
Words of Truth

Love For God

By: Brian A. Yeager

How many times have you heard someone say they love God, but that person is not a Christian? How many times have you heard someone talk about someone else's love for God, but the person he or she is talking about is not a Christian? The subject matter of loving God is not something that should be addressed or spoken of lightly. When someone says, "I love God"; there is more to that statement than a statement such as, "I love chocolate". When you say that someone else loves God you are saying a lot in that statement. We have to understand that.

Loving God is shown through action. The word of God says this: *"If ye love me, keep my commandments... He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him... For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again... By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous"* (John 14:15, John 14:21, II Corinthians 5:14-15, and I John 5:2-3).

The Scriptures you just read teaches us that love for God is shown through obedience. We learned that love for God means living unto Him rather than to ourselves. When you say that you or someone else loves God do you realize that you are saying that they are obedient to His entire will (Joshua 22:5)? Do you realize that you are saying that the person who loves God puts God first, even above himself or herself? There is a lot you or I are saying if we proclaim someone has a love for God.

Understanding How Much Is Stated When Saying Someone Loves God

There is not a statement, which I can think of, that says more about a person's good spiritual status than that person having "love for God". The term "Christian" does not emphasize faithfulness more. Even being called "brethren" (I Corinthians 1:10) or "saints" (I Corinthians 1:2) doesn't signify full obedience to God (I Corinthians 1:11-17, I Corinthians 3:1-3, I Corinthians 5:1-8, etc.). The term "disciple" can also be used loosely at times and not necessarily mean complete faithfulness to the Lord (Matthew 28:16-17). Also remember that the term "Christian" is just a synonym for the term "disciple" (Acts 11:26). Thus, saying a person is a saint, Christian, or disciple does not always carry with it the emphasis of absolute obedience to the Lord.

Now, considering what it means to say someone loves the Lord, you have to understand that speaking as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11) demands we use such phrases

carefully. When I say I love the Lord I am saying I am fully obedient to Him. Notice: *“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me”* (John 14:23-24).

To define this more, we shall consider some applications of what it means to fully obey the Lord. In doing so, we can see some things that are instructions from the Lord and draw a conclusion about a person based upon their response to God's instructions.

Can You Say This Is Loving God

With the principle in mind that loving God means obeying Him, we will go down this road of thought. The Lord says this: *“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds”* (Colossians 3:9). Can a person tell a lie and say they love God? The Lord says this: *“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband”* (Ephesians 5:33). Can a man care more about himself than his wife and claim to love the Lord? The Lord says this: *“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you”* (Titus 2:7-8). Can a person say do as I say and not as I do and claim to love the Lord? The Lord says this: *“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof”* (Romans 13:14). Can a person focus on carnal desires and claim to love the Lord?

The above paragraph was written to stir up our minds. A person cannot claim to love the Lord while his or her conduct shows disobedience to His will. It is biblically ignorant to say that a person has a love for God while they are doing that which is not pleasing in His sight. The phrase itself proves nothing when the actions do not line up.

Prove It

The Lord says: *“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate”* (Titus 1:16). Clearly, from what you just read, people often say they are God's people while their works show otherwise. What does your work for the Lord say about you (Galatians 6:3-4)? If you say that you love God does your life reveal that through absolute obedience to His will?

Conclusion

After considering some of the things in this article, are you comfortable saying you have a love for God? If not, something needs to change in your life. You have to love God to be known of Him (I Corinthians 8:3). If you do not have that love for the Lord you are Anathema [accursed] (I Corinthians 16:22). It is God's will that we show we have love for Him: *“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked”* (I John 2:3-6).