



Teaching Letter 4

God's Passionate Love

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NASB).

Nothing can separate us from that love (see Romans 8:39). It is a passionate love for humankind that was in the heart of God before the foundation of the world. Scripture tells us God purposed to sacrifice His only begotten Son for us before He created any of us. He was willing to pay the price it would take to redeem us back to Him.

This is Passion Week. For Jesus, approximately 2,000 years ago, it was a week of intense suffering. We call His crucifixion and death His "Passion." It was the culmination of all Christ came to earth to accomplish—to make the way open to God for all who would believe. God demonstrated the extent to which He would go to reach a lost world that He loves.

It is impossible to fully comprehend the love of God. Very little about it makes much sense to the human mind. I could list many reasons God should not love us. You probably could too. Even the best people I know can occasionally be unlovable. Others make it hard to love them pretty much all the time. And me . . . well, just ask my family and some of my friends.

Our understanding of God as Father can help somewhat toward comprehending God's love for us. For some, I know, that is a negative; but we must get beyond our own experiences somehow. God is the perfect Father, and His love is perfect. If we have had negative relationships with our

earthly fathers, we still have to be open to receiving and experiencing the love of our perfect Father.

God's love became experiential to the max with the suffering, crucifixion and death of Jesus. It not only was experiential for God, but it became so for us as we could view, touch, truly know the depth of God's love. It had been in God's heart, but now it was tangible, expressed. God suffered in the flesh. He held nothing back. He gave His all—His own Son. He gave Himself. Maybe even more incomprehensible—nevertheless, real, demonstrated.

For centuries God had expressed His plan and His love in types and shadows, such as Moses and other deliverers whom God sent to help His people when they were in desperate need. He had great authors and musicians, such as David write and sing about it. As great and important as they were, they were only forerunners. Nothing and no one before or after would surpass God's plan and His love as demonstrated in Christ.

God longs for you to experience His love on a deeper level. Christ gave Himself for you and He also gives Himself to you. He does not withhold. He is passionate for you. God knows that if we ever really get it, that knowledge of His love—on the heart level—will cause our love for Him to spring forth and blossom.

God is still passionate in His love for His children and for the world. God does not change;

His passion does not diminish, as ours is prone to do, over time and through sad or difficult experiences. Our love—not His—needs rejuvenation, refreshing.

If you desire to receive more deeply of God's love for you and also to give yourself and your love to Him, maybe you would like to pray this prayer:

“Father God, thank You for Your great love for me. I want to experience Your love more than ever before. I repent of indifference and lukewarmness. Ignite my heart ablaze with love for You. Give me passion for Jesus and passion for the lost. I submit my heart to You. Touch my heart as You have never done before. I love You, Jesus.”

Jesus will answer that prayer.

“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are . . .” (1 John 3:1, *NASB*).

Thank you, Jesus. **SH**

GOD'S WORD FOR TODAY
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