



**A Turning-Point
Question**

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Does God Love Me?

A Turning-Point Question

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Two Suggestions for Doing This Study:

1. One-a-Day Pace

You can obviously go through this study at any pace that fits you, your interests, and your schedule. You'll notice that the five sections are labeled "Day 1", "Day 2", etc., implying that one suggested pace would be to spend at least a day on each section. There will also be suggested meditation and journaling ideas that will go with each day. There will be some room on this paper to write, but you will probably want to get a journal of your own to dedicate to searching this question.

2. Find a Prayer Partner

It would be great if you could do this study with a trusted partner (or partners). Always focus on what you personally are getting from the study, but share it with your partner(s).

NOTE: The daily meditations in this study are very brief, and they deal with topics that are discussed more thoroughly in Scripture. The footnotes on page 6 give you some ideas for a little more study on them.

Romans 8:38 – 39

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,
neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,
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 our Lord.*

Day 1

A Turning Point



Psalm 62:11 – 12a

*One thing God has spoken, two things I have heard:
"Power belongs to you God, and with you is unfailing love."*

David came to the conclusion that God's power and His unfailing love were two things that he could absolutely count on. He was clearly in awe of the powerful, creator God and, at the same time, felt the intimacy of the loving Shepherd. You see the personal evidence of both of those convictions in his psalms.

You also see in David's psalms the evidence of his difficult journey to get to that conviction. He did not live a charmed or flawless life. A lot of bad things happened to him, and he himself did some very sinful things that tempted him to doubt God's love. But through his personal challenges and struggles, David found the answer to the question: "*Does God love me?*" But what about us?

There comes a point in our lives when we realize that we need answers to that question. There are important questions that have impact on the way we view our whole lives, and this is certainly one of them.¹ Searching it represents a turning point, a fork in the road, an awareness of being stuck in our mindset, and a sense that there needs to be an "*a ha*" moment, a radical shift in our perspective, a change of heart, and a change of mind.

Meditation and Journaling Ideas for Day 1:

- Read the above psalm repeatedly; meditate on it; pray for insight; and write your thoughts about it.
- Think about why this question: "*Does God love me?*" is a turning-point question, a fork in the road. If I take the fork labeled "*No*," how does that impact the way I view my life?

If I take the fork labeled "*Yes*," how does that impact the way I view my life?

If I live the rest of my life not sure of what the answer is, how does that impact my life?

NOTE: This is not suggesting that you just choose your answer to this question. You want to find the truthful answer to it and not just decide what you want the answer to be. But the point is: do you see that this is an important question that impacts your life?

Day 2

The Turning-Point Prayer



Ephesians 3:17b – 18 has an interesting and powerful prayer about this subject:

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have the power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

Read that prayer a few times. It shows us two things about the question: "Does God love me?"

- 1) It shows God's interest in helping us with this question. He had this prayer written in His Bible. So, answering this question is something He wants for us. He wants us to get it!
- 2) This prayer is asking God to give you the power to grasp the enormity of Christ's love. That shows that the question about God loving us is not meant to be an easy question; you need His power. It also shows that He is willing to grant that power to you. Make sure you get that: **it takes power to do this and God is willing to give you that power.** Ask! ²

There is a distinguishable turnaround when you start to grasp the enormity of Christ's love for you personally. This is when you get unstuck. It's an exciting time which can truly be called life-changing, a turning point, a radical shift. But it's also a fragile time when Satan pulls out all the stops to try to get you to not believe in God's love.

So, pray this prayer for yourself and ask others to pray it for you. Ask God to give you the power to grasp the enormity of his love for you. Ask someone else to also pray that prayer for you everyday this week. That prayer is followed by the amazing thought (verses 20 and 21):

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Grasping the love of God in a personal and practical way may seem too good to imagine, but God is able to do much more than you imagine. Prayer, though, is one of the keys. You may not even know for sure if you believe the promise that is stated above. Your prayer might sound something like, "God, I'm not even sure if I believe all of this yet, but I am asking you to please give me the power to grasp the enormity of your love." Hopefully, you see that the importance of this question deserves your persistence in it and that you deserve to get the answer.

Meditation and Journaling Ideas for Day 2:

- Read the above Scriptures repeatedly; meditate on them; pray for insight; and write your thoughts.
- Start saying this prayer every day this week and ask someone else to pray it for you.
- Why do you think God is interested in you grasping the enormity of His love? _____
- _____
- Do you think God will give you the power to do this? _____
- Are you willing to ask Him for the power to do this? _____

Day 3

I Don't Feel Loveable



Today's and tomorrow's meditations will focus on two common reasons given why most of us find it difficult, at least at first, to believe that God loves us. That difficulty is why we need God's power to grasp His love. These are not the only two, and they may not describe your situation perfectly, but hopefully they will help you deal with objections that you may have to accepting God's love for you personally.

The first objection is the feeling that God couldn't love me **because** . . .

That sentence might end differently for different people. It might be because I have sinned too much to be loved by God. Or it might be because I don't fit in. Basically, I'm not good enough to be loved by the perfect, holy God.

It turns out that so many of the Scriptures in the Bible that communicate God's love are written to or about people who fit the above descriptions. David, referred to in the psalm in Day 1 of this journal, was certainly an example of that. Here are two, of the many, Scriptures showing that:

<p style="text-align: center;">Zephaniah 3:17</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Romans 5:6 – 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.</i></p>
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The Scripture on the left above was written during a time when God's people had failed repeatedly, but God showed his desire to love them. In fact, he says he delights in them and even sings over them. "Do you hear God singing to you?"

The Scripture on the right above shows that the very way God demonstrates his love is by loving us as sinners. He didn't say, "I'll love you if you're good enough." He just says, "I love you."

We know, of course, that God asks us to repent and come to Him. It is in fact good that we should be very humble about our sin. ³ But the point is that you are nowhere close to being too far gone to do that. You wouldn't be reading this with a sincere desire to find God's love if that were true.

Meditation and Journaling Ideas for Day 3:

- Read the above Scriptures repeatedly; meditate on them; pray for insight; and write your thoughts.
- How does it feel to hear what is said in the *Zephaniah* Scripture above? _____
- How does it feel to hear what is said in the *Romans* Scripture above? _____
- Continue praying the prayer from Day 2's meditation.

Day 4

This Doesn't Feel Like Love



Another obstacle that is a common challenge to people coming to the personal conviction that God really does love them involves looking at what God has done, or what we perceive He has done in our lives or in the lives of others and not liking what we see.

If God is love, then why has this happened? Why has he not answered my prayers? Why did He let bad things happen? This doesn't feel like love.

One thing that a thorough search of Scripture shows is that these are not bad questions. It seems from all that God has revealed to us in Scripture that he is waiting for you to deal with questions like these, and he is not shocked, disappointed, disrespected, or frustrated by them. They are good questions – not bad ones. The only way they can go wrong is if you are using them as an excuse to not follow God and aren't really looking for an answer. As with the question from Day 3, there are actually many Scriptures dealing with this. Here is just one:

Romans 8:28

For we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Let's notice what this verse says and what it doesn't say.

What It Doesn't Say	What It Does Say
➤ It doesn't say that God causes bad things to happen to us.	➤ It says that in " <u>all things</u> " – good or bad – God is there.
➤ It doesn't say that you need to figure out the purpose of the things that happen to you.	➤ It says that God is working in your life for your personal good.

Until we get to heaven, we live in a sinful, fallen world. Bad things will happen, even to good people. We can't count on everything always going well. But, like David in the psalm quoted on Day 1 of this study, we can count on two facts: "*God, you are powerful.*" and "*God, you are loving.*" Or, as he said in *Psalms 23:4*, "*Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.*"

Meditation and Journaling Ideas for Day 4:

- Read the above Scripture repeatedly; meditate on it; pray for insight; and write your thoughts.
- Meanwhile, the trials, tragedies, pains, losses, and disappointments are real, and they don't feel like love. One mistake, though, that we can avoid if we read the Bible is to think that we have to be stoic and silent before God in dealing with them. ⁴ Take it to God. Don't cover it up or by-pass the pain. But don't just deal with it inside yourself. Take it to God. Take a moment to write your own prayer of lament and spend some time being honest with God about it. _____

- Continue praying the prayer from Day 2's meditation.

Day 5

Am I Starting to Grasp It?



I John 3:1

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

All over the Bible. God tells us that His love is real, personal, and unending. It's not just that we are "called" children of God, a fake title that's just trying to make us feel better about ourselves. It is His reality.

Recall the prayer from **Ephesians 3:17b – 18** to have the power to grasp the enormity of that love. If you have not yet started to grasp that love, don't give up the search yet. It can happen in an instant, but it may not be this instant. Keep praying this prayer and asking others to pray it for you. Seek, and you will find! There can come a time when it is the clear, unqualified conviction of your soul. But there also may be gradual steps to get to that point. For instance:

Agree or Disagree?	<i>I don't totally understand how you can love me personally, but I have to admit that sending your Son to save us while we were still sinners demonstrates your love for the world. I am thankful to you.</i>
Agree or Disagree?	<i>I don't totally understand why there is so much evil in this world, but I have to admit that the loveliness of your creation is a demonstration of your power and your love. I am in awe of you.</i>
Agree or Disagree?	<i>I don't totally understand why bad things happen to good people, but I have to admit that you show your love by listening and caring for us in our grief and pain. I am willing to cry out to you.</i>
Agree or Disagree?	<i>I have many other questions, but I have to admit that I don't like the sense of emptiness and insecurity that comes from not being convinced that you love <u>me</u>. I will continue to ask and seek.</i>
Agree or Disagree?	<i>I am not done yet, but I am willing to admit that I am starting to grasp some of the enormity of your love, and I will continue to pray for the power to grasp it more fully, believing that you are willing to grant that prayer. Help me, Lord.</i>

If you have found the blessing of seeking God's love, don't give up the search for other turning points in your life. There will be more, but the promise you can always count on is that if you seek God, you will find Him. When you discover that this prayer of getting the power to grasp the enormity of His love is bearing fruit in your life, you will find yourself praying that prayer for others also.⁵

Meditation and Journaling Ideas for Day 5:

- Read the above Scripture repeatedly; meditate on it; pray for insight; and write your thoughts.
- What are you starting to see about the enormity of His love? _____
- What questions do you still have about God's love? _____
- What are you willing to do to find answers to those questions? _____
- Continue praying this great prayer, not only for yourself, but also for others.

Footnotes

- ¹ For a one-month journey on some other turning-point questions, see the study "*Turning-Point Questions*" found at www.d4yp.com. This question is repeated there, along with 3 other ones.
- ² See also: *Matthew 7:7 – 8*; *Jeremiah 29:33*; and *James 4:8*.
- ³ See David's humility about his sin and yet his confidence about the loving forgiveness of God in verses like: *Psalms 25:11*; *Psalms 51:1 – 4*; and *Psalms 130:3 – 4*.
- ⁴ David also has many examples of crying out to God about the difficulties he had in his life. See, for example some of his psalms of lament: *Psalms 6*; *Psalms 13:1 – 2*; and *Psalms 22:1*. See also *Hebrews 12:11*.
- ⁵ When we start to understand God's love for us, we then start to shift our focus to how much we love Him and how we want to live a life of love – love for God, love for ourselves, and love for others. See *Matthew 22:34 – 40* and *1 John 4:7 – 21*, for example.