

Maker Fun Factory: God Will Always Love You
July 9, 2017
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

Long ago the LORD said to Israel: "I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself." (Jeremiah 31:3 NLT)

The very nature of God is love. It isn't a choice He makes, but rather who He is. And His unconditional love for us is everlasting and unfailing, regardless of what we think, say or do. It is a comfort to know that our Father in heaven is always drawing us near to Him so He can bless, discipline, heal and save us. This week, let us consider the many ways in which God displays His great love for us and remember that no matter where we are, we are standing in His love.

Digging Deeper

Because God loves you...

He wants to **BLESS** you.

- Don't we all want God's blessings? Of course material rewards are nice, but mostly we desire His blessings to fall upon us in the form of His presence, His power and His purpose for our lives. And why do you think we want these things? Because God knows what is best for us! Can you think of an example of something that happened to you that seemed like a curse at the time, but was actually a blessing in disguise? Were you able to see God at work in the good and the bad?

"[They] will find blessings even in the barren land, for I will give rest to the people of Israel." (Jeremiah 31:2b NLT)

"...my people will feast on my good gifts." (Jeremiah 31:14b NLT)

He wants to **DISCIPLINE** you.

- Read Hebrews 12:10b-11 (NLT). Discipline doesn't always feel good, but is necessary to correct and redirect. Just as truly loving parents discipline their children to mold their character, God disciplines us to shape us in godliness and holiness. Why do you think living a disciplined life is essential to developing character?
- Do you struggle with self-discipline in the face of temptation? What helps you to overcome?

I have heard Israel saying, "You disciplined me severely, like a calf that needs training for the yoke...I turned away from God, but then I was sorry." (Jeremiah 31:18-19a NLT)

"Is not Israel still my son, my darling child?" says the Lord. "I often have to punish him, but I still love him." (Jeremiah 31:20a NLT)

He wants to **HEAL** you.

- God's love for us allows us the freedom to choose to accept or refuse what He offers. God sees your hurts and sorrows and wants to heal you, but He's waiting for permission to act. And since He won't force Himself on anyone, we must seek Him through prayer. Can you share an example of how you witnessed (or personally experienced) healing through diligent prayer?

"For I will bring them from the north and from the distant corners of the earth. I will not forget the blind and lame...Tears of joy will stream down their faces, and I will lead them home with great care. They will walk beside quiet streams and on smooth paths where they will not stumble. For I am Israel's father..." (Jeremiah 31:8-9 NLT)

He wants to **SAVE** you.

- Read 1 Timothy 2:3-4 (NIV). God wants us all to be saved and know Jesus. Of course, since we are all sinners, we could never accomplish salvation on our own. That is why Jesus stretched out His arms on the Cross of Calvary, took the punishment we deserved, and said, "I love you this much." Now, He waits for our reply. We embrace Him and receive the gift of salvation by saying "yes" to His offer of forgiveness and eternal life. As a Christian you gave your "yes" when you accepted Christ and your Lord and Savior. What is the result when you fully surrender your life to Christ? What does it mean to you to be a saved and a follower of Jesus? What are some characteristics of a faithful disciple?

Now this is what the Lord says: "Sing with joy for Israel. Shout for the greatest of nations. Shout out with praise and joy: 'Save your people, O Lord...'" (Jeremiah 31:7 NLT)

Conclusion

God will always love you and because He does, He wants to bless you, discipline you, heal you, and save you. The question is: Will you let Him? Will you allow God to do those things for you? Will you receive the word of the Lord that says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love. With unending love I have drawn you to myself." (Jeremiah 31:3 NLT)