



- **Now, God loves everyone soooo much that we should not preach a hellfire message**
- **Now, God loves us soooo much that hell barely exists any more**

Universalism(all will be saved) is now rampant in the Church.

Consider this from Peirce, a believer who has been a Christian for over 60 years. He shared a teaching in a group for discipleship and new believers, about how Gehenna (hell) is only really speaking of the rubbish dump, the Valley of Hinnon. Hell as a place of eternal suffering does not really exist God loves us too much to send anyone to a place like that:

*'In the light of several recent entries in this group, I found this **very interesting and very important reading.** Especially on **the most interesting evolution of the our view of Hell** (and what we hear when the Scriptures record Jesus talking about*

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

Hell) compared and contrasted with what his listeners would have heard.' (Emphasis added)

We really do have to stop preaching God's love for heaven's sake, we are sending so many to the 'Lake of Fire' hell. All the while they think they are saved, until....

- **Now, non-Christians use it against us when we try to expose sin and while witnessing to them**

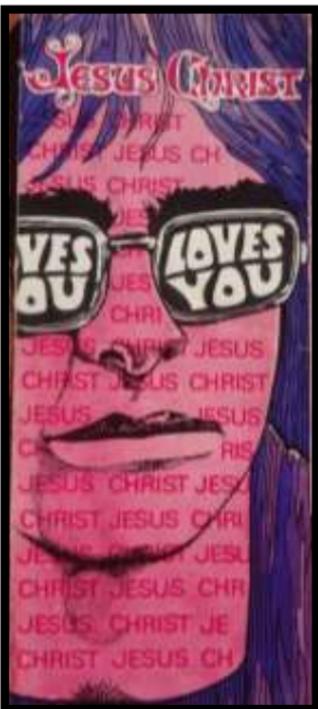
All the way from:

"You can't judge me, I thought your God was a God of love?"

to...



- **Now, God loves us so much we must never offend anyone even with Truth**
- **Now, God loves us sooooo much, we demand absolute unity. Truth must be ignored if it is going to offend anybody (we can just go home and pray about it.)**
- **Now, God loves us so much, demands that we do not preach the Law as Jesus did.**



"GOD'S GRACE CANNOT BE FAITHFULLY PREACHED TO UNBELIEVERS UNTIL THE LAW IS PREACHED AND MAN'S CORRUPT NATURE IS EXPOSED. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR A PERSON TO FULLY REALIZE HIS NEED FOR GOD'S GRACE UNTIL HE SEES HOW TERRIBLY HE HAS FAILED THE STANDARDS OF GOD'S LAW."
~ JOHN MACARTHUR

- **Now, God loves us so much causing Sola Affectus that severely compromises**

the disciple and training of the Church

- **Now, God loves us so much, which then makes our evangelism so weak and ineffective.**

An evangelistic leaflet from the early 1970's, from memory. I seemed to have kept it as a book mark:

Think about this – if you were born after 1970, most likely you have never really known anything different. It has become so entrenched in our thinking and beliefs, because it's all we heard.

That is why I say that we are deceived and why I say 'we do not really know God any more.'

This is also why we feel we must fight and resist such a 'fantastic' accusation.

How dare you. How can you say that we do not really know God?

Some will even go to the extent of thinking it is of the devil.

Self-preservation is a powerful force in our lives.

- **Now, because we think that God loves so much, we are blinded on how to fix our churches.**

Tired, frustrated pastors try every imaginable program to try and keep people interested and committed. If they could let go of the false assumptions on how much we need to protect people and start to truly challenge them with the blunt Word instead, the change would come. Yes, you most likely will have a smaller congregation after you do that, so what? You will please God and you will see radical change.

- **Now, 'God loves us so much', causes us to present a shallow Christian worldview to the non-Christian world.**

We feel we must portray God as a good light to the world. But the world says that anything that is not 'nice' is evil. So, we can only say something 'nice' on God's behalf and the world is not exposed to God's hatred for sin and demand for holiness.



- **Now, 'God loves us so much', presents a shallow form of Christianity to our children and believers in general.**
- **Now, 'God loves us so much', has given birth to the false criticism "that's not being Christ-like' when you are doing what Christ did.**

Many times I have been told that 'You are not Jesus' or 'You are not Paul' to silence my call to Scriptural living. Their accusation is confirmation of what I am saying – Jesus told us to 'do what He does' which includes speaking out against compromised truth and that we would be hated for it.

Paul told his listeners/readers to 'be like me.'

Peter says:

1Peter 4:11 "Are you called to be a speaker? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you..." NLT

Years ago, I even had someone accuse me of 'hiding behind Paul.' That continues to make me smile each time it comes to mind. ☺ It is a completely false statement, taken from another context to give it accusation power in this context.

- **Now, 'God loves us so much', causes weak counseling and it is far less effective.**

It seems that everybody 'today' is a victim of life. They have a personality disorder, a guilt complex, a regressive memory complex or a plethora of other conditions that make them so much the victim. Perhaps they had a terrible childhood, a bad marriage, a bad accident or just about anything that allows for the sin in their lives to be dumbed down to virtually nothing. So, any genuine responsibility or expectation to deal with sin is barely present.

No! Forget all the fancy named conditions and terrible problems. Just obey Scripture. We are supposed to be soldiers in an army, overcoming the problems of the past, not spoilt children of the King.

When you think about it, the concepts and book *Love languages* is only needed because we refuse to obey Scripture and love one another sacrificially. As self centred people, we need to be told all the benefits for 'me', of loving your spouse in this special way, before we are prepared to sacrificially love them. **If we just obey the Bible as we are told to, books like *Love Languages* are irrelevant.** But when we try to live our lives by these books, we conveniently side step the requirement to just obey Scripture, as it is written. The Word of God will revolutionize your life, if you want to grow. But the truth is, we do not really want to grow, we want to find an easier way to live the 'acceptable' even the 'trendy' Christian lifestyle that appears enticing to our friends and family.

Until we are prepared to truly die to self, we will continue on in a form of Christianity without power and one that does not please God.

- **Now, 'God loves us so much', causes a great pride in good Christians, believing that their theology of love is more superior.**

Our 'love' theology is far more superior than anyone speaking uncomfortable truths. It causes us to 'take the higher moral ground'; to silence the 'un-Christ-like' which confirms in the minds of the undiscerning that uncomfortable truths are not to be spoken. We push against God and His Spirit working in people.

- **Now, we help Satan use 'God loves you so much' to silence any possibility of offending truth - to stop the voice/oracle/words of God for others or Churches.**
- **Now, because we feel soooo loved by God, worship is reduced to a self-centered feel-good 'singsong'.**
- **Now, 'God loves mankind so much' that we must always help the needy however they treat you and they do not even have try.**

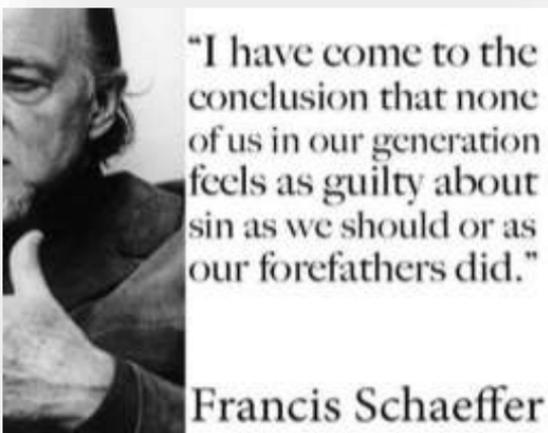
Somehow Jesus is supposed to have done this with all the people He interacted with, so we should too. No He didn't. He did not persist with those who had a hard heart.

- **Now, 'God loves us so much', reduces our ability to suffer for a great cause, for we have become the centre and the cause of our lives.**

- Now, 'God loves me so much', has caused us to believe and totally accept that God's love is 'unconditional'. A free pass to take God's love for granted.
- Now, 'God loves me soooo much' causes us to think we are so loveable to God that we barely repent of sin.

How many Christians have a time of repentance as part of their daily devotions? Not many. How many confess sin during the day as it rears its ugly head?

When we first confess our sin and choose to follow Christ, we repent a lot, if we were truly saved. And this is supposed to be the beginning of a life of repentance. But now, we really do not feel that bad about our sin, for after all, 'God loves us so much'.



- Now, 'God's great love for us' has birthed and cemented in our minds, the "I am special to God" syndrome. This is Spiritual conceit'.

[Jonathan Edwards](#) has some profound words about this:

Today sin is called sickness, so people think it requires therapy, not repentance.

~John MacArthur~

This is . . . the difference between the joy of the hypocrite, and the joy of the true saint. The [hypocrite] rejoices in himself; self is the first foundation of his joy: the [true saint] rejoices in God. . . . True saints have their minds, in the first place, inexpressibly pleased and delighted with the

*sweet ideas of the glorious and amiable [i.e., pleasant, admirable] nature of the things of God. And this is the spring of all their delights, and the cream of all their pleasures. . . . But the dependence of the affections of hypocrites is in a contrary order: they first rejoice . . . that they are made so much of by God; and then on that ground, he seems in a sort, lovely to them.*¹²²

This, written in the 1700's so aptly describes the normal believer today. We were made to feel so special to God, so we love Him. We feel so special to God, so we 'worship' Him with all manner of self-centered songs and feelings.

Yet, remove the feeling of specialness and we fall apart spiritually, we cannot understand why God has abandoned us.

Why is our focus and commitment so shallow? We do not love and serve God for who He is, but because we love to feel loved by Him. The former was a choice to serve the Holy Lord; the latter was a sentimental, self-centered attachment that is easily shaken.

[John Piper](#) in commenting on Edwards above, wrote about some of the problems of self-love:

*'...self-love inevitably embraces God not for the beauty of his glory in itself, but for the natural benefits God gives. Mere self-love savors the gifts of God without savoring fellowship with God himself...'*¹²³

- **Now, the over-emphasis of 'God's great love for us' causes us to believe that God is wonderfully watching to arrange everything nicely in our life. This is a great self-centeredness.**

When you post this sort of simplistic, self-centered rubbish.....:



.....what are you even talking about?

¹²² <https://goo.gl/CTU1AA> The Religious Affections, ed. by John Smith, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 249-250

¹²³ <https://goo.gl/qErizz> God's Passion For His Glory John Piper pp. 110

Are you into some 'other gospel' or something?
So I posted this:



Oh, the joy of these types of things?

If you do not consider these things to be joyous, you do not have the heart of God; you do not have a kingdom perspective at all, and you are probably not even saved.

I want to be like Christ. God commands me to be holy, and I want to be what God wants me to be. And He even commands me to be 'happy and excited' about persecution and problems.¹²⁴

No! Not just words, we have to really mean it.

If you are surrounded by people who only give it lip service in your Bible study or your *Know Your Bible* group, but would not let you talk about it as though we have to be accountable to do it, get out of that church and find someone who does mean it.

I have had Christians say, "Oh but I cannot find any church like that." So what, you keep looking with perseverance, and prayer till you do. 'Ask and you will receive', if you ask, like the woman did of the 'evil judge.'

If you still cannot, you may need to find one or two people and meet with them, making each other accountable.

You may say "On no, my pastor said that only rebellious people do that, it is too radical."

¹²⁴ [Matt 5:12](#) **Be happy and excited!** You will have a great reward in heaven. People did these same things to the prophets who lived long ago. CEV

[Luke 6:23](#) Long ago your own people did these same things to the prophets. **So when this happens to you, be happy and jump for joy!** You will have a great reward in heaven. CEV

[2 Cor 12:10](#) That is why, for Christ's sake, **I delight in weaknesses**, in insults, **in hardships**, in persecutions, **in difficulties**. For when I am weak, then I am strong. NIV

[James 1:2](#) My brothers and sisters, you will have many kinds of trouble. **But this gives you a reason to be very happy.** ERV

I say, 'What is radical?' Preaching about hell is radical these days! Jesus was radical. He only survived about 3 years after He began preaching and teaching.

I do not care about what is considered radical or what is not. I care about doing what the Bible says and thinking what the Bible thinks. If that means I need to not follow the crowd, so what. That's irrelevant.

So, I say again, if you cannot find a church with a proper Biblical perspective, find someone who does, and meet with them. And include other hungry believers as you come across them. Make it a place where you truly die to self, pray with fervor, and study the Bible.

- **Now, 'God's great love for us' belief, causes us to crumble in a tragedy thinking that God has abandoned us, and many leave the faith.**

And this is just a short list in no particular order, of the more obvious ways, in which we are compromised. There are so many more subtle ways that cannot even quantify the effects.

David Cooke posted a good article concerning these issues titled:

The World And Many Churches Have A "False View" Of Love. We Must Not Redefine What True Godly Love Is! True Love Is Not Devoid Of The Holiness Of God And Does Not Compromise With Sin.

- A. To many 'love' means we must accept, tolerate and even approve of sin and never speak out against it and never give a word of warning or correction concerning false doctrine or ungodly living. But this is a false worldly love...[read more](#)¹²⁵

It is worth reading the whole article.
Thank you brother.

How true this is.

Love is NOT devoid of the holiness of God; despite our feeble postmodern tampering, experiments and shallow claims. We can never win against God, we cannot somehow prevail against God and redefine 'love'

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<https://www.facebook.com/AflameforGod/posts/1314225285343885>

for all eternity. These are mere futile efforts that will come to a screeching halt the instant we die. And then we must stand before the Holy God and explain our stupid, carnal reasons for trying to do so.

And finally, [DA Carson](#) hits the nail on the head with his appraisal on what an over-emphasis on God's love does:

*"I do not think that **what the Bible says about the love of God can long survive at the forefront of our thinking if it is abstracted from the sovereignty of God, the holiness of God, the wrath of God, the providence of God, or the personhood of God—to mention only a few nonnegotiable elements of basic Christianity. The result, of course, is that the love of God in our culture has been purged of anything the culture finds uncomfortable. The love of God has been sanitized, democratized, and above all sentimentalized"***¹²⁶ (Emphasis added)

D.A. Carson; The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God. Wheaton, 1L; Crossway Books; 2000, p.11.

As I have said, we do not even know the God of the Bible now.

How can I say such a thing? Well quite easily, let me prove it to you:-

- Your god would never execute a liar as God did to Ananias. Because apparently, your god loves us too much to do such a terrible thing.
- Your Jesus would never take a whip and drive people out of the Church. You have 'another Jesus'.
- Your god would not curse anyone who preaches a false gospel or 'another Jesus'.
- Your god accepts homosexuals in the Church as they are, without rebuke.
- Your Jesus goes about only 'spreading the love of God' and a gospel of 'grace', never really strongly challenging anyone.
- Christians today will not judge sin and declare it to be so, even though the followers of Jesus in the Bible did. A lot.

Let me show you an instance of where your bible differs from the Bible.

¹²⁶ goo.gl/yLsZ4C

From the new *Postmodern Romanticist Translation (PRT version)*, freshly edited by the evangelical postmodern Church. And **endorsed by pastors everywhere**:

2 Tim 4:2 I ~~command~~ **encourage** you to preach God's message **about His love**. Do it willingly, ~~even if it isn't the popular thing to do~~ **unless it might offend someone. This may drive them away from church. This also might give the church a bad name.** You must correct people and point out their sins **but only if you can, by some miracle, find a new way of telling them they are sinful (full of sin), that will never be offensive. Otherwise, you must not correct people and point out their sins - this is not the love of God.** But also, **always** cheer them up **and make them feel good about themselves**, and when you instruct them, always be patient, **building up their self-esteem for this is what Jesus did.**

Yes, the *Postmodern Romanticist Translation (PRT version)*, sometimes called the *Laodicean Bible*, is a wonderfully relevant bible for today's world. Your church will love it.

Really?

No! The Bible YOU live by, is NOT the Bible you read. In fact, the bible you preach & live by, is NOT the Bible you quote! Some of it sounds that same, but it means something quite different.

Your bible is twice as thick as mine, due to all the white-out (correction fluid or tape) used to cover and correct the less-than-pleasant verses and the inclusion of all the modern traditions of men that have been written into it.

It is as though the postmodern Church has become a huge Christian cult, just as we consider the Mormons or the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Oh how we need a great reformation. A shaking of the Church so that the hard-hearted leave and we can get

back to what the Bible really says – a purifying of the Church.

Stop it, and repent!

The 'trained professional' pastors and Bible college professors, they are supposed to be the Gate Keepers. But generally, they have let God and His people down very badly in the post modern church era.

Jer. 8:11 *They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. "Peace, peace," they say, when there is no peace.* NIV

And:

Eze. 13:1 *The Lord said:*

2 Ezekiel, son of man, condemn the prophets of Israel [pastors and elders] who say they speak in my name, but who preach messages that come from their own imagination. Tell them it's time to hear my message.

3 I, the Lord God, say those lying prophets [pastors and elders] are doomed! They don't see visions—they make up their own messages! 4 Israel's prophets [pastors and elders] are no better than jackals that hunt for food among the ruins of a city. 5 They don't warn the people about coming trouble or tell them how dangerous it is to sin against me. 6 Those prophets [pastors and elders] lie by claiming they speak for me, but I have not even chosen them to be my prophets. And they still think their words will come true. 7 They say they're preaching my messages, but they are full of lies—I did not speak to them!

8 So I am going to punish those lying prophets [pastors and elders] for deceiving the people of Israel[church] with false messages. 9 I will turn against them and no longer let them belong to my people. They will not be allowed to call themselves Israelites or even to set foot in Israel. Then they will realize that I am the Lord God.

10 Those prophets [pastors and elders] refuse to be honest. They tell my people there will be peace, even though there's no peace to be found. They are like workers who think they can fix a shaky wall by covering it with paint. 11 But when I send rainstorms, hailstones, and strong winds, the wall will surely collapse. 12 People will then ask the workers why the paint didn't hold it up.

*13 That wall is the city of Jerusalem. **And I, the Lord God, am so angry** that I will send strong winds, rainstorms, and hailstones to destroy it. 14 The lying prophets[**pastors and elders**] have tried to cover up the evil in Jerusalem, but I will tear down the city, all the way to its foundations. And when it collapses, those prophets[**pastors and elders**] will be killed, and everyone will know that I have done these things.*

*15 The city of Jerusalem and its lying prophets[**pastors and elders**] will feel my fierce anger. Then I will announce that the city has fallen and that the lying prophets[**pastors and elders**] are dead, 16 **because they promised my people peace, when there was no peace. I, the Lord God, have spoken.** CEV*

We must forsake our own fancy ideas of what the gospel should be and we must preach the gospel of the Bible. The Lord Jesus Christ MUST be made the **Head of the Church** again.

We have glorified the 'love of God for us', exalted it, given it holy pre-eminence above all other aspects of God. It is now the primary, the ultimate, the most pre-eminent standard, by which all things are judged. All other discerning principles have been degraded to the 'not particularly spiritual' level in comparison.

If we really understood just how much our church is centred on self, even while we lift the Name of Jesus, we would weep.

Humans can say all the right words, but be thinking in virtually the opposite way:

Isaiah 1:10 You are **no better than the leaders and people of Sodom and Gomorrah!**

So listen to the Lord God:

11 "**Your sacrifices mean nothing to me.**

I am sick of your offerings of rams and choice cattle; I don't like the blood of bulls or lambs or goats.

12 "Who asked you to bring all this when you come to worship me? **Stay out of my temple!**

13 **Your sacrifices are worthless**, and incense is disgusting. I can't stand the evil you do on your New Moon Festivals or on your Sabbaths and other times of worship.

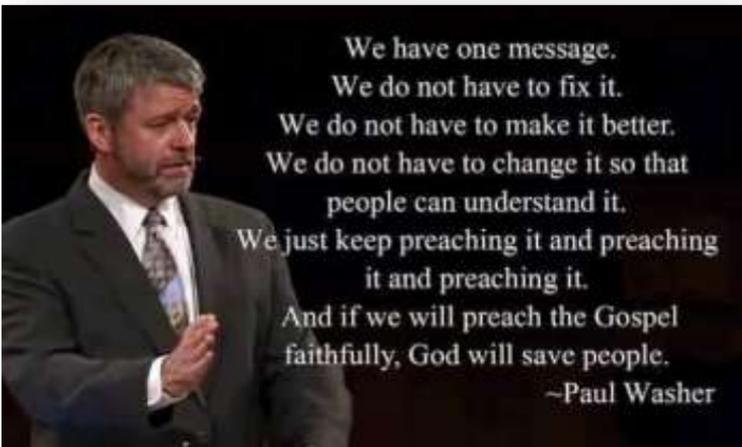
14 **I hate your New Moon Festivals and all others as well.** They are a **heavy burden I am tired of carrying.** CEV

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

The heart of man is deceitfully wicked [Jer.17:9](#) - our heart knows how to subtly live in a way that our words and thoughts will not.

We, the 'good' churches, even reject the 'seeker-friendly' theology, but we do not realize that we practice it.

Some pastors afraid of being seen as preaching a 'sugar-coated' gospel, will even preach a little tough at times to prove that they are not 'like that'. But they will not address the most needy issues. They will not preach the depth of sin, the reality of hell (and demons), the hatred God has for sin, the hatred God has for every kind of unnatural sex, the terrifying wrath of God, etc...



We are not here to maintain and propagate a system of Christian teaching more or less, less or more; we are here as Christ. The world thrust Him out; He has come back again and He is not out.

T. Austin-Sparks

SECTION 4 WHAT NOW?

CHAPTER 36. WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

I am no expert in correcting these things, I merely offer my thoughts after observing, grieving over and praying about these things for many years.

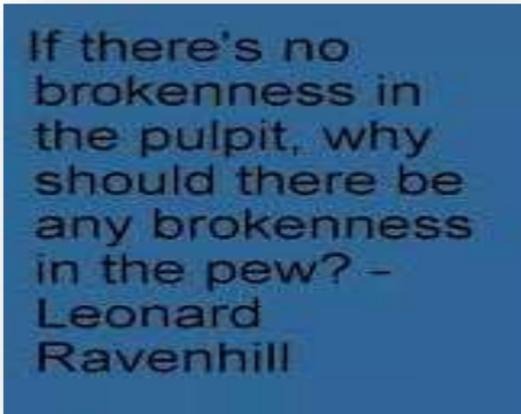
In fact, it was the so-called 'trained experts' that largely got us into these problems, so I doubt that it is experts we need right now. No, it is the humble we need to hear from now.

While much of the writings of the Eastern Church father, **Isaac the Syrian** (613–700) I would disagree with, this is profound:

'He who knows his own sin is higher than the man who resurrects the dead by his prayer.'

The broken and contrite, those who intentionally live and move in God, daily. Listening with an attentive ear to what the Spirit is saying. Those humble, yet bold enough to call the so called 'experts' into account. Those few voices we hear calling from the wilderness.

It's the broken saints, that I want to hear from, those broken by this evil world and rebelling church.



If there's no brokenness in the pulpit, why should there be any brokenness in the pew? - Leonard Ravenhill

Oh, how there would be brokenness in the pulpits all over the Western world, if they only had any real understanding of God's heart today.

Well, what should we be doing?

It seems to me that it would include a number of things that I will suggest. I do not presume to know all that we should be doing, but surely it would include some things I shall outline.

Seeing the problem clearly

If your students believe that $0 + 1 = 6$, how can you teach them algebra?

If your students believe that evolution created the universe, how can you teach them that God created everything in 6 days?

If your students believe the false traditions of men, how can you teach them who God really is?

And how can you teach a child anything if they are undisciplined? Unless you are able to breakthrough and gain their respect, it's all haphazard learning and maturing. Hit & miss.

False facts MUST be exposed and corrected before you can teach anything deep or lasting.

Jesus hated false facts and teachings, that's why He strongly exposed them as false.

False ideas is how Christian cults develop - JW's, Mormonism, Universalism, etc... Christianity has been majoring on an aspect of God to the diminishing of other vital aspects, very badly. Christians now have such bad foundations that unless the errors are corrected, they cannot know God. We are becoming a 'Christian sect' in the way we view Jehovah's Witnesses as a Christian sect, rather than remaining as a church of 'evangelical theology.'

A Christian sect?

A few examples of things we hold that are completely contradictory from age old 'evangelical theology' and the Bible:-

- 'Judge not that you be not judged'
- 'If God is a God of love, how could God destroy a whole city of people? Surely it's wrong?'
- 'We cannot push our Christian views on others'
- 'We just need to spread more love around'
- 'Jesus never condemned homosexuality so I won't'
- etc..

So yes, we are fast becoming a Christian sect.

All these lies must be dethroned. Do you know of any other effective way of cancelling the effect of strong, wrong belief, in order to get another message through?

In order to colour stain old timber, one must first remove the oils, wax, gunk and old paint. Wrong traditions of men, are the oils, wax, gunk and old paint, that prevents the truth from soaking in.

There is new anti-graffiti surface that is now used on signs. It causes any paint or permanent pen, used on them, to bead and it will run off, and any remnants can be wiped off with a cloth.

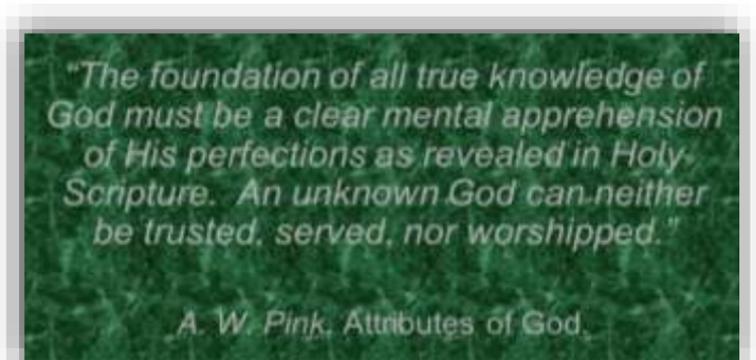
'God loves you so much' is the anti-graffiti surface, we apply to our form of Christianity - nothing sticks to it.

So many in the Church look good, like these modern signs, but little to nothing ever truly penetrates the surface.

A non-change people and a non-growing church, is an insult to a Holy God.

Currently, there is no **systematic deconstruction of the lies and the traditions of men**, with the unequivocal establishing the clear nature, attributes and teaching about, and of God.

The Church is sick with cancer (traditions of men), but the pastors and leaders give hugs for medication. Truly, they are not so different from the big money-craving pharmaceutical companies that hide genuine remedies and sell their concoctions of dependence to keep the people coming back for more.



Yes, absolutely true.

God MUST become known again today.

I have people say to me "Oh my church is good, our pastor really teaches the Word."

But when I hear his preaching, I am grieved because this believer and pastor do not even comprehend what 'good Word preaching' is. He preaches the same insipid, neutralized, waffle with the odd strong word on something benign, to give it the impression that he 'really does speak out strongly on important things' too. Pastors will even declare that God is fearsome, that He will harshly judge the wicked, but these are all words to some 'other' people out there somewhere and has nothing to do with us. These are mere words, they are not things that we really have to live by - they are not things that help us interpret the Bible. They are not things that truly show me how to live my life. They do

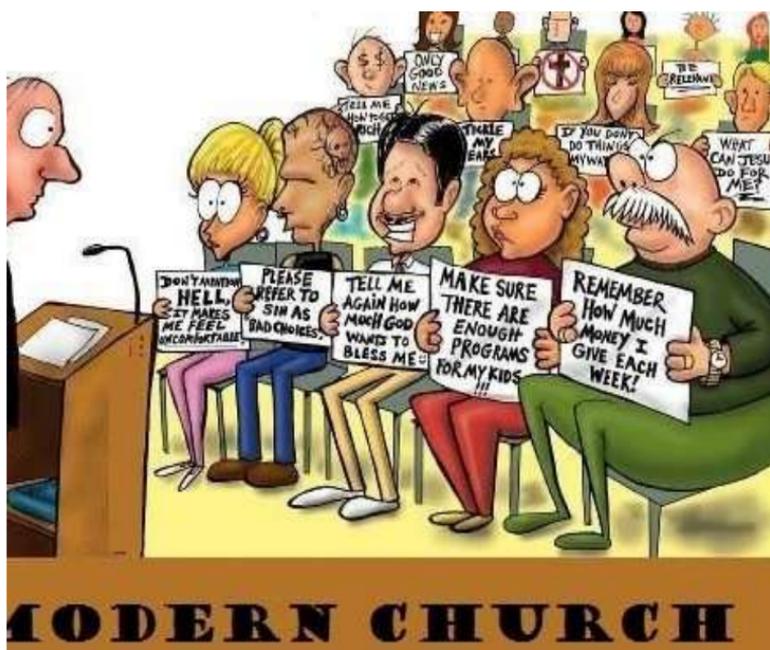
not demand that I, personally, am humbled and broken over sin. These words touch us not.

Before any pastor can have any really meaningful impact, the traditions of men, must be exposed and dismantled, and this is what Paul did. He '**waged a war on every wrong belief**' in the Corinthian church:

2 Cor. 10:5 We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ. NLB

Dear pastor, if you are not **destroying every proud obstacle today**, you are throwing your life away for so little, maybe nothing.

- How can anyone be disciplined by the Lord (or by others) when they subjectively believe 'judge not lest you be judged'?
- How can believers be Kingdom focused and self-sacrificing, when they so firmly believe that God loves them soooo much and is concerned about their every little trouble?
- How can believers deny themselves and seek the Kingdom, when they believe that God wants to prosper them financially?
- How can believers really speak the truth to any sin, when they believe that it is not their job to expose unnatural sexuality in the Church?
- How can people know God and obey Him now, when they think that the 'Jesus' of the NT is so much nicer than the 'God' of the OT?
- How can people truly hear the words of Jesus(or the Bible) when He is falsely painted as always being so kindly?
- How can you genuinely challenge believers, when they think they are very special to God?
- How can you train people who believe that the best way to grow, is only by 'encouraging' them in a nice way?
- How can you do anything meaningful with politically correct believers?
- How can you have any real impact in believers' lives before the lies are exposed and they very clearly see, who God really is?
- How are you going to impart the power of God to your people, before you restore the power of who God is?
- How will anything stick, if it all runs off like water on a duck's back?

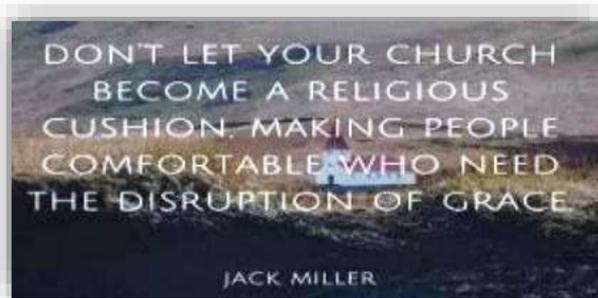


Paul is correct:

1 Cor. 9:16Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

NLB

Sadly, this is what we are doing today, we need a 'disruption of grace':



Pastors and teachers, until you remove their shield of 'God loves me so much' protection, your words of hard truth will NOT get through to your congregation.

You must disarm them first, only then will you have any real effect, only then will there be any sort of an agent of change:



Oh yes, and they will try to convince you that they are just trying to 'defend' the lowly, but don't believe a word of it.

And how do you disarm them?

By methodically disarming the many wrong traditions of men they hold to from raw Scripture.

Remove the rose tinted 'God loves me' glasses. That is how it works and in order to get our proper eyesight back, we need radical surgery - cut out the 'God loves us so much' elements from our life.

Pastor, stop preaching it and preach Christ, Christ in repentance, Christ in holiness, Christ in judgment, Christ in deep humility, Christ in prayer, Christ in destroying vain imaginations. Preach it till the fear of God returns to all listening.

[2 Cor. 10:5:](#)

*Casting down **imaginations**, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God...*

KJV

*We are **destroying speculations** and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God...*

NASV

*We demolish arguments and every **pretension** that sets itself up against the knowledge of God...*

NIV

*We destroy every **proud obstacle** that keeps people from knowing God...*

NLT

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God...

ESV

*and all their **intellectual arrogance** that oppose the knowledge of God...*

GWT

*For we **overthrow arrogant 'reckonings,'** and every stronghold that towers high in defiance of the knowledge of God...*

Weymouth NT

[A W. Tozer said in 'Christian Leader':](#)

*I preach to my congregation week after week and **I pray that I may be able to preach to my people with such conviction that they sweat. I do not want them to leave my services feeling good. The last thing I want to do is to give them some kind of religious tranquilizer and let them go to hell in their relaxation.***

***The Christian church was designed to make sinners sweat.** I have always believed that, and I*

still believe it. **The messages preached in our churches should make backslidden Christians sweat.** And if I achieve that objective when I preach, I thank God with all of my heart, no matter what people think of me. *Jesus Is Victor!*, 61-62.

"Lord, help me to preach with boldness—not concerned with 'what people think of me.' Amen"¹²⁷

(Emphasis added)

I hear the immediate protest 'You do not know about the people that are touched in my church when I preach a repentance message.' You mean your people have a momentary 'emotional' touch of conviction but everyone knows it is not necessary to follow through with life choices? And one day they will have another touch, but no real change.

Or do you mean you had people touched by a moving moment in your message or presentation – some touching sentimental story that brought a momentary emotional reaction but lead to nothing beyond that?

That is NOT the spiritual Christian lifestyle, that is mere emotionalism. Emotionalism does not get you saved or keep you holy. In isolation from spiritual obedience, it is spiritual trash.

Think of it this way. The global economy is currently operating in a huge bubble of debt, with highly over priced stocks and printing trillions of dollars of 'funny money' just to stay afloat.

We got here through greed and bad management. When the big bubble of the dot.com crash in 2001, and the housing bubble - global financial crisis occurred in 2008, the governments did not allow everything to revert to its true value, they merely put a band-aid on the internal sickness with huge bail outs. Accordingly, the bubble got much, much bigger. We are now in the 'Everything Bubble.'

This huge bubble is going to burst in the near future.

So too, the Western Church is living in a huge bubble of 'God loves me soooo much and I am special'.

They have refused to expose the sickness over the decades. They only applied an external band-aid on the internal sickness - created a new dumbed down, glitzy, glamorous gospel to get more people in; they created new whiz-bang programs to motivate their tired members; they made new laws that prevented any judging, confronting sin or speaking truth and many more traditions of men.

¹²⁷ goo.gl/9G5Hxv

The bursting of the economic bubble will cause the stocks to crash back down to their genuine value. So too, the Church's bubble will crash back down to genuine value. Back down to reality - the reality that God is God, and we are not so special in the whole scheme of things after all.

I suspect that the Church bubble will crash shortly after the economic bubble crashes. There will be much suffering and turning away from the god who is 'not protecting me from all my troubles.'

Oh, how **we need a total reformation**, not just revival or restoration.

In order to break this deception, we need more than a book or a sermon with some discussion. Like other things, it will be forgotten very quickly.

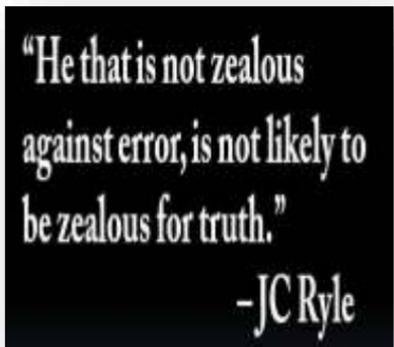
During discussions there needs to be a clear commitment to, and conscious effort to check ourselves and each other.

We need to develop 'an ear for our words'. Meaning train ourselves to notice each time we think, and talk in this way. A clear commitment to correct each other.

We are told in Scripture; to 'take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.'[\(2Cor. 10:5\)](#)

And it sounds as though Paul is saying in this verse, that if you do not capture every thought, then I will, when I get there and I will do it harshly.

Our pastors and elders are supposed to be doing just that! But they do not!



We desperately need a post-modern reformation of the Church!

A great reformation that will be recognized as the great turning point for Christianity. **Back to God.** But I suspect that for the Church in general, there will be no great reformation. Rather, the Church will descend into the Great Apostate Church of the end times.

But, believers everywhere can and will be transformed. There will be great revival. Do not wait for the Church organization to change, do it yourself.

Not only has the Western Church neutralized the Biblical gospel, but we have been exporting it to every other country in the world, neutralizing the gospel

there too. India does not need our neutralized, self-centered, impotent, dangerous gospel. Neither does China, Vietnam, New Guinea, Ethiopia, Vanuatu, Peru or Nepal. In fact, we all desperately 'need NOT to have it'. We need the truth.

Thank God that church leaders in some countries, see our false gospel for what it is and reject it.



"Oh Lord, please stop us and bring a great reformation."

Rom. 12:2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. NLB

What are we to preach?

What did Jesus preach?

What did the apostles preach?

What then, are we to preach?

Surely, the message that Jesus taught is the most important message.

What Jesus instructed the apostles to teach, and what they taught is the critical message.

What then was that message?

The Lord Jesus Christ **MUST** be actively and purposefully, made the **Head of the Church again**.

You say "we do that already. You do not understand how we really worship God in our church services."

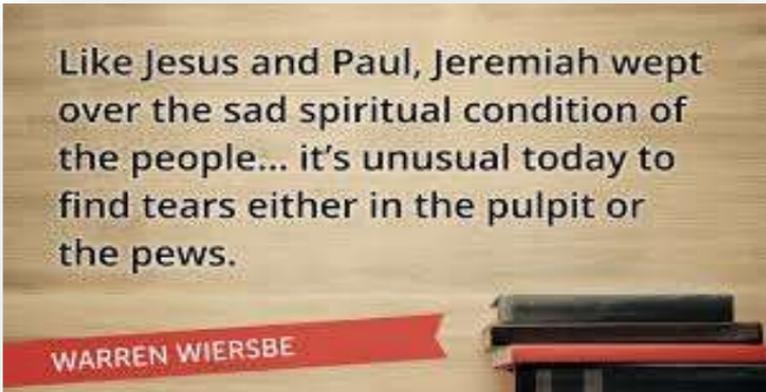
I then have to ask, "Have you not heard anything I have said so far?"

We must in brokenness, repent before God and plead that He open our eyes to who He really is. We must 'destroy every vain precept of men' every 'tradition of men' that we have lifted up as Scriptural, and turn again to God- without reservation.

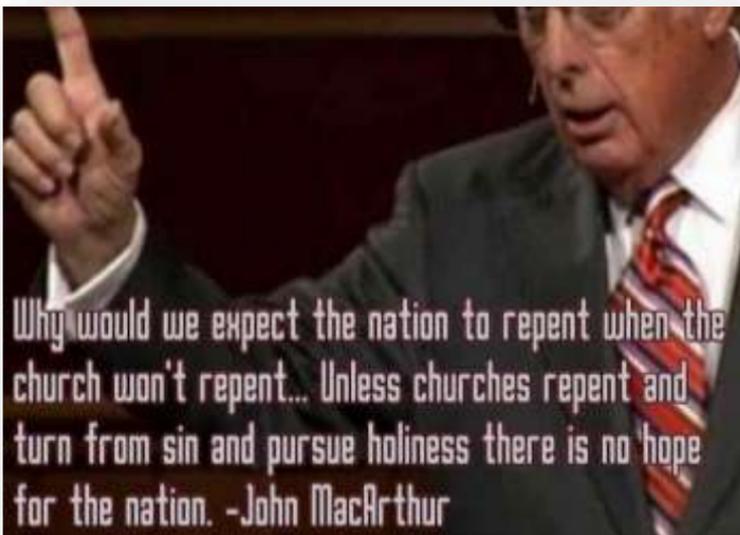
Here are some things that I believe God wants us to be doing now:

Enough Already! Stop Preaching God's Love For Heaven's Sake

- repent of cold, hard hearts, corporately - in our church services. Pastors, elders and congregation.



- pray for forgiveness, and that you come to know God afresh again, and pray for a new heart.



- Stop all the singing and all the preaching. Yes! Stop the self-centered singing and stop the self-centered preaching - **just read the Bible from the pulpit.** Read the whole book of John. Aloud. **Read through each gospel account - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, noting down each time Jesus strongly spoke truth that was offensive. And how often He was kindly.** It will truly open your eyes.

Read the whole book of Revelation. Aloud.
Read the whole book of Romans. Aloud.
Read the whole book of Jeremiah. Aloud.

The Western Church leaders are now so dull of hearing, that God does not need the benefit of

their shallow insights of Scripture and of who He is.

Read the Sword of the Spirit and allow the Holy Spirit to convict, teach, encourage and change hearts.

Read and pray for the whole length of the church service.

Read and pray like the 'woman seeking justice from the unjust judge', and keep reading and praying it until the Holy Spirit truly moves.

Forget about all the popular books written by popular authors. Don't quote them and follow them. Just read Scripture and pray.

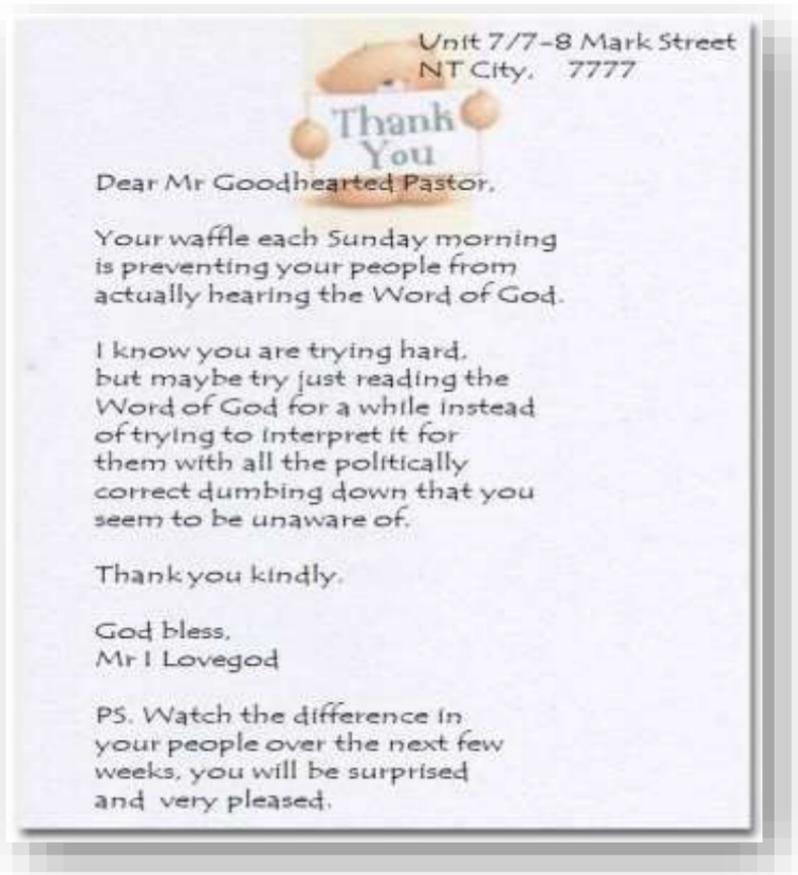
We are called to follow Christ. We were not called to build a building and fill it with people. In all our activity, we lose focus on what exactly we were called to do.

So give up the distracting loud music that makes us feel good, so that we can just worship Him. Just worship God in prayer, in simple, humble words, pouring out your heart to God.

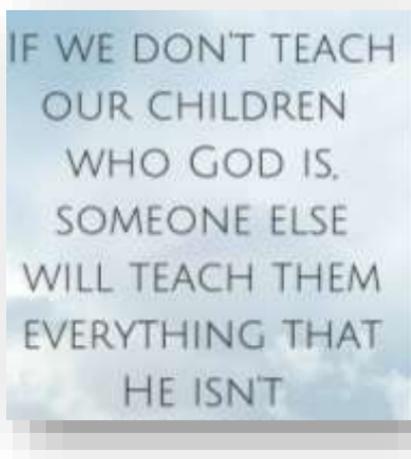
What a great act of worship to God by giving up the music for six months.

"But we cannot do that" you say. Why? What, you do not want to give up something that is 'popular'? Sounds as though you need to, then. Sounds like you need to 'slay your Isaac.' Or is it because you would not know how to worship God without the music? Well then, there is another reason to give it up; in order to truly worship God in truth and Spirit. Or is it because you would lose too many people? Then again I say, we were not called to build a building and fill it with people. We were called to make disciples - followers of Christ who would give up everything for Him. Be willing to give up loud distracting music that gave people good feelings but did not seem to produce changed lives in holiness and self-sacrifice, but rather, more self-centeredness. Or is it that you might lose people and not be able to afford the new flash church building? If that is the case, your buildings are a liability that prevent you from pure, self-sacrificing worship and service to God.

This was something I posted online a few years ago, to address this need of abandoning our feel-good preaching and to read the Bible instead:



Strange don't you think, that **Paul instructs Timothy to continue having weekly, public readings of Scripture¹²⁸**, but we do not do that anymore. We believe we have grown beyond that. Is it any wonder that the Western Church is so Biblically illiterate¹²⁹ and we have lost a proper understanding of God?



- And when you do start preaching again, stop affirming and start challenging. Stop preaching God's love, God's comfort, God's help against fear, against troubles, against pains,

¹²⁸ **1 Tim 4:13** Until I arrive, be sure to keep on reading the Scriptures in worship, and don't stop preaching and teaching. CEV

¹²⁹ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2015/july/epide-mic-of-bible-illiteracy-in-our-churches.html>

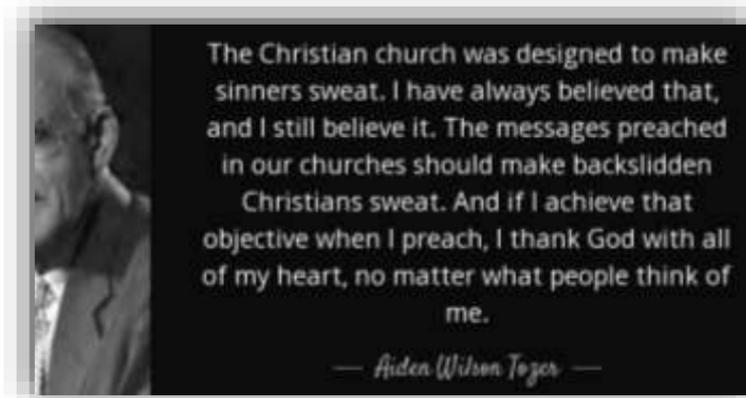
and start preaching only challenging messages. And preach them without the supposed 'mandatory' affirmation at the end.

You are helping to make soldiers, not running a self-esteem, therapy club.

Preach consecutive expository teaching. Leave the Textual and the Topical preaching aside for now. Do your own real study, in order to consecutively and expositively teach Scripture. If you are not prepared to do this, you truly are not serious about revitalizing your congregation.

Maybe start with the book of Revelation. You WILL be blessed, Jesus told us we would.

Forget about the favourite topics, the amazing miracle-producing prayer lines, and the jazzy services – these do not permanently change the heart. Just read, teach and pray, allowing the Holy Spirit to convict and do the deep work.



Put plainly, if we want to please and serve God in the way He commands, we have to stop playing church and really get serious. Really, who cares if others say we are weird! Our aim must be to serve God with the deepest, most passionate intentions that come from a life of brokenness.

- As suggested earlier: **Make a rule that every time you mention God's love, you then must preach twice as much about God's wrath, and commands.**

If Scripture does not state that God loves us that many times, but the New testament includes 1050 commands, then every time your mention God's love, you talk much more about God's commands.

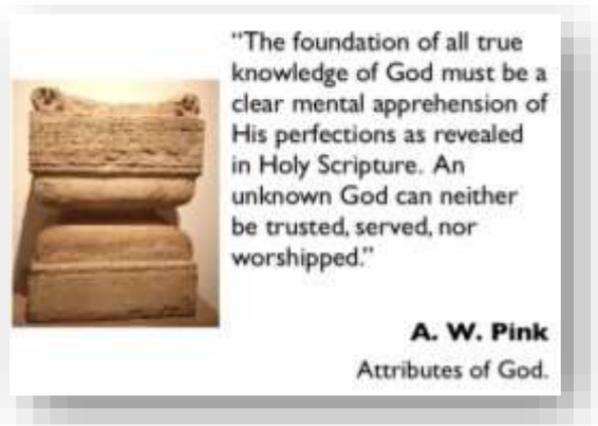
The Jews hold to 613 commands of God in the Law (248 positive Mitzvot/Commandments ("the Do's"), and 365 negative ones ("the Don'ts").).

The New Testament has 1050 commands.
Find a proper biblical balance?

- Stop praying for your every little need and want of the people, but rather pray for God's will to be done in us, in the Church and in the world.
Have you noticed that when we pray, most of it is about the needs of all the members? We need to rise above such small priorities, and pray for the unfolding of God's wonderful plan. Pray for revival, pray for the millions of brethren being persecuted, often so violently, in many parts of the world. Pray for the unsaved, and for yourselves, that you might have a greater effect for the gospel. Pray for the government.
- Do a mid-week study working through the Bible verses listed in each chapter of this book. Do not study this book, but rather the verses listed, so that the Holy Spirit can truly use the Scripture to prove it to your own minds and be transformed.
- Wait on God till you have finally been broken by the Holy Spirit and have wept in repentance before God. And I mean properly broken, not just a few tears and sentimental feelings of sorrow, then return to normal. It most likely will take weeks, maybe even months. For some, even years to achieve a real breakthrough.

Then, become reacquainted afresh with the God of the Bible - discover God all over again, solely from what the Bible actually says, devoid of the 'God loves us soooo much' paradigm and traditions.

Do a study on the character of God, the attributes of God, with the intended purpose of keeping the same emphasis that the Bible has on each one of these, rather than from what 'we sort of, kind of, remember' the Bible says.



Instead of rejecting theology because supposedly it's 'relationship with God' that matters, study our basic doctrines again. And again. Going deeper each time in your understanding of our Infinite God.

We think we are too high and mighty to go over the basic (glorious) themes of the truths that saved us, yet Peter did not:

2 Peter 1:12 *You are holding firmly to the truth that you were given. **But I am still going to remind you of these things.***

13 In fact, I think I should keep on reminding you until I leave this body. CEV

Even though they were firm in the truth, he was going to keep reminding them of the truths. And not only that, he was going to keep doing it until he died.

Even the business world understands the concept of **going back to the basics**. When things are not working and we are feeling a bit lost, we need to get back to the basics.

Many years ago I was chatting with a car salesman. He told me that there are times in his career, where he felt lost and unsure about how to sell cars effectively. He then said adamantly, "But when that happens, I go back to the basics of what I was taught, I review them and I get it all back again."

Losing our way and being unsure at times is normal. But in order to regain our focus, we must go back to the basics.

It may be helpful to think of it as going back to the simplicity of the NT church and doing what they did, the

way they did it. Putting aside all the modern church traditions and just practicing the new faith of believing in Jesus as the risen Son of God. Then we can once again find the essence of the faith that Jesus established and then begin to rebuild our churches and our lives from that Biblical basis.

As I said earlier, I am no expert, but I offer my thoughts after observing, grieving over and praying for these things for many years.

It seems to me that there are four main practical areas of our lives that need to change: -

- **Preaching** – pulpit, authors, composers of worship and contemporary songs: stop talking about ‘God’s love for you’
- **Evangelism** – need to stop evangelizing with this approach
- **Social** – need to stop talking this way with our family and friends.
- **Personal Beliefs** – We need to change our basic assumptions. Our paradigms must be renewed by a proper Bible understanding, and this will take intent and perseverance. An intent that includes real determination that to change our thinking with daily effort, and being accountable to others. Commit to correcting one another when we hear this wrong focus.

Make the choice to do it and to challenge your brethren to do it. Daily.

I wrote earlier about the instinctive aspect; **‘if hell or hard things are raised, the instinctive and immediate response, is ‘what about God’s love?’**

It is this instinctive aspect that shows how deep the deception is, and it will take a certain active determination to undo this ingrained belief.

And we need to do this until we have destroyed these deceitful traditions of men, in order that Christ may rebuild a Church of basic Christianity again.

When you see a church congregation that no longer cares about how unspiritual or rebellious they appear, but have humbled themselves to just seek God, you know that here is a church that is truly listening to God. They finally ‘got it.’

They no longer put on a 'happy program' Sunday morning, or a more 'appealing service'. They just want God to revive them, and they pray like desperate people.

They abandon the many good programs 'doing God's will', to find out afresh who God really is. They want God to come back as Lord, rather than a 'mere attraction.'

Oh, for churches and pastors who would be so honest: pastors that are sick to death of the 'our lovely warm services.' Pastors who demand a life-changing uncomfortable message and meeting together with God.

"Father please send Your Holy Spirit to convict us, to break into our hard hearts, and change us."

CHAPTER 37. LAST WORD

Yes, 'enough already, stop preaching God's love for heaven's sake' The Kingdom of God desperately needs 'truth sayers.'

Do you 'hunger and thirst for righteousness?'¹³⁰

Do you 'mourn' over the sin around you?¹³¹

And are you 'distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless' your 'soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds' just as Noah was?¹³²

Or does your smart phone and television have your affections? Do you feel happy with life?

Let me ask again, **do you 'hunger and thirst for righteousness' as a lifestyle?**¹³³



There is something so much bigger, so much greater that we must be about. **Our Father's business.**

¹³⁰<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matt+5%3A6&version=CEV;KJV;NIV;ERV>

¹³¹<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matt+5%3A4&version=CEV;KJV;NIV;ERV>

¹³²<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Peter+2%3A7-8&version=CEV;KJV;NIV;ERV>

¹³³<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matt+5%3A6&version=CEV;KJV;NIV;ERV>



How is it possible that God would even notice us?

It is NOT possible, yet He does.

I guess that this shows how extraordinary His grace really is.

Surely, for us, who are sinful people, to presume to speak to a holy God is an insult. Even to worship a holy God is an insult and an assault on His holiness.

How extraordinary His grace really is, that He would forgive and accept us, even tell us to come boldly into His presence. We must however, do it with complete humility, and for the rest of our life.



May God give you the strength to do what you need to do.

END NOTES

ⁱ Neil Baulch: a 61 year old nobody, and a lowly servant of the King. I do not claim to be an academic in any way. Put simply, as I read and studied the Bible through the years, I came across things that did not seem to add up with what was being preached. I used my library of resource books to find answers, and I found that there were answers that the Church did not like to talk about. (Rather than putting money into a great hi-fi system {I love music} I bought study books instead. I highly recommend this kind of priority.) I have not read much that has been written by popular writers or even old time preachers, but around 2012, I opened up a Facebook account to add friends & family and I began to see many wonderful quotes which I had never heard before. I was amazed to see that there were other people saying similar things as I. People like Paul Washer, David Pawson, Sproul, John MacArthur, Francis Chan, David Plait, and Leonard Ravenhill, Tozer, Pink, Ryle, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, DA Carson and many more.

I grew up country Victoria, in the south east corner of Australia. My parents were Christians and I made a deep commitment to Christ at an early age. After some rebellious teens years, I recommitted my life to Christ and settled into a local church, where I worked in various areas of ministry – Sunday school, youth, a deacon, a home church leader and preaching. I have 5 children. I have not studied a fulltime Bible college course. I do not feel in any way qualified to write this book, I only present some things that God has laid on my heart over many years.

Disclosure: I confess that in 2011, tragically my wife of 35 years deserted our marriage for her own reasons. It was devastating. And it was more devastating to have something that I preached against, happen to me. There had been problems in our marriage over the years that I could not fathom, but I would never leave the marriage. It was about eight years or so, before she left me that, one day while praying about it, I prayed yet again "Lord, what is it that is going on in our marriage..." and in desperation, I pleaded with the Lord "...Lord PLEASE change ME, or change my wife....." and then I heard myself wailing "...OR TAKE MY LIFE!!!!" And I sobbed inwardly. I was somewhat taken aback by the words I had heard coming from my mouth.

When she did finally leave, I grieved and wept before the Lord. However, I have not and will not ever celebrate her leaving me. I remember forcefully telling myself at the time, that I would NOT hate or even resent her for what she had done. One day during those early days, my mind was wandering into resentful thoughts and then a voice in my spirit loudly said "THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS." How true. You see, a proper 'Kingdom perspective' dictates that 'I was bought by the precious Blood of Jesus Christ to serve Him with my whole life, and to waste my time on past hurts, it to steal time from my boss. It is to watch old videos on the bosses time, as well as to do spiritual, emotional and physical harm to myself for selfish purposes. I repented and changed my thoughts. I was determined to use this devastating time to grow in God as much as I possibly could. I did not pass every test that well. I also assumed that I could no longer preach or speak out for God, and I said: "I have now failed at everything in life, I am finished Lord, now please let me serve you very quietly in a small obscure

corner of your Kingdom." Immediately I heard the words in my mind, forcefully put "YOU WILL NOT!"

Having been so humiliated by the character assassination and falling from grace, because of the lies that were told about me, I could not imagine how I could possibly, have any credibility to ever speak again.

But as I had done through very hard times over the years, I resigned myself to just place one foot in front of the other and keep going in obedience to God's will. If He wanted me to do anything, I would obey, but He would have to work it out, I was ultimately not responsible.

But, a new clarity arose after those days, as I determined to 'only know God' and be obedient to what he was saying to me. I developed a much clearer picture of who God really is; revelation from Scripture multiplied greatly. It has become difficult to read my Bible and to pray, because of the revelatory interruptions these days. I do not complain though, as I know what it is to have dry times in life too. "Oh, how wonderful is our God."

Interestingly, when I was in my mid-thirties, I felt God impress on me that 'You will be most useful when you are 60, 65 years old.' I didn't really want to hear that at the time, I wanted to be used 'mightily' then, as we often hear preachers say, but I was already starting to change my thinking by then.

The issue of divorce and remarriage.

There are many who will have a problem with remarriage, and I humbly accept your choice if you wish to reject this book.

I had to work through the questions of remarriage in a way I had never had to do before and God graciously taught from His Word. I have since remarried and I am so very thankful to God for His leading in my life, and a wonderful lady, Connie.

And I would also like to report that Connie approves of this book ☺

It did take her a while to reconcile what I was saying with Scripture, but the more she read Scripture as it is written in black and white, devoid of the traditions of men, the more she believed the truth of these pages.



ii King James Version Study Bible Notes:

John 4:8. John has also recorded that "God is light" (1:5) and irit" (John 4:24). Love is one of many attributes of God and is to be understood in relation to the others, such as holiness and justice.'

Thru The Bible Commentary - 1 John 4:

John gives us now another definition of God: "God is love." We have three great definitions of God in this wonderful little book: (1) "God is light" (1 John 1:5), and that was the theme from chapters 1:1 to 2:2; (2) "God is love" (1 John 4:8-16), the very heart of this 1 epistle is the theme from chapters 2:3 to 4:21; and (3) "God is life" is the theme of chapter 5. These are the three great definitions of God which John gives to us, and they constitute the major divisions of this very marvelous epistle.'

Holman Bible Dictionary - God as Mystery Revealed in Christ:

'Revelation of Christ in the form of Bible narrative allows us to describe God but not to define Him. Perhaps the closest we can come to a definition is that God is the holy Being who is love in servant form. This rises out of Bible statements. "the Lord our God is holy" (Ps. 99:9) "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16). These contain partial

descriptions, not definitions. The norm for a definition comes in Jesus, who said, "but I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:27 NRSV)'

Holman Bible Dictionary - The Origin of Atonement:

Yet, divine love is not sentimental or merely emotional. It is a righteous love which blazes out against all that opposes God's will. The New Testament affirms that 'God is love.' (1 John 4:8); it also affirms that "our God is a consuming fire" (1 Pet. 1:7). Thus, the cross is simultaneously a manifestation of God's will to save and of His wrath against sin.

Willmington's Guide - Attributes of God:

God is Love, This is at once **the most universally known and universally misunderstood attribute of all. Millions have simply equated love with God, thus weakening or totally denying his other perfections.** A man and woman may have an affair hidden from their spouses and justify their adulterous relationship by their great "love" for each other. But **God's love cannot be separated or isolated from his holiness and hatred for sin.** Having said all this, however, it must be admitted that of all his attributes, God's love is probably more quickly seized upon by seeking sinners than any other perfection. (emphasis added)

Vincent Word Studies:

Is love (ἀγάπη ἐστίν)

See on God is light (1Jn 1:5), and the truth (1Jn 1:6); also God is spirit (John 4:24). Spirit and light are expressions of God's essential nature. Love is the expression of His personality corresponding to His nature. See on love of God (1Jn 2:5). Truth and love stand related to each other. Loving is the condition of knowing.

Word Picture in the New Testament, Robertson:

God is love (ho theos agapē estin). Anarthrous predicate, not hē agapē. John does not say that love is God, but only that God is love. The two terms are not interchangeable. God is also light (1Jn 1:5) and spirit (Joh 4:24).

Philip Schaff's Popular Commentary on the NT:

All love in man, all love everywhere, is from God; but, more than that, **God is love:** a word that had never before been spoken since revelation began. It closes and consummates the Biblical testimony concerning God as knowable to man: it must be remembered that it is connected with **he that loveth not knoweth not**—literally, 'never has come to the knowledge of'—**God.** Observe that it is not said 'love is God,' any more than it was said 'light is God.' God is light in His revealing and diffusive holiness; God is love in His diffusive self-impartation: both, however, in His relation to His creatures. His eternal essence is unfathomable and behind both. Love is the bond of His perfections as revealed to the created universe.

David Guzik's Enduring Word Commentary:

i. When we say **God is love**, we are not saying everything about God. Love is an essential aspect of His character, and colors every aspect of His nature. But it does not eliminate His holiness, His righteousness, or His perfect justice. Instead, we know the holiness of God is loving, and the righteousness of God is loving, and the justice of God is loving. Everything God does, in one way or another, expresses His love.

The Expository Notes of Dr. Constable

1 John 4:8 *Absence of love shows that a person does not have intimate fellowship with God. It does not necessarily show that he was never born of God. Because God is light those who abide in Him walk in His light (1Jn 1:5; 1Jn 1:7). Because God is righteous those who abide in Him practice righteousness (1Jn 2:29). Just so, God is love and those who abide in Him manifest His loving character. God is also light (1Jn 1:5), spirit (John 4:24), and fire (Heb 12:29). These are all metaphors that emphasize certain characteristics of God.*



iii [Word Pictures in the NT - Robertson:](#)

First pure (*prōton men hagnē*). First in rank and time. *Hagnos* is from the same root as *hagios* (holy), old adjective, pure from fault, not half-good and half-bad, like that above.

Then peaceable (*epeita eirēnikē*). Old adjective from *eirēnē* (peace), loving peace here, bringing peace in [Heb 12:11](#) (only N.T. examples). But clearly great as peace is, purity (righteousness) comes before peace and peace at any price is not worth the having. Hence Jesus spurned the devil's peace of surrender.

[Philip Schaff's Popular Commentary on the NT:](#)

the wisdom which is from above is first, in the first place. Purity is its primary quality; all other qualities of heavenly wisdom are subservient to this. We must, however, beware of perverting this remark in the interests of intolerance and party-strife; these are the bitter fruits, not of heavenly, but of earthly wisdom.

[Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary:](#)

This is put, "first of all," before "peaceable" because there is an unholy peace with the world which makes no distinction between clean and unclean.

[The Biblical Illustrator:](#)

The sequence is that of thought, not of time. It is not meant, *e.g.*, that purity is an earlier stage of moral growth in wisdom than peace, **but that it is its foremost attribute.** (*Dean Plumptre.*)



iv

Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 4:

22-23 Cf. 13:3-5, 24-30. God points out that he is the one who is going to expel the nations that are in the land, because he qûts, "loathes," their defiling practices. Qûts communicates deep feelings of repulsion met contempt produced by continuous irritation (cf. Gen 27:46; Num 21:5; 22:3.)

23.a. Some Hebrew manuscripts Samaritan Pentateuch, and versions have a plural noun; both the singular and plural appear in 18:24-30, especially, v 28.

23.b. The direct object appears before the verb for emphasis.

23.c. Masoretic Text *** is imperfect qal(stem) of qûts, "feel a loathing, sickening dread" (cf. Exod 1:12; Num 21:5, 22:3; 1Kgs 11:25; BDB, 880-81).



v

Matthew Henry Commentary: Lev 20:23

The Canaanites were to be expelled for these very sins:

'They committed all these things, therefore I abhorred them' V. 23. **See what an evil thing sin is; it provokes God to abhor his own creatures**, whereas otherwise he delights in the work of his hands. And, if the Israelites trod in the steps of their impiety, they must expect that the land would spue them out (v. 22), as he had told them before, ch. 18:28. If God spared not the natural branches, but broke them off, neither would he spare those who were grafted in, if they degenerated. Thus the rejection of the Jews stands for a warning to all Christian churches to take heed lest the kingdom of God be taken from them. Those that sin like others must expect to smart like them: profession of relation to God will be no security to them.

Pett's Commentary:

*They are to be careful not to behave like the nations who are already there, whom God will drive out before them. They in fact did all these things that he has forbidden to Israel. **That is why God hated them, that is, had an aversion towards them** because of their sinfulness.*

Pulpit Commentary:

*The fact of the nations of Canaan being **abhorred by God because they committed all these things** shows that the Levitical code forbidding all these things was no part of any special law for that nation alone, but a republication of that Law which is binding on all nations because written on the conscience. The prohibited degrees in the Book of Leviticus form a part of the moral, not of the ceremonial, law, and are, therefore, of permanent and universal, not only of temporary and national, obligation.*



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Expositors Bible Commentary Psa. 5:4

*1]. Affirmation of God's Hatred of Evil (5:4—6)
4—6 Deeply ingrained in Israel's belief system and developed in the wisdom literature is the conviction that, the God of Israel hates evil in any form. Whereas other religions brought together good and evil at the level of the gods, God had revealed that evil exists apart from him and yet, is under his sovereign control. The religion of Israel was revelatory. The psalmist shows a clear conviction that God hates in the most radical way any form of evil and denies lawless persons any (present or future) right to his presence (v. '4). Whoever expects his own people to dissociate from evildoers (Psa 1:1-2; Amos 5:15) and encourages righteous and holy living (Psa 15:2-5; 24:4-6) cannot betray them by having a double standard himself.*

The verbal phrases "[you are not a God] who takes pleasure" (hapes v. 4), "you hate" (sane'th a, v5), and "[the LORD] abhors" (yeth a 'eb v. 6) affirm three times God's absolute hatred of evil. In Malachi's days some argued that God "delights" in evildoers (Mal 2:17) But, in response, the Lord revealed how he will quickly judge unfaithful people as well as those who oppress the poor (Mal 3:5). Similarly, the negative statements "cannot dwell" and "cannot stand" (cf. 1:5) are complemented by the phrase "you destroy," having the same root ('-b-d) as the verb in 1:6: "but the way of the wicked will perish."

God hates both the sin and those who sin against him (V. 5). *The particular sins are examples of a way of life. The liar is only a hairbreadth away from the murderer (v. 6). Though the liar may*

claim that he only goes so far with his deception. when he is caught, the liar is a dangerous man, because he may attempt to cover his tracks. Deception and greed mark the man who is unfaithful to God and man; he is a potential candidate for murder. The "bloodthirsty" man is, therefore, not necessarily one who is guilty of murder, but one who no longer knows the limits between "mine" and "thine" and thus twists and perverts justice, even at the cost of human lives or dignity (cf. Isa 3:13—15; 5:8—10; Amos 6:12).

Instead of "taking pleasure" in evil, the Lord "abhors" all who practice wickedness.

Bible Knowledge Commentary:

5:4-6. The psalmist expressed his confidence in approaching a God who hates iniquity (evil). An evil person cannot dwell with such a God. People who are presumptuous and boastful, who do not shrink from murder or deceit, **God hates** and will destroy.

They are totally detestable to Him.

Complete Commentary - John Trapp:

*Thou hatest all workers of iniquity] Though they not only act it, but art it, polish and trim their sin, that it may seem less heinous, as hypocrites do, who hide their wickedness with no less subtle sleights than Rachel hid the idols, Rahab the spies. **But God will detect and detest them.***

Notes on the Bible - Albert Barnes:

*Thou hatest all workers of iniquity - **All that do wrong.** He refers here, also, to a general characteristic of God, but still with an implied and immediate reference to his enemies as sustaining this character, and as a reason why he appealed to God to defend his cause. Nothing is more constantly affirmed in the Scriptures than that God hates all forms of evil.*

Adam Clarke Commentary:

*Thou hatest all workers of iniquity - Some sin now and then, others generally; some constantly, and some labor in it with all their might. These are the Workers of iniquity. Such even **the God of infinite love and mercy hates. Alas! what a portion have the workers of iniquity! the hatred of God Almighty!***

Exposition of the Bible - John Gill:

*thou hatest all workers of iniquity; not all that have sin in them or do sin, for there are none without it; but **such who give themselves up to work wickedness, who make it the business of their lives, and are slaves unto it, living in a continued series and course of impiety; and this character does not only belong to openly profane sinners, but to some professors of religion; see Mat 7:22; and these are the objects of God's hatred.** Which does not so much intend any past act of his, the preterition or passing them by, when he chose others in his eternal purposes; in which sense the word is used in Rom 9:13, as his continued aversion to them, denying them his grace and favour, and rejecting them from all nearness to him and communion with him; and may include the everlasting punishment of them, by which his displicine and hatred will be made manifest: and he is impartial in it, without any respect to persons, high or low, rich or poor; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, will come upon every soul of man that does evil. God's love to his own people was antecedent to sin, and was placed upon them in Christ, in whom their persons are always well pleasing to him; and though they sinned in Adam, and became actual transgressors of his law, yet such was his love to their persons, that he saves them from their sins by the blood and righteousness of his son.*

The Biblical Illustrator:

Thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

God's hatred of sinners

Here is a plain declaration.

I. *That God does hate the persons of impenitent sinners. It is often said that God hates sin, but not sinners. The point now to prove is, that God hates sinners themselves, as vile and odious creatures. It is allowed that God loves all that love Him, and it is equally true that He hates those who hate Him. The Old Testament abounds with passages in which God expresses His displeasure, His wrath, and His indignation towards sinners.*

II. *Why does God hate the persons of sinners? Many consider sin in the abstract, and God as hating it in the abstract. But who can conceive of sin without a sinner? Or of sin that no person ever committed? Every sin is a transgression of the law, and renders the transgressor both criminal and hateful. The transgression cannot be separated from the transgressor, any more than his reason, or conscience, or any other property or quality of his mind can be separated from him. The apostle represents sin as corrupting all the powers and faculties of sinners. This moral corruption of sinners he represents as rendering them vile and hateful, even in their own sight. Their evil hearts render their persons morally evil and hateful in the sight of God. It is holiness of heart that makes saints lovely, and the reverse is equally true of sinners.*

III. *How God's hating the persons of sinners is consistent with His loving them. Some have attempted to evade this difficulty by supposing that all the Scripture says about the displeasure, the hatred, the wrath and anger of God, is to be understood figuratively; and that no such exercises or emotions of heart can exist in the mind of an absolutely perfect and immutable being. But to suppose that God does not really hate sinners is evading rather than solving the difficulty. Others say that God loves sinners themselves, and only hates their sins. But it is abundantly evident from Scripture that God does really and literally love and hate sinners at the same time. What kind of love does God exercise towards sinners? They are not proper objects of approbation or complacence, but of disapprobation and hatred. It is only the love of benevolence that God exercises towards totally depraved sinners. He loves all His creatures, whether rational or irrational. If He loves them with the love of benevolence, He cannot love them with the love of complacence. Benevolence hates selfish and sinful creatures, as much as it loves holy and virtuous creatures. Holiness in the Deity produces love to the holy, and hatred to the unholy. There are two things in sinners which render them objects of both love and hatred. Their capacity to enjoy happiness and suffer misery renders them proper objects of benevolence, and their sinful character renders them proper objects of displeasure, disapprobation, and hatred. God views them in both lights. His love towards them is benevolent love, and His hatred towards them is benevolent hatred. Improvement.*

1. *If God's hatred of impenitent sinners is consistent with His love of benevolence towards them, then it is consistent with His benevolence to hate them as long as they continue impenitent.*

2. *If God loves and hates sinners in this world at all, then He loves and hates them more than any other being does in the universe.*

3. *If impenitent sinners themselves are as much the objects of God's hatred as of His love, then it is very important that they should be made sensible of it.*

4. If it be consistent with the benevolence of God towards sinners to hate them, then it is consistent with His benevolence to express His hatred towards them.

5. If God's hatred of impenitent sinners flows from His benevolence, then His punishing them must flow from His benevolence.

6. If it be the benevolence of God that disposes Him to hate and punish impenitent sinners forever, then it is extremely absurd and dangerous for sinners to rely on His mere benevolence to save them in the eleventh and dying hour. This subject calls on all to inquire and determine whether they are saints or sinners. (N. Emmons, D. D)



vii

Preachers Complete Homletical Commentary:

John 3:36. The wrath of God abideth.—It is not specially meted out; it is there already, and simply remains for all who remain in their sins (*Eph 2:3*).

Vincent Word studies:

Abideth (μένει)

The present tense. As the believer hath life, so the unbeliever hath wrath abiding on him. He lives continually in an economy which is alienated from God, and which, in itself, must be habitually the subject of God's displeasure and indignation.

F.B. Meyer - Through The Day:

Note the present tenses of the last two verses. They are as true today as when first uttered. Our eternity dates not from our dying moment, but from that in which we first trust in Jesus Christ. If you can do nothing else, be willing to trust Him as soon as He is revealed to you, and in the meanwhile obey Him; that path will bring you into the open.

Tenney:

"The word does not mean a sudden gust of passion or a burst of temper. Rather, it is the settled displeasure of God against sin. It is the divine allergy to moral evil, the reaction of righteousness to unrighteousness."

Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges:

the wrath of God] This phrase occurs nowhere else in the Gospels. It is the necessary complement of the love of God. If there is love for those who believe, there must be wrath for those who refuse to believe. Comp. *Mat 3:7*; *Luk 3:7*; *Rom 1:18*; *Rom 9:22*; *Rom 12:19*.

abideth] Not 'shall come to him:' this is his portion already. He is under a ban until he believes, and he refuses to believe: therefore the ban remains. He, like the believer, not only will have but *has* his portion; it rests with him also, whether the portion continues his. He has to struggle, not to avert a sentence, but to be freed from it.

The Companion Bible (E. W. Bullinger):

wrath = [permanent] wrath. Greek *orge*; as in *Mat 3:7*. *Luk 3:7*; *1Th 2:16*, &c. Not *thumos*, which = [temporary] wrath.

abideth. Present tense. See note on *John 1:32*.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible:

The wrath of God - The anger of God for sin. His opposition to sin, and its terrible effects in this world and the next.

Abideth on him - This implies that he is "now" under the wrath of God, or under condemnation. It implies, also, that it will continue to remain on him.



All 32 instances that Paul mentions God's love for us:

Rom 1:7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

Rom 5:5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom 8:15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

Rom 8:16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Rom 8:23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Rom 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Rom 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

Rom 8:39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom 9:25 As he says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one,"

Rom 9:26 and, "It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.' "

2Cor 5:14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

2Cor 13:11 Finally, brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Eph 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

Eph 1:5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--

Eph 1:8 that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Eph 2:4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,

Eph 2:7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Eph 3:18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

Eph 3:19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Eph 5:1 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children

Eph 5:2 and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

Phil 2:1 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,

Col 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

1Thes 1:4 For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,

2Thes 2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

2Thes 2:16 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope,

1Tim 1:14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Tit 3:4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared,

