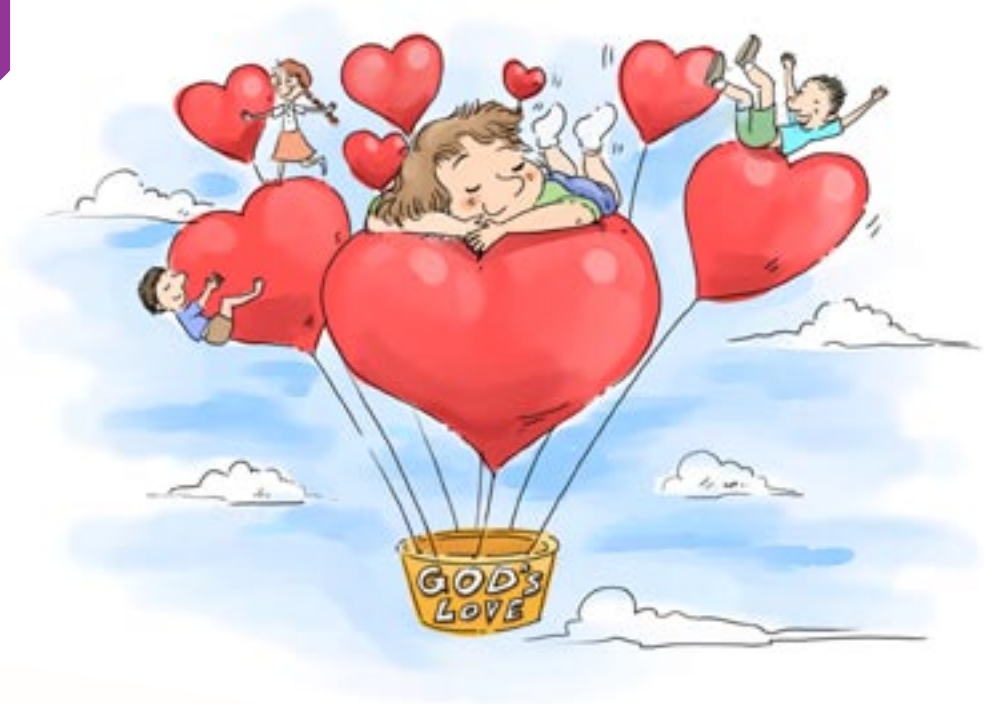


# God's Love



## Getting Started

All of the light and warmth in this world comes from the sun. In the same way, all of the love in this world comes from God. We are able to love God because he first loved us. We are able to love other people because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19) But sadly, many people do not believe God loves them. They might think they need to do things to earn God's love. The Bible tells us that there is nothing we can do to earn God's love. But we do not have to. He already loves us. In fact, God knew us and loved us even before we were born! (Psalm 139:15-16)

## Improving Your Vocabulary

**hurl (v)** - to throw forcefully

**insult (n)** - something said to hurt or make fun of someone

**rebuke (v)** - to strongly criticize

**sentence (n)** - a judgment; a decision as to the punishment of a criminal

**eternal (adj)** - lasting forever and ever

**drive out (v phr)** - to get rid of; to force someone or something to leave

**abandon (v)** - to leave someone in a time of need

## Reading God's Word

*When Jesus was dying on the cross, there were two thieves hanging on crosses beside him. He showed love to these criminals, but only one responded to that love.*

### Luke 23:39-43

**39** One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" **40** The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God? You received the same sentence he did. **41** Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong." **42** And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!" **43** Jesus said to him, "I promise you that today you will be in Paradise with me."

### John 3:16

**16** For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.

### 1 John 4:18-19

**18** There is no fear in love; perfect love drives out all fear. So then, love has not been made perfect in anyone who is afraid, because fear has to do with punishment. **19** We love because God first loved us.

## Romans 8:38-39

**38** For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, **39** neither the world above nor the world below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.

For further study, see Psalm 63:3, Psalm 136, Isaiah 54:10 and John 13:1.

### Taking a Closer Look

1. What did the first criminal think about Jesus? What did the second criminal believe about him? (Luke 23:39-42)  
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2. What did the second criminal ask Jesus to do? Why do you think he did this? (Luke 23:42)  
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3. What promise did Jesus make to the second criminal? Why do you think he did this? (Luke 23:43)  
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4. What did God do to show us how much he loves us? (John 3:16)  
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5. Why are some people afraid of God? What drives out all fear? (1 John 4:18-19)  
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6. Where does all love come from? (1 John 4:19)  
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7. Who or what might try to separate us from God's love? How? (Romans 8:38-39)  
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## Taking Action

1. God loves you. It gives him pleasure when you include him in every part of your life. What can you do to remind yourself to think of him more, and talk to him more each day?
2. God says in the Bible, “I will never leave you; I will never abandon you,” but sometimes he feels very far away. How can we remind ourselves of God’s love in these difficult times?

## Memory Verse: Romans 8:39

**There is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.**

## Review the Vocabulary

*Discuss the following questions with a classmate.*

1. Have you ever **insulted** someone without meaning to?
2. Is it possible to **rebuke** someone in a loving way?
3. What is something you want to **drive out** of your life?
4. What is something **eternal**?



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