



ALL THINGS FOR GOOD

Thomas Watson

9. OF LOVE TO GOD

4. OF LOVE TO GOD

And we know that all things which they love God do all things to him to get love for God, for these are the called according to his purpose. Rom. 8:28 KJV:28
ESV

- “Despisers and haters of God have no lot or part in this privilege

4. OF LOVE TO GOD

Five things concerning love to God:

1. The Nature of Love to God
2. The Ground of Love to God
3. The Kinds of Love to God

4. OF LOVE TO GOD

Five things concerning love to God:

4. The Properties of Love to God
5. The Degree of Love to God

I. THE NATURE OF LOVE

Faith and love are the two hinges on which all religion turns. A true saint is carried in that chariot, "the midst whereof is paved with love" (Song 3:10).

Thomas Watson, *The Godly Man's Picture*.

Psalm 116:1-2 I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

"Love is to the soul as weights to the clock, it sets the soul a-going towards God, as the wings by which we fly to heaven."

"By love we cleave to God, as the needle to the lodestone."

Possibly even more apt is **1 Jn 4:19** "We love because he first loved us." Dr Renihan, in "True Love" says that these words emphasize two simple truths, "God loves us; and our love grows from his love for us."

2. THE GROUND OF LOVE

“That is, knowledge. We cannot love what we do not know.”

(1) Fulness - of grace to cleanse us, and of glory to crown us.

Ground = basis

“That our love may be drawn forth to God, we must know three things in him.”

(1) He is not only sufficient but redundant - He is a sea of goodness without banks or bottom.

2. THE GROUND OF LOVE

(2) Freeness - taking what he freely gives

(3) A propriety or property

(2) God's propensity is to dispense mercy and grace. Rev 22:17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

By propriety or property Watson is describing a sense of belonging, of ownership. Not that we have actual ownership of God, of course - just the reverse! But the sense is conveyed by **Ps 48:14** "this is God, our God forever and ever."

3. THE KINDS OF LOVE

(1) A love of appreciation

(2) A love of complacency and delight

(3) A love of benevolence

1. When we set a high value upon God as being the most sublime and infinite good. We so esteem God, as that if we have Him, we do not care though we lack all other things. The stars vanish, when the sun appears. All creatures vanish in our thoughts, when the Sun of righteousness shines in His full splendor. In *A Godly Man's Picture* Watson says, "A godly man loves God and therefore delights to be in his presence; he loves God and therefore takes comfort in nothing without him."
2. As we delight in a friend whom we love, the soul that loves God, rejoices in Him as in his treasure—and rests in Him as his center. The heart is so set upon God—that it desires no more. "Show us the Father, and it suffices" (John 14:8).
3. Wishing well to the cause of God. If we love God, then we want what God wants.

4. THE PROPERTIES OF LOVE

(1) Love must be entire

- The heart must not be divided

(2) Love must be sincere

- We must love God more for what he is than for what he bestows

1. Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'
2. Eph 6:24 (KJV) Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. (ESV: Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.") The word conveys a sense of purity, being undefiled and undiminished.

4. THE PROPERTIES OF LOVE

(3) Love must be fervent

- Love for worldly things must be indifferent

(4) Love must be active

3. Ps 119:10 "With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!" Watson speaks of love of God having the sense of burning in holy love. 1 Cor 7:29-31 This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, 30 and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, 31 and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

4. **1 Thess 1:3** calls it "a labor" i.e., "a labor of love" - It is active in that it sets us studying to learn more about God, it sets us hurrying to obey the commandments.

4. THE PROPERTIES OF LOVE

(5) Love is liberal

(6) Love is peculiar

(7) Love is permanent

5. Watson uses the term “liberal” in the sense of generous and kind. As in **2 Sam 24:24** David would not give to the Lord something which had cost him nothing. He who loves Christ will be liberal to his members. Watson says that love is like new wine, which must have a vent; it vents itself in good works.
6. Based on the previous point, we might well say that “love is peculiar” but Watson’s meaning here is that it is “different, or unusual”. This is a love that we bestow on no one else. Just as the love of one spouse for the other is different from the love for anyone else, so our love for God is also “peculiar.”
7. Like the eternal flame, love for God does not go out. “Love to God abides firm to death.”

5. THE DEGREE OF LOVE

(1) We must love God above all other things

(2) We must love him more than relations

(3) We must love him more than our estate.

1. Ps 73:25 “Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.” Watson quotes Bernard of Clairvaux, “The measure of our love to God must be to love him without measure.”
2. Abraham obeyed God when he told him to sacrifice Isaac in **Gen 22**. **Heb 11:19** tells us that Abraham considered that God would be able to raise Isaac from the dead. In **Luke 14:26** our Lord speaks of hating mother and father, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even our own life. As Watson puts it, “Christ would not have us be unnatural [it is natural to love our relatives, not to hate them], but if our dearest relations stand in our way and would keep us from Christ, either we must step over them, or know them not.”
3. Heb 10:34 “For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.” Matt 6:19-21 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

A SHARP REPROOF

How can someone expect love from God, who shows no love to him?

1. “This may serve for a sharp reproof to such as have not a grain of love to God in their hearts—and are there such reprobates alive? He who does not love God—is a beast with a man's head!”
2. 1 Cor 16:22 If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come!

NEXT TIME ...

- Chapter 5 “The Tests of Love to God” (pages 74-87)

