



2 parts:

Why should you love God?

If I do...

What does this mean for my life?

## Why should you love God?

- God Created You
- God Loves You (But YOU sinned)
- God Sent His Son For You
- Christ CHOSE To Die For You
- He Only Asks For You To Accept Him

## God Created You

- God created the universe...you, the time you spend, and the air you breathe.
- Ergo, you are nothing apart from God.

"It is like a small child going to its father and saying, 'Daddy, give me sixpence to buy you a birthday present.' Of course, the father does, and he is pleased with the child's present...but only an idiot would think that the father is sixpence to the good on the transaction."

—C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.

Nothing you do can benefit God. Not only don't you have any inherent worth apart from God, you CAN'T. He doesn't need you, and you can't earn or deserve anything from him.

Supply and demand:

He has infinite supply, no need.

You have infinite need, and no supply.

C.S. Lewis Quote (above)

# God Loves You

and offers a wonderful plan for your life.

<sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,  
<sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

-Romans 8:38-39

We'll come back to this...(application half: Trusting God with everything).

## *You* Sinned

- Not your ancestors, not your parents, not the person next to you, or the students out drunk and ‘hooking up’... YOU.

“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

- Romans 3:23

“<sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

-Matthew 7:4-5

Sin is something that separates people (you) from God.

Worry about your own sin first, that is your task.

When you are dealing with yourself first, you will find yourself helping others without even trying.

## God Sent His Son...

- who lived a PERFECT life
- who VOLUNTARILY died the worst death.
  - This man CHOSE to be:
    - Betrayed by a friend
    - Humiliated publicly in a farce trial
    - Abandoned by his supporters
    - Tortured
    - Crucified
    - Forsaken by his heavenly father
    - Condemned to death

**Voluntarily:** After one of Jesus followers cut's off a man's ear when arresting Jesus, he tells him to put away his sword, saying, "53 Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" -Matthew 26:53-54 (A legion @ full strength was 6000 men, but were often smaller in practice (not at full strength). God doesn't send half-strength legions (That's just not really how he works), ex. Gallic Wars: Julius Caesar in ~7years conquered much of western Europe with only 10 legions (plus some auxillaries and additional conscripts to fill in the gaps, if you want to be picky), but 12 (the number given by Jesus) was **a lot**).

### **Tortured:**

"Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged [3] Jesus, delivered him to be crucified." Matthew 27:26 Note:[3]Scourged: "A Roman judicial penalty, consisting of a severe beating with a multi-lashed whip containing imbedded pieces of bone and metal."

**Crucified:** Notice, this is a separate entry from dying. They are very different indeed.

**From Todd Agnew's "My Jesus": - Excellent Song w/ a powerful message, listen to it.**

"Pretty blue eyes and curly brown hair and a clear complexion

Is how you see Him as He dies for Your sins

But the Word says He was battered and scarred

Or did you miss that part

Sometimes I doubt we'd recognize Him"

**Your Sin:** You are responsible for Jesus death: "24 So when Pilate saw that he was

Because he wanted to redeem:

**YOU**

“3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.” - 1 Corinthians 15:3

## He asks one thing in return...

- That you personally accept him as your savior and lord.
- Him and Nothing Else!

<sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

-Ephesians 3:8-9

This is both easier and harder than you would ever think. We'll come back to this.

## Therefore...

- “...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.”

– Mark 12:30

This need not be viewed as a command, just as a statement of fact. This logically follows directly from the Gospel. Sort of like a group ice-breaker or trust-building exercise, this love of God gives us, as individual entities distinct from him, the confidence and assurance in God to willingly allow him to work in our lives to make us more like he intended us to be, more like his son, something he cannot do without our consent.

“But what is that going to do to  
my life....”

**CHANGE IT COMPLETELY**

Order Matters: Experiencing the Love of God will change your life

You do not try to change your life to experience the love of God.

This is trying to do something to achieve or earn love from God, and it **will** fail.

If you do experience God’s Love and let that Guide your life...

You can’t do it part way.

“Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on; you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make any sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of - throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.” - C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, from George McDonald.

**Personal Testimony: How I have changed from Fall Retreat '08 to now.** (I have seen all of the following in my life. Never completely or perfectly, but still very strongly).

What sort of things are likely to happen? (NOT “What sort of thing should I be doing?”)

## You Will Want To Know More

- You might find yourself wanting to...
  - Read your Bible
  - Pray
  - Evangelize!
  - Fellowship
  - Read/hear/watch sermons, commentaries, treatises, papal bulls...

**Facebook Analogy:** When you see a cute/interesting/attractive boy/girl in class, and you figure out their name, what is the first thing you do...Facebook stalk them. You want to learn everything you possible can about them after ~10 minutes of contact.

How much more so should we want to know everything about God?

## You will Want God to guide Everything in your life

- Career (Classes)
- Relationships
- Free Time
  - Internet, Television, Reading, Food...

You do trust him with all of that, *right...*

**Tostito's Example** (Even what I eat has been guided directly by whether I am doing so as an experience of God's blessing in my life or simply to fulfill a worldly desire {here a desire for spicy food})

**Craving Stimulation/Newness** – This desire is fostered in us by the world we live in, and is the feeling of needing to be doing something, engaged with something, every minute of every day. This can be dangerous, and leads straight to worldliness, especially when combined with internet, television, music, or other media)

**Learn to Value Living Simply.**

OK, so you say you love God, and you fully understand why you should and do, but it's still a little hard to let go...

## Doing Things God's Way

- God wants it that way + you want to please God.
- You want the best for yourself +
  - God has your best interest as his primary goal
  - He knows Past, Present, and Future better than you
  - He knows YOU better than you

Relatively, you are flying blind:

“If God is your co-pilot, switch seats!”

**Your Best Interest:** “28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. “ Romans 8:28  
– He’s on your side!

This is still the hardest thing in the world to do. It takes faith. Remember that part about accepting him and **NOTHING ELSE?** This is it. Nothing, not even, especially not even, yourself.

## You will start to love everyone

- They were created by God, too
- This is the second greatest commandment
- Forgiveness is a (difficult) command

This will come from the fruit of the spirit.

**Commandment:** “28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” 29 Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 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.’ 31 The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” 32 And the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. 33 And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” -Mark 12:28-33

**Forgiveness:** “12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. “ - Colossians 3:12-14

**Fruit of the Spirit:** “22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” -Galatians 5:22-23 How would your interpersonal relationships change if you made all of these a part of that relationship?

## Pursue God Out of Love And He Will Change You

- You must accept Christ  
...but nothing else.
- God will direct your life for the best...  
...but you won't see how at the time.
- He will fix your visible problems...  
...but then he will move on to everything else.
- Sin can and will be overcome...  
...but it will hurt.

If you say you love God, and have every reason to do so...  
if you say that you trust him with your life, which you should...  
Are you living like it?

The Gospel has the power to make  
Everything new...



...so by the love of God,  
give it a chance.

## Discussion Questions

1. What aspects of the Gospel do you feel LEAST moved by? Why is that?
2. What effects of the Gospel have you seen in others that you wished for yourself? Why might they have that, and not you?
3. What activities of your daily life DO NOT bring you the joy found in serving God? How should that change?