

Title: Relentless love
Pastor: Fred May
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Jeremiah 31:3 NIV

³ The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."

A. 1. A GOD called love

I John 4:16 ESV

¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

2. Cosmic mystery – the choice for humans

Ephesians 3:9a, 10 NKJV

⁹ and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery... ¹⁰ to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

3. Vulnerable to open secrets, straying hearts

Jehovah Qana – overwhelmingly desirous, protective, possessive, envious

Exodus 20:5a

⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God...

Exodus 34:14

¹⁴ for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God

James 4:5 AMP

⁵ Or do you suppose that the Scripture is speaking to no purpose that says, The Spirit Whom He has caused to dwell in us yearns over us and He yearns for the Spirit [to be welcome] with a jealous love?

4. Sympathetic creation

Deuteronomy 4:24

²⁴ For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

Psalms 104:4, 6-7, 29a

⁴ Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.

⁶ You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. ⁷ At Your rebuke they fled; at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away.

²⁹ You hide Your face, they are troubled...

Matthew 27:46, 50-51

⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. ⁵¹ Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split.

Hebrews 12:26, 29

²⁶ whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”

²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

Joel 2:28-32

²⁸ And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. ²⁹ And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. ³⁰ And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. ³² And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

5. Worship in Spirit and truth

John 4:24

²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

Hebrews 4:12

¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

B. Imitation learning

Ephesians 5:1-2a

¹ Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love...

1. ‘Seeing’ God in Christ

I Corinthians 13:4-7

⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

2. ‘Knowing’ love through shared experience

Ephesians 3:14-15 NASB

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name

Ephesians 3:18-19 NIV

¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

3. Overcoming:

• ‘Separation anxiety’

Romans 8:35, 38-39 NIV

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 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.

- **Fear of punishment**

I John 4:18 NIV

¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

4. Embracing love's extravagant dimensions

Ephesians 3:18 The Message

And I ask him that with both feet planted firmly on love, you'll be able to take in with all followers of Jesus the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love.

- **Warrior**

Zephaniah 3:17 NASB

¹⁷ The LORD your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.

- **Father**

Hebrews 12:5-10

⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives." ⁷ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

- **Mother**

Matthew 23:37

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

Psalms 131:2

² Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with his mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.

Isaiah 66:13

¹³ As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

- **Husband**

Isaiah 54:5

⁵ For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.

Ezekiel 16:8

⁸ When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine," says the Lord GOD.

- **Friend**

Proverbs 18:24

²⁴ A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Psalms 25:14 RSV

¹⁴ The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.

John 15:15 RSV

¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

- **Brother / sibling**

Romans 8:29

... firstborn among many brothers

5. Growing in appropriate love

Philippians 1:9-11 The Message

So this is my prayer: that your love will flourish and that you will not only love much but well. Learn to love appropriately. You need to use your head and test your feelings so that your love is sincere and intelligent, not sentimental gush. Live a lover's life, circumspect and exemplary, a life Jesus will be proud of: bountiful in fruits from the soul, making Jesus Christ attractive to all, getting everyone involved in the glory and praise of God.