

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

The Love of God *Selected Scriptures*



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Love is the best known and least understood of God's attributes. Few doubt that God is love. Yet many believe that God's love, as demonstrated in His patience, mercy, and forgiveness, nullifies His righteousness, justice, and holiness. This popular notion of God, as if He were a benign, aging grandfather, sitting passively in heaven—affable, lenient, permissive, and devoid of any real displeasure over sin because He loves us—cheapens God's love. It doesn't uphold the value of His love. In truth, looking into God's heart to discover His love is to discover His other attributes as well.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Defining the Meaning of God's Love (Selected Scriptures from 1 John)

For us to grasp the depth of God's love, we must first understand what God's love is *not*.

2. Seeing Examples of God's Love (Selected Scriptures)

Some believe that God showed Himself as the God of judgment in the Old Testament and the God of love in the New Testament, but this is false. He demonstrated His love in both testaments.

- In the Old Testament

- In the New Testament



Quotable

You may or may not believe you deserve to hear it, but here it is: God loves you.

— Charles R. Swindoll



www.insight.org | www.insightworld.org

Original outline copyright © 2008 and Message Mate copyright © 2016 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM03

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

The Love of God *Selected Scriptures*

3. Illustrating the Extent of God's Love

God's unconditional love is illustrated in Jesus' story of the prodigal son and from Paul's great letter to the Romans.

- From a Story in Luke's Gospel (Luke 15:11–24)

- From a Statement in Paul's Letter (Romans 8:31–39)



DIGGING DEEPER

A God with Two Faces?

Some have observed that God as He revealed Himself in the Old Testament is One of stern justice and capricious wrath, bordering on the thin edge of madness, while God as He revealed Himself in the New Testament is loving and merciful, a doddering grandfatherly type who smiles a lot but doesn't quite know why. Both are extreme distortions of the popular view that God is inconsistent or hasn't revealed Himself consistently in Scripture. Such a notion renders God as schizophrenic.

This dual vision of God is not only unbiblical, it reduces God to a god (with a lowercase "g") . . . which is to say it reduces Him to no god at all, because it denies His unchanging nature or reduces Him only to a god of our making. The problem lies not in the reality of God but in the perspective of those who cannot see God's love in the Old Testament and His justice in the New Testament. Many have wrongly concluded that love and justice are mutually exclusive. But justice is not the opposite of love (nor is hate), indifference is. (Even hatred recognizes the existence and worth of another as worthy of time and negative attention.) Indifference treats another as a nonperson, as nonexistent; justice treats another as worthy of redemption, as worthy of love. Justice may seem a cruel cut, but the cruelest cut is the cut that never comes—that is, indifference. God's love is too great not to cut out our sin with the scalpel of justice. He cannot be indifferent and let us die from the cancer of sin.

We may take God as He really is or reject Him on the same basis, but the one opinion not open to us is to create Him as we'd like Him to be. He is and has always been the God of love and justice in both the Old and New Testaments.



HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

The Love of God *Selected Scriptures*

4. Claiming the Reality of God's Love

Claim the reality of God's love by receiving, in faith, the sacrificial death of God's Son, Jesus Christ. If you're already a follower of Christ, reclaim God's love by reminding yourself that God loves you.



LET'S LIVE IT

“This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life” (John 3:16 MSG).

To people perishing in their ignorance of the reality of God, such a message of love seems inconceivable. They believe their sin is too great and God, though affable, is too weak to do much about it. How sadly incorrect that view is. God's love is greater and tougher than our sin. His is a love so great that He sent His own Son to die on a cross, just to win the hearts of humanity . . . including yours. No greater love than that exists!

If you are a believer in Christ but you tend to doubt God's love for you, reread Romans 8:35–39, and write in it your own words.



www.insight.org | www.insightworld.org

Original outline copyright © 2008 and Message Mate copyright © 2016 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM03

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

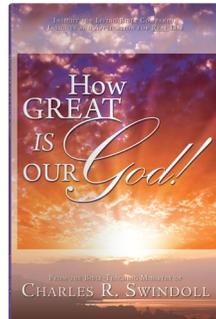
The Love of God
Selected Scriptures



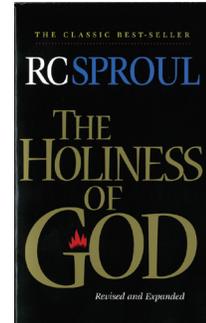
Tools for Digging Deeper



How Great Is Our God!
by Charles R. Swindoll
CD series



How Great Is Our God!
by Insight for Living Ministries
softcover Bible Companion



The Holiness of God
by R. C. Sproul
softcover book

For these and related resources, visit www.insightworld.org/store
or call USA 1-800-772-8888 • AUSTRALIA +61 3 9762 6613 • CANADA 1-800-663-7639 • UK +44 1306 640156



www.insight.org | www.insightworld.org

Original outline copyright © 2008 and Message Mate copyright © 2016 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM03