

Does God love us unconditionally?

Answers to Questions Concerning the Restored Gospel from HisWorkmanship.net

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Question: [Does God love us unconditionally?](#)

Answer(s)

No. God loves us with covenant love, which is a sacrificial, redeeming love that binds our hearts together in true love for Him and for each other by faith in Jesus Christ.

*For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you,
and for them at Laodicea,
and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;
That their hearts might be comforted,
being knit together in love,
and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,
to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God and of Christ,
who is of God, even the Father.*

Colossians 2:1-2

*Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved,
bowels of mercies, kindness,
humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;
Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another,
if any man have a quarrel against any;
even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.
And above all these things put on **charity,**
which is **the bond of perfectness.***

Colossians 3:12-14

To understand the importance of this distinction, consider how John, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote that *God is light* before he wrote *God is love* (I John 4:8,16)

*This then is the message
 which we have heard of Him,
 and declare unto you,
 that **God is light**,
 and in Him is no darkness at all.*

*If we say that we have fellowship with Him,
 and walk in darkness,
 we lie, and do not the truth.*

*But if we walk in the light,
 as He is in the light,
 we have fellowship one with another,
 and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son
 cleanseth us from all sin.*

*If we say that we have no sin,
 we deceive ourselves,
 and the truth is not in us.*

*If we confess our sins,
 He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,
 and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

*If we say that we have not sinned,
 we make Him a liar,
 and His word is not in us.*

*My little children,
 these things write I unto you,
 that ye sin not.*

*But if any man sin and repent,
 we have an Advocate with the Father,
 Jesus Christ the righteous;
 And He is the propitiation for our sins;
 and not for ours only,
 but also for the sins of the whole world.*

*And hereby we do know that we know Him,
 if we keep His commandments.*

*He that saith,
 I know Him,
 and keepeth not His commandments,
 is a liar,
 and the truth is not in him.*

*But whoso keepeth His word,
 in him verily is the love of God perfected;
 Hereby know we that we are in Him.*

I John 1:5-2:5

These qualifying statements made by John, which are emphasized by the frequent use of the word “if,” clearly outline for us the *conditions* by which we may *abide* in God’s fellowship and thus in His love. Briefly comprehended, those who walk in the *light* as God is in the *light* have

true fellowship with God. Conversely, those who *lie* and do not the *truth* (i.e. those who walk in *darkness* by not keeping God's word of truth) do not have true fellowship with God.

Therefore it is vital that we understand that John's declaration, *God is light*, is as important as his declaration, *God is love*. God is, at the same time, both light and love. Nothing we have done or will ever do can change the true nature and character of God. Consequently, no one should expect to abide in God's love except they are also willing and committed to abide in His light. **As such, it is a very cruel thing to tell people about the love of God without first telling them, as John has done, about the light of God. For as long as a person or group of people choose to remain in darkness, they shall remain outside God's fellowship.**

By remembering that **before** John wrote *God is love* he wrote *God is light*, we are able to keep John's message that *God is love* in its proper perspective and balance. Without holding the declaration that *God is light* equal in significance to the declaration that *God is love*, we will get out of step with Jesus Christ by failing to observe the proper order for entering into and continuing in God's fellowship and thus in His love. We will have an unbalanced understanding and view of God and the covenant relationship (fellowship) He calls us into with Himself and with each other.

Recall how the night of His betrayal by one of His apostles, Jesus Christ spoke plainly to His remaining eleven apostles about His love for them, a love He described as being the *greatest love* of all (implying lesser types of love do exist). He spoke of a sacrificial love, one that was to be revealed by the laying down of His life for His friends.

*This is my commandment,
That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
Greater love hath no man than this,
that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

John 15:12,13

Jesus did not stop here in describing His *greater love*, however. As recorded in the next verse, He went on to clarify that this wondrous, unique love is reserved for His *friends*, meaning those who do whatsoever He, as their Lord, commands them:

*Ye are my friends,
if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

John 15:14

Together, His words read:

*Greater love hath no man than this,
that a man lay down his life for his friends.
Ye are my friends,
if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

John 15:13,14

The message is unmistakable, unambiguous. The promise of our Lord's love is to those who obey Him and to those who seek so to do.

Jesus spoke these words the night of the Passover meal (commonly known as the Last Supper). Given the setting and the emphasis on friendship based in obedience, it is evident that our Lord was not speaking of unconditional love (which, by definition, knows no covenant terms or conditions). Rather, Jesus was speaking of covenant love, the love He expressed in establishing the New Covenant (Testament) through the shedding of His blood for His friends, that is, for those who love Him unto the keeping of His words to the honor and glory of His Heavenly Father.

When teaching that we are to *abide* in His love through keeping His commandments, Jesus explain that this is, in very fact, the way He abides in His Heavenly Father's love, i.e. by keeping His Father's commandments.

***Therefore doth my Father love me,
because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.
No man taketh it from me,
but I lay it down of myself.
I have power to lay it down,
and I have power to take it again.
This commandment have I received of my Father.***

John 10:17,18

***If ye keep my commandments,
ye shall abide in my love;
even as I have kept my Father's commandments,
and abide in his love.***

John 15:10

In saying "*even as*," Jesus made it abundantly clear that we are to follow Him in His example of obedience. Therefore, if we obey Him by keeping His words, Jesus assures us that we will abide in His love.

Just prior to stating these words, Jesus made it clear that if obedience (unto keeping His words, teachings, etc.) is the form and quality of our love expressed towards God – to His honor and glory – Jesus and His Father in heaven will love us and will make their abode with us. Only in and through this means (upon these conditions) does our Lord promise us that we may abide in His love.

***He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them,
he it is that loveth me;
And he that loveth me
shall be loved of my Father,
and I will love him,
and will manifest myself to him.***

...

***If a man love me,
he will keep my words;
and my Father will love him,***

*and we will come unto him,
and make our abode with him.*

John 14:21,23

John reinforced Jesus' teaching on God's love and the keeping of His words by saying that this is, in very fact, the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

*By this we know that we love the children of God,
when we love God,
and keep his commandments.*

*For this is the love of God,
that we keep his commandments;
and his commandments are not grievous.*

I John 5:2,3

Thus it is written, the Lord *became the author of eternal salvation* to those who *obey Him* (Hebrews 5:9); and, *He loveth them which will have Him to be their God* (I Nephi 5:131; cf. Deuteronomy 5:9).

*For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God;
the Lord thy God hath chosen thee
to be a special people unto himself,
above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*

*The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you,
because ye were more in number than any people;
for ye were the fewest of all people;*

*But because the Lord loved you,
and because he would keep the oath
which he had sworn unto your fathers,
hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand,
and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen,
from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

*Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God,
the faithful God,
which keepeth covenant and mercy
with them that love him and keep his commandments
to a thousand generations;*

*And repayeth them that hate him to their face,
to destroy them;
he will not be slack to him that hateth him,
he will repay him to his face.*

Deuteronomy 7:6-10

Unconditional love is antithetical to these truths. It proposes to abide with everyone without any consideration as to whether or not we love and obey the true and living God through keeping His commandments and instructions in the light of truth. Thus Jesus asks:

*And why call ye me Lord, Lord,
and do not the things which I say?*

Luke 6:46

If Jesus did not teach unconditional love, from where then does the teaching that God loves us unconditionally come? Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, warned that before our Lord returns, Satan would attempt to exalt himself above God and appear as God in God's own temple, the church (II Thessalonians 2:1-12). Because God is love, the devil is attempting to supplant God with his own ideal of love, a love that would rob justice and dismiss the mercy extended to us through the atonement of Jesus Christ. In other words, in his rebellion against God, Satan invented unconditional love to rival God's covenant love. Within and through the church, Satan is seeking to replace the redemptive covenant love of our Lord and Savior with a love that has no covenant terms and conditions. That is, he proposes to love the world with a covenant-breaking love.

Perpetrating a deception about the love of God would be one of the highest, most decisive and influential forms of deception Satan could ever hope to achieve, especially within and through the church. Therefore, knowing that his time is short, Satan and his servants are working harder than ever to deceive the nations, including the elect if possible, about God and His love. They are attempting to marginalize the *conditions of repentance* by which Jesus Christ has power to redeem mankind (Helaman 2:73 & 5:65-74). Notwithstanding Satan's efforts at deceiving the nations, the Lord has called His priesthood in these last days to preach repentance and faith in Jesus Christ so that all people may know the *conditions* by which they may be saved.

*Behold, this is my doctrine:
Whosoever **repenteth** and cometh unto me,
the same is my church;
Whosoever declareth more or less than this,
the same is not of me, but is against me;
therefore, he is not of my church.*

D&C 3:16

*Say nothing but **repentance** unto this generation.*

D&C 10:4b

*And now, behold, I say unto you,
that the thing which will be of the most worth unto you,
will be to **declare repentance** unto this people,
that you may bring souls unto me,*

*that you may rest with them in the kingdom of my Father.
Amen.*

D&C 13:3

*Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God;
for, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh;
wherefore he suffered the pain of all men,
that all men might repent and come unto him.
And he hath risen again from the dead,
that he might bring all men unto him
on conditions of repentance.*

D&C 16:3c,d

*Call upon the nations to repent,
both old and young, both bond and free; saying,
Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord:
for if I, who am a man, do lift up my voice
and call upon you to repent, and ye hate me,
what will ye say when the day cometh
when the thunders shall utter their voices
from the ends of the earth,
speaking to the ears of all that live, saying:
Repent, and prepare for the great day of the Lord;
Yea, and again, when the lightnings
shall streak forth from the east unto the west,
and shall utter forth their voices unto all that live,
and make the ears of all tingle, that hear, saying these words:
Repent ye, for the great day of the Lord is come.*

D&C 43:5d-g

*And it shall come to pass
that they shall go forth into the regions round about,
and preach **repentance** unto the people.*

D&C 44:2b

*Let them preach by the way,
and bear testimony of the truth in all places,
and call upon the rich, the high,
and the low, and the poor,
to repent;*

*And let them build up churches,
inasmuch as the inhabitants of the earth will repent.*

D&C 58:9g

More on this topic is provided in the following articles:

- [Unconditional Love: A False God](#)
- [The Covenant Breaker: Unconditional Love's Sinister Plan](#)

[Return](#)