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THE SURE WORD By Jonnie Hutchison

GOD'S LOVE

“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” (1 John 4:8-10). It is clear from this passage and others that God loves every person and has demonstrated His love by sending Jesus to shed His precious blood on the cross to provide for us the opportunity to be forgiven of our sins. Sadly, many misunderstand what the Bible teaches about God’s love for us.

“God is love.” He is both the source and the very essence of love. Love characterizes everything that God has done and continues to do in relation to man. Because of His love, God devised a plan to save us through Jesus Christ. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

God loves us whether we choose to love Him or not. John wrote that God “first loved us” and Paul wrote that “God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (1 John 4:10; Romans 5:8). Even though ones sins separate him or her from God, He continues to love and desire each one to turn from sin and accept His offer of pardon for “He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

The fact that God loves every sinner does not mean that He will tolerate, overlook, or refuse to condemn sinners. His love, His justice and His great desire for the salvation of every sinner will not allow Him to forgive sinners unconditionally. “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.” (Acts 17:30-31).

How do we show our love for God? “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 burdensome.” (1 John 5:2-3). God loves you. Do you love Him? Are you showing your love for God by keeping His commandments?