

How Has God Loved Us?

The Love of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

1 John 4:7-11

Trinity Sunday (May 26th) 2024

I. Introduction

God the Father promised to us a Deliverer, and God the Son was born of the virgin Mary. God the Son, anointed with the Holy Spirit to proclaim good news, ministered in our midst. He did the works of His Father, He taught us the true words of His Father; and He suffered and bled for us, offering Himself up without spot or blemish, through the eternal Spirit, to God, that we might be cleansed of our sins and reconciled to the living God. The Father by the Spirit of power resurrected Jesus from the grave, and installed Him as Lord and King over all, and gave Him as Head over the Church. After receiving from the Father the gift of the Holy Spirit, He poured Him out upon His Church, who is His bride, so that we might be renewed and conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ, and so that we might go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Through the historical course of Jesus Christ, God has revealed Himself to be _____ in nature. But He has also revealed to us what He, the Triune God, is like. This Triune God who is eternally existent, eternally subsisting as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is _____.

II. 1 John 4:7-11

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

III. How Has God Loved Us?

God has loved us with Triune love, for this is His very nature. This is how God exists. This is not to say that there are three different loves. There are not three different loves, but _____ Love. We confess in the Athanasian Creed that the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Spirit is almighty, and yet there are not three almighties, but one Almighty. In the same way, the Father is love, the Son is love, and the Holy Spirit is love, and yet there are not three loves, but one Love. This one divine Love is made manifest according to the operations of each Person of the Trinity in the work of redemption.

IV. How Has God the Father Loved Us?

The Father loved us first by _____ the Son (Jn. 3:16). God the Father whose depthless love rested eternally upon His Son gave Him up for our sake. He has loved us with great generosity and mercy, for He gave up Him who was most precious to Him so that we could come home and dwell with Him forever. This is the Father's love. See Gen. 22; Prov. 8:30; Hos. 11:8-9.

How should we respond? First, we should respond with great confidence in our Father's love (Rom. 8:31-39). We are to rest in the love of our Father and have great confidence in Him through every season. He has demonstrated beyond any reasonable doubt that He does in fact love you, that He is in fact *for you*. And nothing shall separate you from the love of your Father who gave up His beloved Son so that you might have life. Another way we respond to this is through imitation. If God has so generously given up His Son for us, shouldn't we give up whatever is most _____ to us for Him?

V. How Has God the Son Loved Us?

Divine life originates with the Father, and in the Son it is reflected as in a mirror. If we compare the Father to the sun, the Son is His _____. He makes the Father known. In regards to the love of the Father—the Son makes the love of the Father known. How does He make this love known? First, by coming to the earth and fulfilling the mission entrusted to Him. The Father loved the world and sent His Son that we might have life. The Father loved us, and in order for this love to reach us, the Son had to come. In order for the Father's loving desire to spare us to be fulfilled, the Son had to willingly stand in our place as a propitiation for our sins. And that's exactly what He did. The Son is the brightness of the love originating in the Father's heart. The Father is the source, and the Son is what our eyes see, what our ears hear. Secondly, however, the Son is not simply a servant on his master's errand. The Son is the very image of His Father, the exact imprint of His nature. The Son is Himself the love of God incarnate. The Son Himself, with the same divine love pumping through His Person, made known _____ love for us. And He made that love known chiefly by laying down His life for His friends (Jn. 15:13).

How ought we to respond? We begin by speaking of Jesus the way Paul did in Gal. 2:20: He is to us "the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for _____." We ought to dwell in the love of our Lord and Savior. He saved us, not because He had to, not because it was His job to, but because He loves us. So bask in His love—and then live with simplicity of heart, looking to please Him alone.

VI. How Has God the Spirit Loved Us?

The love original in the Father is made known to us in the Son, and the Spirit effects this love in us. Scripture compares the Son to the brightness of the Father's glory, and the Spirit is the heat. As the warmth of the rays that flood from the sun creates an effect in the earth, making it alive and fruitful, similarly the Spirit brings about the effects of God's love in our lives, making us alive and fruitful. As Paul writes, "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom. 5:5). He does this by sharing His very Self with us so that we become lovers of God, so that we come to cherish the Son, so that we love what God loves.

How should we respond? First, we should follow where He leads. The Spirit has graciously come to help us and fill us with His life, so let us be _____ to guide (Psa. 32:8-9). Related to this, we ought to follow those whom God has put in authority in your life, for the Holy Spirit dwells in and empowers the Church for the work of His ministry.

VII. Conclusion