

TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST



STUDIES IN THE HEALING WORD
AND WILL OF GOD SERIES
BIBLE BYTE COMMUNICATIONS

To Know the Love of Christ

Studies in the Healing Word and Will of God

Written by Larry M. Jaynes

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PO Box 814

Wiscasset, Maine 04578

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Why this eBooklet is free:

We are so glad that you chose to download this eBooklet as our gift to you. Jesus taught us in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and we aspire to follow our Lord's teaching. The Apostle Paul also understood this concept, "What is my reward then {for preaching and giving the gospel away freely}? *Verily* that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge" (I Corinthians 9:18). Paul came to realize that to serve the Word *without charge* was both a blessing to those who received the Word and to himself personally because he understood that God Himself is the reward, "I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward" (Genesis 15:1, and see Hebrews 11:6). When you have God in your life as your *exceeding great reward*, then being *with God* you will have everything you need to begin enjoying the more than abundant life. Our prayer for you is that you come to know experientially that "with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27).

Enjoy, and God Bless You!

Introduction:

Our first Bible study is on the love of Christ. Having an understanding of the love of Christ gives the Christian believer a wonderful spiritual freedom that he or she can stand on, and this builds true Christian character that can uplift our souls, not only on a “good day,” but also even in times of troubles.

The love of Christ will never let us down, but rather will encourage and strengthen our lives daily. God’s healing Word truly blesses us through an understanding of His loving heart and the spiritual gifts that His Word reveals (such as, the love of Christ), filling us with His strength and encouragement moment by moment, day by day.

The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author in any of the Scripture verses are enclosed in {braces}.

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One:

To Know the Love of Christ

When Jesus Christ walked upon this earth one of the things that attracted people to himself and his ministry was the love he displayed for the individual. The Bible tells us that we today, nearly two thousand years later, can still know the love of Christ and have his same love in our lives.

Ephesians 3:17-19:

-17: That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith {believing faith}; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

-18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth {width}, and length, and depth, and height;

-19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

These verses contain more than we can study in a single Bible study, therefore, our focus will be on a singular phrase, *the love of Christ*. Verse 17 states that with Christ in our hearts we can be rooted and grounded in love.

Christ's love in us can become an exciting and dynamic foundation for living the Christian lifestyle. Then, in verse 18, the Word of God shows us the four dimensions of the love of Christ. The love of Christ is the love of God in full bloom that Christ utilized in his daily life while he was here blessing people.

This love of Christ does not end at the crucifixion, but currently lives in our hearts just as Christ does. With the love of Christ, we can spiritually perceive the fullness of love, its width, length, depth, and height.

"Breath (width)" indicates his love extending worldwide — to all.

"Length" illustrates his love extending throughout all the ages — without end.

"Height" shows his love extending up into the heavenlies — beyond the reach of negatives.

"Depth" communicates his love extending into our very hearts — profound spiritual wisdom regarding how to apply the love of Christ.

In verse 19 the love of Christ "passeth knowledge," his love travels beyond mere human knowledge about love. Love (the love of Christ) does not hurt, stink, or let

people down as some of the songs and literature of the day claim, for the love of Christ is first and foremost spiritual and is on a higher plane than five senses love.

Christ's love is greater than most realize because it brings the Christian believer into "all the fullness of God!"

I Corinthians 8:1b:

. . . Knowledge puffeth up, but charity {spiritual love} edifieth.

Human love and man's basic understanding about love only puffs up the head and pulls on feelings in good and bad, happy and sad ways. But spiritual love is not a "head thing," rather it is a "heart thing" delivering to the believer spiritual realities, and when savored and applied his love will always edify, build up, and encourage with unlimited blessings. The four dimensional love of Christ can always grow greater and greater in our lives.

Christ's love can become for you endless, boundless, measureless, and fathomless as it continues growing in your heart, and it leads you by the hand into all the fullness of God!

Two:

That Ye May Know God

In the Gospel of John chapter 17, we have a prayer of Jesus Christ to God, which contains so much love and heart. We can read how Jesus prayed for God, for others, and for himself. Normally our prayers are not recorded for anyone else to read, and only few of Jesus' prayers are recorded in the Scriptures. His prayers are set in the Word like diamonds of truth for us to learn and understand the ways of prayer.

John 17:3:

And this is life eternal, that they {believers} might know thee {God} the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

In this wonderful prayer, Jesus explains to us a glimpse of what "life eternal" can mean to the believer: that we may know God, and that we may know Jesus Christ himself. So as we receive our salvation (Romans 10:9-10), then our knowledge of God will continue to grow, and we can begin to understand that our God is "the only true God." There are many gods or idols, which people worship, however, there is only one true God, and as we receive our eternal life we also become acquainted with Him, and the same is true with Jesus Christ whom God has sent.

I Corinthians 8:5-6a:

-5: For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

-6a: But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we {are} in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ. . .

Oh, yes, there are many gods that can be worshiped and even cherished, but for the believer who looks to the true God and His Son Jesus Christ, their blessed privilege for doing so is an understanding of "life eternal," not when we die, but now while here upon this earth we can understand that we have eternal gift.

I John 5:20:

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him {God} that is true, and we are in him {God} that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is {understand} the true God, and eternal life.

It is interesting that the very next verse quotes, “Keep yourselves from idols,” because when we receive this understanding that the Son of God gives to us, we can discern the difference between idols (the many different gods) and the one true God, His Son, and our eternal life.

The longer you are a believing Christian the more God shows you in the heart of your heart the “life eternal” that you have received.

Well praise God, that He indeed sent His Son into the world so that you would have an understanding about the only true God. This brings to the inner consciousness of the soul joy unspeakable and spiritual understanding within your daily life and walk with the only true God.

Three:

And Ye Shall Know the Truth

John 8:31b-32:

-31b . . . If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

-32: And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Jesus is teaching that “if ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed.” As disciples of Jesus we will come to know the truth, for the truth itself shall make us free to be his disciples. I once saw a poster illustrating an arm garbed with a robe and an outstretched hand that we were to assume was Jesus setting a bird free, and the caption below read, “The truth will set you free. John 8:32.” This Scripture was not even quoted accurately. The kind of freedom that Jesus was teaching was freedom to choose to walk with him; believers are never set free in the sense of being just simply freed to aimlessly wander around. Rather we were made free from the world, to be able to follow and become true Disciples of Christ, through the words of God that Jesus Christ spoke.

Galatians 5:1:

STAND fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made {not “set”} us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Galatians 5:1 shows us a further development in the freedom that is available for the believers. Here it says that “Christ hath made us free,” and he did so by giving his life freely for us. Now that we are free to become his disciples, we can also further begin to enjoy this freedom that enables us to be truly free in order that we may completely know our freedom with spiritual abilities.

The “yoke of bondage” in Galatians 5:1 has a twofold meaning. First, the Old Testament Law was a yoke of bondage. Secondly, the world itself has hidden traps of enticements to prevent the non-Christian, and even some Christians from truly walking with God in the truth, and this is a yoke of bondage (Ephesians 2:1-10). However, and thankfully, we have been given liberty by God to actually “stand fast” upon His Word. The Words of God that not only continuously keep us free from the devices of this world and the Law, but the words of God that

continuously reveal to our inner understanding the enormous freedom we have in Christ, in his accomplishments for us.

The truth of the words of God became the words which Jesus Christ spoke because he had made God's Word and will his very own word and will (John 17:8).

Today, believers - you and me, have the same blessed privilege to allow God's Word to also raise our believing standard to be that of God's Word for us - because He thinks the Word of us!

Whenever any believer continues in the words of God their lives become a showpiece for the glory of God, and they themselves become Disciples of Christ who enjoy the benefits and blessings of being made free to stand fast in the true spiritual liberty of our God.

Four:

Know That We Are of the Truth

I John 3:18:

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

Look at the love and concern that God has for His children, saying “My little children.” What an encouragement it is for us to recall that no matter what our age we are children of God. God is encouraging us to love, but not to simply give lip service. Rather, God wants us to love “in deed and in truth” or truly love by our deeds.

Ephesians 4:15a:

But speaking the truth in love. . .

In the center margin of the King James Version, it reads for the word *speaking* means “being sincere.” We are to be sincere with the love of God, sometimes speaking it out to others, but always in deed (in our actions) and in truth (by the guidelines contained in the Scriptures).

I John 3:19:

And hereby {loving in deed and in truth, verse 18 above} we know {not question, and without doubt} that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him {God}.

When we indeed begin learning to live in a Christ-like lifestyle and start living with the love of Christ in our hearts, our own lives will become assured “that we are of the truth.” We can then further become confident that when we pray and ask God for blessings upon our lives and for our daily needs (Philippians 4:19), for our loved ones and friends, that our prayers will be answered.

I John 3:20–22:

-20: For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

-21: Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God.

-22: And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

Whenever and wherever we have condemnation in our hearts, God becomes (in our minds) unapproachable. However, when our hearts condemn us not, then we indeed have great confidence and expectations to not only ask God, but know that we will also receive from Him as well.

His commandments usually scare people from asking because many of us have been so schooled in the Old Testament Laws, which were very burdensome. However, the commandments that God is referring to here are the commandments to live a life of love (period), not the burdensome commandments of the Old Testament (for more on this concept please read your bonus chapter "Jesus Loves You"). By the way the Old Testament Laws were written to the children of Israel who were living before Christ came, Luke 16:16, Acts 15:711, and Ephesians 2:15.

The choice to live in love is one of a deep personal and spiritual nature that each person weighs in his or her heart. As Christian principles delicately come to the surface of reason and understanding, we are more assured of having the foundation of God's Word and Christ's love to rely on, and the decision to know and experience the truth of God becomes an exciting adventure in life.

Five: Know the Savior

The greatest experience in this life is to come to a personal knowledge and understanding of our Savior. For so many people Jesus Christ was a man, who walked on this earth nearly two thousand years ago, and now he is somewhere, but they have no understanding of his actual whereabouts. The Angel said "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:6). Jesus gave his life for all the people on this earth and he is personally excited and blessed when people actually look for him and actually find him to be alive and well.

In the Book of Revelation, we have one of my favorite verses of Scripture in the whole of the Word of God that Jesus spoke after his resurrection.

Revelation 3:20:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

One thing that makes this verse so exciting to me is that in the Bible lands, in the culture that Jesus was raised in, whenever they would have a close personal friend over to dinner, the host always served and waited on his welcome guest, not sitting at the table. In Revelation 3:20, we have a dinner invitation that is even more personal than a close friend is, because Jesus says that he actually eats with you, and you with him.

Jesus has always been standing at our door knocking. The knocking is another custom meaning that one would actually stand outside the gate of the house and call out the owner's name (Acts 10:17-18). This is why the verse reads "if any man hear my voice."

In the Gospel of John, Jesus further discusses that there were to be other people besides those of the first century who would hear his voice.

John 10:16:

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

We today are those to whom Jesus was referring.

Reading the words of Christ is easy, yet it is an entirely different experience to hear his sweet voice.

Christ calling is pleasant and speaks directly to the heart and inner souls, with inspiration that will always strengthen our believing with a heavenly calmness of serenity. For our Savior's voice encourages, exhorts, and edifies men and women who answer him.

When you answer the call of Jesus today, you allow him into your heart.

When you hear His wonderful voice, you may recall how he has been calling you all along, even since your childhood!

It certainly will bless his life to bless your life for allowing him into your heart as you begin dining together on the bread of life (God's Word), and enjoying your close personal relationship with him as you come to know the Savior who gave his utmost for you.

Six:

Known of God (part one)

It is interesting to look back over our lives and try to remember the first thoughts that we may have had about God. Was God real, or simply a myth? Was He so far removed from humanity that He really is only a mirage? But when we turn this around, we see from God's point of view that He has always loved and known us. He has been waiting since the beginning of time for man to seek Him out.

Galatians 4:9a:

But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God. . .

"After that ye have known God," refers to after our salvation we become acquainted with our God, yet God has always been acquainted with us. Recall John 3:16 "for God so loved the world." God so loved us from before time itself.

Ephesians 1:3-5:

-3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

-4: According as **he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world** {emphases supplies}, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

-5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

This is still true today; He still loves the people in the world. God loved you in His foreknowledge and knew that you would be born.

Romans 8:28:

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to *his* purpose.

How many things according to God's Word work together for good? All things will work together for good! These good things that God desires and gives to them love Him. It is a misunderstanding of biblical light to assume that some of us were not called according to God's purpose. Every person who God has ever called was called according to His purpose.

The reason that things do not always work out for good is that we are in control of our believing and future (on earth), not God, for we have free will. The more we know of God's Word, and the more we believe in spiritual principles, the greater our spiritual life becomes.

God calls us and desires good things to come our way, and they will come our way when we believe they will work together for good to them that love God.

Ephesians 2:10:

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

A master artisan's work is always his pride and joy. We are God's workmanship — we are His masterpieces of joy.

God knew us from before the world began and He has foreordained that we should walk into His good works — this is when all things work together for good.

Notice that in the verse above it records, "That we should walk in them." This is not a command, but rather is a request. When we, out of our own personal love for God, begin walking in His good works, then we will begin to realize how awesomely they truly are ordained for our own good.

God created man. He has always known exactly how men and women work and play the best, so when God says that all things work together for good to them that love Him; it will be so.

This is how God's children begin to realize that they truly are known of God.

Seven:

Known of God (part two)

God created the heavens and the earth, and He formed, made, and created man to live upon the earth. God, being the Creator, designed the mind of man to hold His Word and for men and women to walk with God in His Word is His greatest goal. The Bible teaches that God knows our frame (Psalms 103:14). He understands everything that there is to know about us, and thankfully, He still loves us even though some people will deny His existence. God also formed our bodies and made us the way we are.

Matthew 10:29:

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

Nothing falls without God knowing about it. His concern for us is beyond all human comprehension. Yet the greatest thing God ever made was man.

Matthew 10:30:

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

This verse is probably familiar to most people, and I have heard it said that God knows how many hairs we have. Yet this verse goes way beyond this, for God has numbered each and every one of them! He knows which hairs are number as one, all the way through to the end. God's care and concern over us is almost unbelievable when we compare how we care for and think of ourselves.

A good friend of mine who had very little hair once said to me "God only made a few perfect heads, and He covered all of the rest of them with hair." Well, anyway, this I do know: God has numbered the very hairs on our heads, and I'll lay wages that God even knows where each hair we have lost has fallen!

Romans 11:33:

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

It is beyond the mind of man to thoroughly search out God, for instance; have you ever wondered where God came from? Well, Romans 11:33 reveals that this is “past {or beyond} finding out.” In other words forget about it, because we cannot understand it now; however, when Christ does return we will “know as well as we are known” (I Corinthians 13:12). Still, God has given to humanity more than enough to acknowledge the reality of Him (Psalms 19:16, Hebrews 11:3).

Romans 1:20a:

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made {the heavenly amphitheater above, the earth and all that is therein}, *even* his eternal power and Godhead. . .

“Godhead” is old English for head God. “The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are revealed belong* unto us and to our children for ever. . . (Deuteronomy 29:29a). Your heavenly Father has revealed many things, not only what you can physically see with your eyes out in the world, but even more emphatically: He has revealed many secret things to your heart throughout His Word, so that you may come to know Him Who knows you so intimately.

“GOD BLESS YOU!”

Benediction:

(a prayer)

Ephesians 3:14–21 (The Amplified Bible): *

-14: For this reason [seeing the greatness of this plan by which you are built together in Christ], I bow my knees before the Father *of our Lord Jesus Christ*,

-15: For Whom every family in heaven and on earth is named [that Father from Whom all fatherhood takes its title and derives its name].

-16: May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened *and* reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality].

-17: May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love *and* founded securely on love,

-18: That you may have the power *and* be strong to apprehend *and* grasp with all the saints [God's devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and depth [of it];

-19: [That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]!

-20: Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over *and* above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams] –

-21: To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen (so be it).

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A Bonus Chapter

Jesus Loves You!

John 13:34:

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

The word *new* is an enlightening word, it not only means brand *new* but also *new* in the sense of exchanging and replacing that which came before, and what came before were hundreds and hundreds of Old Testament laws and commandments.

We (as well as they in Old Testament times) could not love as Jesus loved until he came and first demonstrated his love (in the first century); this is why when Jesus spoke the verse above — this was *new* and different from what was written in the Old Testament. But now Jesus gave us a *new commandment* that would fulfill hundreds of Old Testament laws and commandments, and one only needs to exchange the old for the *new* to enjoy the newness that Jesus gave. Yes, to love God (Deuteronomy 6:5), and your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18) is written in the Old Testament, but Jesus gave us the epitome of primo love with which to reach out and it is exciting to love as he loves — you!

Jesus said, *A new commandment I give unto you.*

Jesus gave — so we could know his utmost love for us!

Jesus gave — so we could receive and presently enjoy his love for us!

Jesus gave — so we could then experience his love for us by loving one another *as I have loved you!*

Jesus demonstrated this *new commandment* by loving people, including you and me. When we practice loving others, our neighbors, as Jesus loves us, then a whole new dimension of love's potential and reward opens up to us because

when we are loving others with the love of Christ, we will come to know and experience “the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:19) in our lives.

When we accept Jesus’ love and then love one another with his love, we will effortlessly begin walking in the true splendor of the love of our Savior, and we will recognize that there is no law and no commandment that we can break, which is the true exquisiteness of his love. Take for instance the phrase, “Thou shalt not kill,” when this *new* love – Jesus’ love, is received and applied in our lives – then it becomes totally impossible to break this (or any other) Old Testament law as Romans 13:10 reveals, “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.”

When we utilize Jesus’ love, we then will be fulfilling all of the laws and commandments without compulsion.

So today, I encourage you to allow the abundance of Jesus’ love for you – into your heart – for then you will have his love that is essential to appreciating and thoroughly enjoying Jesus’ love for you.

John 15:9 and 12:

-9: As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

-12: This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Romans 13:8:

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.