

**Psalm 136**  
*The Truth About Love*

**Main Idea:** God's love never comes to an end, for anyone.

We've been looking at three big truths that I believe have gotten distorted over the centuries.<sup>1</sup>

- The truth about hell is that it's not God's abandonment, but His consuming love.<sup>2</sup>
- The truth about judgment is that it's not bad; it's very, very good, because it purifies us through Christ.<sup>3</sup>
- Today, we'll be looking at the truth about God's love.

We tend to talk a lot about love in church.

- We talk about how God loves us.<sup>4</sup>
- We talk about how we're to love one another.<sup>5</sup>
- We talk about how we're to love our enemies, which is modeled after how God loves His enemies.<sup>6</sup>
- But deep down, it seems that many Christians believe the lie that God's love has limits.
  - We think that our constant sin causes God's love to run out.<sup>7</sup>
  - But this says more about us than it does about God. [graph]
  - And it's true that our sin is bad, but God's grace is greater. [Romans 5:20]

Truth #1: God loves sinners. [John 3:16]

- God's love isn't just for the good people, or the people who get it right.<sup>8</sup>
- Even though we've all broken God's commands, God continues to love us.<sup>9</sup>
- I remember the first time I ever sinned.
  - I didn't get what I wanted as fast as I wanted it, and I loudly complained about it.
  - Now, what if when I was born, because of my constantly complaining, my mom decided she had already had enough. [photo]
    - She wouldn't have been a very good mother, would she?
    - Thankfully, she didn't do that.
  - God's love is unconditional.<sup>10</sup>
    - It doesn't matter how much we complain, or how much we mess up.<sup>11</sup>
    - We're going to mess up, because we are sinners. And yet God still loves us.<sup>12</sup>
- And God has enough love for everyone!<sup>13</sup>
  - God's love isn't selective. He doesn't show favoritism. [1 Timothy 2:3-4] [Psalm 145:9]
  - And if God loves even His enemies, then His love even includes every sinner.<sup>14</sup>

Truth #2: Out of His great love, God sent Jesus to die for sinners. [1 John 4:9-10]

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<sup>1</sup> John 17:17

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 12:29

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 12:6

<sup>4</sup> 1 John 4:19

<sup>5</sup> John 13:34

<sup>6</sup> Luke 6:35

<sup>7</sup> Romans 5:8

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 5:45

<sup>9</sup> 2 Timothy 2:13

<sup>10</sup> Ephesians 2:4-5

<sup>11</sup> Psalm 103:10-11

<sup>12</sup> Romans 6:23

<sup>13</sup> Titus 2:11, 1 John 2:2

<sup>14</sup> Romans 5:10

- Love is not just a feeling with God; love takes action.<sup>15</sup>
  - When Jesus saw the hungry crowd, He didn't just feel compassion; He fed them.<sup>16</sup>
  - When Jesus entered a city, He didn't just tell them He loved them; He healed them.<sup>17</sup>
  - Love should spur all of us into action, and God constantly shows His love for us through what He does and has done for us.<sup>18</sup>
- The biggest and most important was when Jesus died for everyone. [Hebrews 2:9]
- Through the cross, God's love was poured out on the world.<sup>19</sup>

The Lie: That God's love comes to an end.

- Out of all the lies we've talked about in this series, this is probably the most dangerous one of all.
- If God's love were to come to an end, then His love would be no stronger than our love.<sup>20</sup>
- But Scripture is clear that God's love never comes to an end. [Psalm 136:1-2]
- Scripture promises that because of God's love, He will keep pursuing us until we rest in His love. [Lamentations 3:22] [John 12:32]
- I've come to understand that Christians have often believed the lie in one of two ways:
  - Calvinists say God's love is limited in scope: that God loves only the elect.
  - Arminians say God's love is limited in power: that He loves all, but can't save all.
  - But Scripture says His love is unlimited in both scope and power. [Colossians 1:19-20]

In his book *The Inescapable Love of God*, Thomas Talbott summed up the argument like this. [quote]

- I would further simplify the logic like this. You can only pick two, logically, to accept as true.
  - God truly loves everyone and wants everyone to be saved.
  - God is all-powerful and can save everyone He wants to save.
  - Only some will be saved, and the others will be in hell forever.
- So, which one is the lie?
- The Bible says #3 is the lie. [John 1:29] [Romans 5:18] [Titus 2:11] [1 John 4:14]
- Not believing the lie changes everything.
  - It means God doesn't love us less when we fail. He pursues us even more.<sup>21</sup>
  - It means no one is beyond hope, not even when it seems like all hope is gone.<sup>22</sup>
  - It means the cross is big enough, strong enough, wide enough to save the whole world.<sup>23</sup>
  - And it means in the end, God will receive what He deserves: not some of creation, but all of creation loving God and praising Him forever for His great love for us.<sup>24</sup>

So the truths are simple, and we all believe them:

- God loves sinners.
- Out of His great love, He sent Jesus to die for sinners.

And so, the lie is that God's love will come to an end.

The truth is, His love never fails. Never ends. Never gives up. Not for me, not for you, not for anyone.

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<sup>15</sup> Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:9

<sup>16</sup> Matthew 14:19-20

<sup>17</sup> Matthew 14:14

<sup>18</sup> 1 John 3:18

<sup>19</sup> John 3:16

<sup>20</sup> Jeremiah 31:3

<sup>21</sup> Luke 15:4-7

<sup>22</sup> Ezekiel 37:5

<sup>23</sup> 1 John 2:2

<sup>24</sup> Philippians 2:10-11, Romans 11:36, Revelation 5:13