

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship
May 9, 2021 ~ Happy Mother's Day!
"A Glimpse of God's Love"

Sunday school at 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King's Kids.

NEWS

Wednesday Night Activities at 6:30 PM
 The New Building is a GO!

330 N. Somers Rd. (Mail: PO Box 10626) Kalispell, MT 59904~ (406) 755-1776

Visit the website ~ www.myaletheia.com

New Podcast Host: myaletheia.podbean.com Or go to Spotify, and type in myaletheia

Like us on Facebook (aletheiachristianfellowship)

Emails: pastor@myaletheia.com, stacey.sundt@myaletheia.com

GLACIER MOM VIDEO:

STUFF MOMS NEVER SAY VIDEO:

SMALL TOKEN OF APPRECIATION:

When God has a _____, we can have _____.

Genesis 1:1, בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים. We say, "In the beginning, God created."

The first word is רֵאשִׁית (rā-shēt), meaning _____, with the letter ב (bāt), giving us _____. In Greek it is Ἐν ἀρχῆ (ēn ä-rĕ-xā).

The next word is בָּרָא (bä-rä), meaning _____.

The third word is the plural form of the single God, אֱלֹהִים (ē-lō-hēm).

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

We know from the Bible that He is triune in nature (II Corinthians 13:14). How is it possible for three to be one? We try to logically explain the _____, but it's a _____ Truth.

Hosea 10:2, "The hearts of the people are fickle."

It's all about Agapê... That _____ to love another, not based upon their character, conduct, or performance...

Human beings make human religion. How can you tell the difference?

What is legalism other than a person _____ to be accepted?
 What is penance other than a person _____ for their sins?
 What is the focus of both?

God is first of all completely selfless. That's proven by creation itself and especially by the Word of God entering our world. "He Who knew no sin, became sin."

All for love's sake...

We get glimpses of God's Agapê. His pure and perfect, altruistic, unconditional, God love... No glimpse is greater than the love we oftentimes see from a _____. Happy Mother's Day!

THIS IS YOUR DAY VIDEO:

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Welcome Friends

H A P P Y
*Mother's
Day*

Alêtheia Christian Fellowship

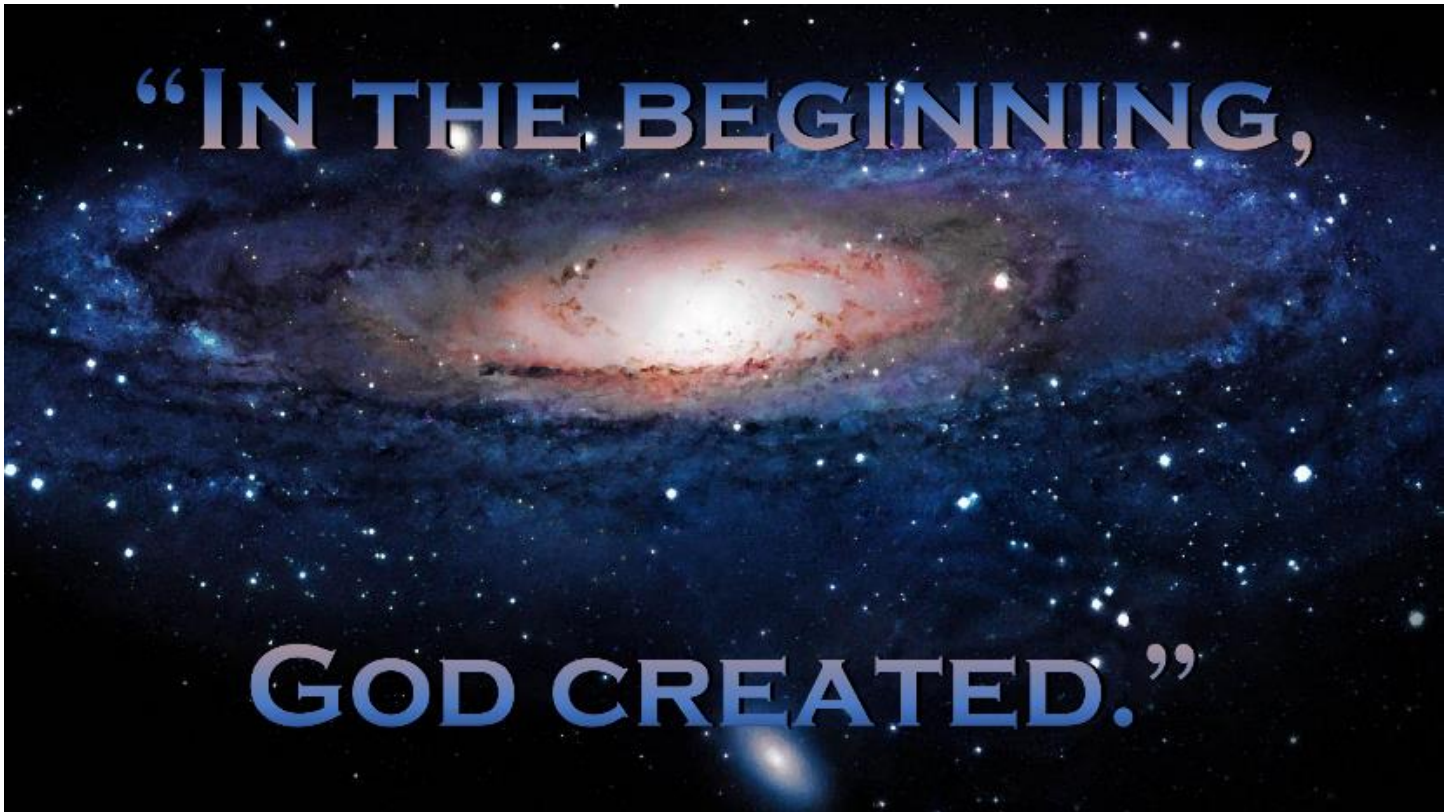
I couldn't very well continue in our study of Matthew's Gospel this morning. To dissect and discuss the brutal murder of Jesus on Mother's Day seemed a bit much to me. On the other hand, the meaning of that horrific day from God's side of the equation is incredibly apropos.

Almighty God had a plan before anything in the physical realm existed and my friends as difficult as it is to believe sometimes, He still has a plan.



What's amazing for us is that when God has a plan, we can have hope.

Genesis 1:1 contains the opening verses of a book written 3,500 years ago from ancient oral history that itself stretches back to the "Beginning."



It is truly profound, far more so that most people realize. We could literally spend the rest of our time together here this morning talking about the first three words. Genesis 1:1, בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים. We say, “In the beginning, God created.” The first word is רֵאשִׁית (rē-shēt), meaning “Beginning.” On the front of that word is attached the letter ב (bāt), giving us בְּרֵאשִׁית (bē-rē-shēt). It adds the idea of “In,” to the operation and so together it means, “In beginning.” Notice there is no concept of the word “The.” We need to add the word “The,” in English for grammatical reasons... It’s really just “In beginning.”

The reason that's important is that the stress is not on a point in time, but on a qualitative aspect of beginning that essentially focusses on the nothing before part. It means in the ultimate beginning before anything at all existed, it the non-time before time, when there was literally nothing except God - no space, no time, no matter, no physical reality at all - in that beginning.

That exact idea is carried on in the Greek translation completed about 300 years before Jesus was born. It is Ἐν ἀρχῇ (ĕn ä̀-ĕā). Again, "In beginning." Which is also the exact same opening in John's Gospel... Ἐν ἀρχῇ "In beginning, there already existed the Message, the Message was relationally interconnected to the One true God and the Message was God." It means that the Word was eternally existent as being fully God, but not the totality of God Himself. Of course, we know that a few verses later, the Bible reveals that the Word took on flesh and dwelt among us as the man Jesus Christ.

Going back to the Genesis opening the next word is בָּרָא (bä-řä). It is a special Hebrew word reserved exclusively for the activity of God. It is to genuinely create in the absolute sense.

In the physical realm nothing is ever truly created. Matter is rearranged - a painter takes existing materials and transforms them into a work of art. It's incredible, but it's a reordering of existing things.

It's like the old joke. A scientist tells God creation of life is no big deal, we can do that in a lab now. God says, "Show Me." The scientist agrees and says, "We start with this beaker of plain dirt." To which God says, "Hang on... Get your own dirt." God creates ex nihilo, which is to say, something from nothing at all.

To a lot of people that is too difficult a concept to grasp, but even our own science was able to recognize a correspondence between energy and matter. That what Einstein's $E=mc^2$, tells us. Of course, in our closed system, energy, just like matter, cannot be created, just exchanged. God, however, exists outside of His rules governing space-time-matter-energy in this universe and so, an easy way to think of God creating from nothing is for Him to have used a bit of His Own personal energy to create matter, which then, by definition, requires space to house it, and again, by definition, space requires the concept of time... No matter how fast you can travel and how small the

distance, space requires time to get from one point to another.

The third word is the plural form of the single God. The Jewish Shema is “God is One.” The Bible repeatedly teaches that the One True God is the only true God and that He is a single unified perfect entity and yet is described as a plurality. That means that God is a plural in such perfect harmony He is a singular.



We know from the Bible that He is triune in nature. Meaning that for our understanding He is Father, Son and Spirit, or we could say, God is Will, Word, and Breath, all coexisting in such perfect concert as to be

One. An example is the closing words of II Corinthians, 13:14NIVMay the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. While the Father “IS NOT” the Son, nor the Spirit. While the Son “IS NOT” the Spirit, nor the Father. While the Spirit “IS NOT” the Son, nor the Father, each of them are fully God.

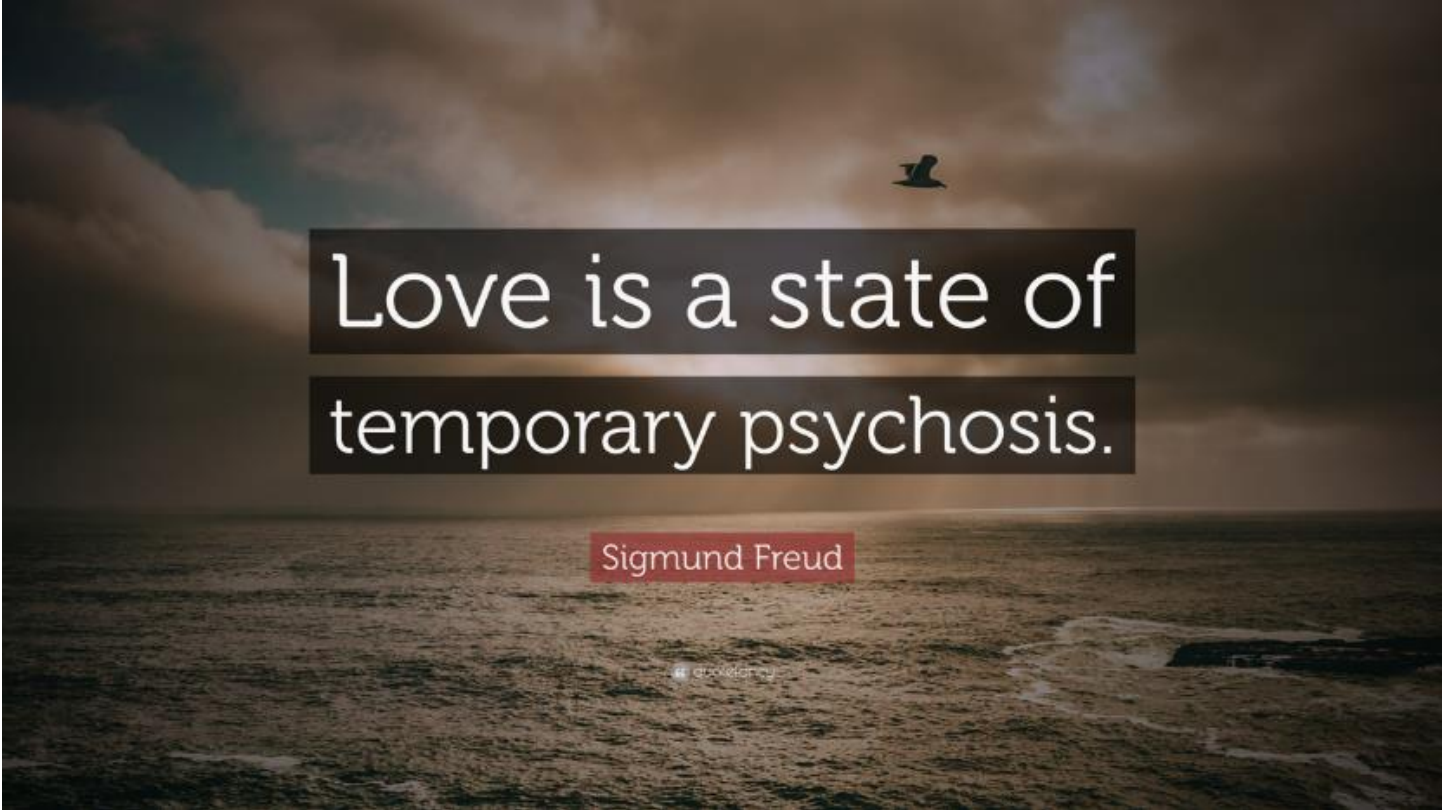
How is it possible for three to be one? The explanations commonly used, generally run from inaccurate to heretical. You’ve no doubt heard the Trinity is like the phases of water... Water can be a solid as ice, a liquid as water and a vapor as steam. That analogy is actually a description of modalism, which was an early heresy. Modalism means that God takes on different modes of being. One moment He’s the Father and the next, He’s the Holy Spirit, etc. He’s one God who wears different disguises - the modalism heresy. I could go on, but even our best attempts don’t do justice to the reality of God because we approach the issue from the wrong basis.

We try to logically explain the mechanics of the contradictory idea of three being one, but it’s a relational Truth, not a puzzle to be solved. For instance, how can two people, let’s say a married

couple, be one flesh as the Bible declares? The Biblical concept set forth in the Garden of Eden long before sin entered the world was one in which Adam and Eve - the two of them, would be one. Add God to the mix as was His desire and the three become one.

Has it ever happened? Has any person in the history of the world been so in tune with, so connected to, so perfectly harmonious with another person that the two could genuinely be said to be one?

Never. As Spirit-filled Christians it is the goal and hopefully we get closer to it than those without God's help, but none of us ever even approaches the reality of truly being one flesh.

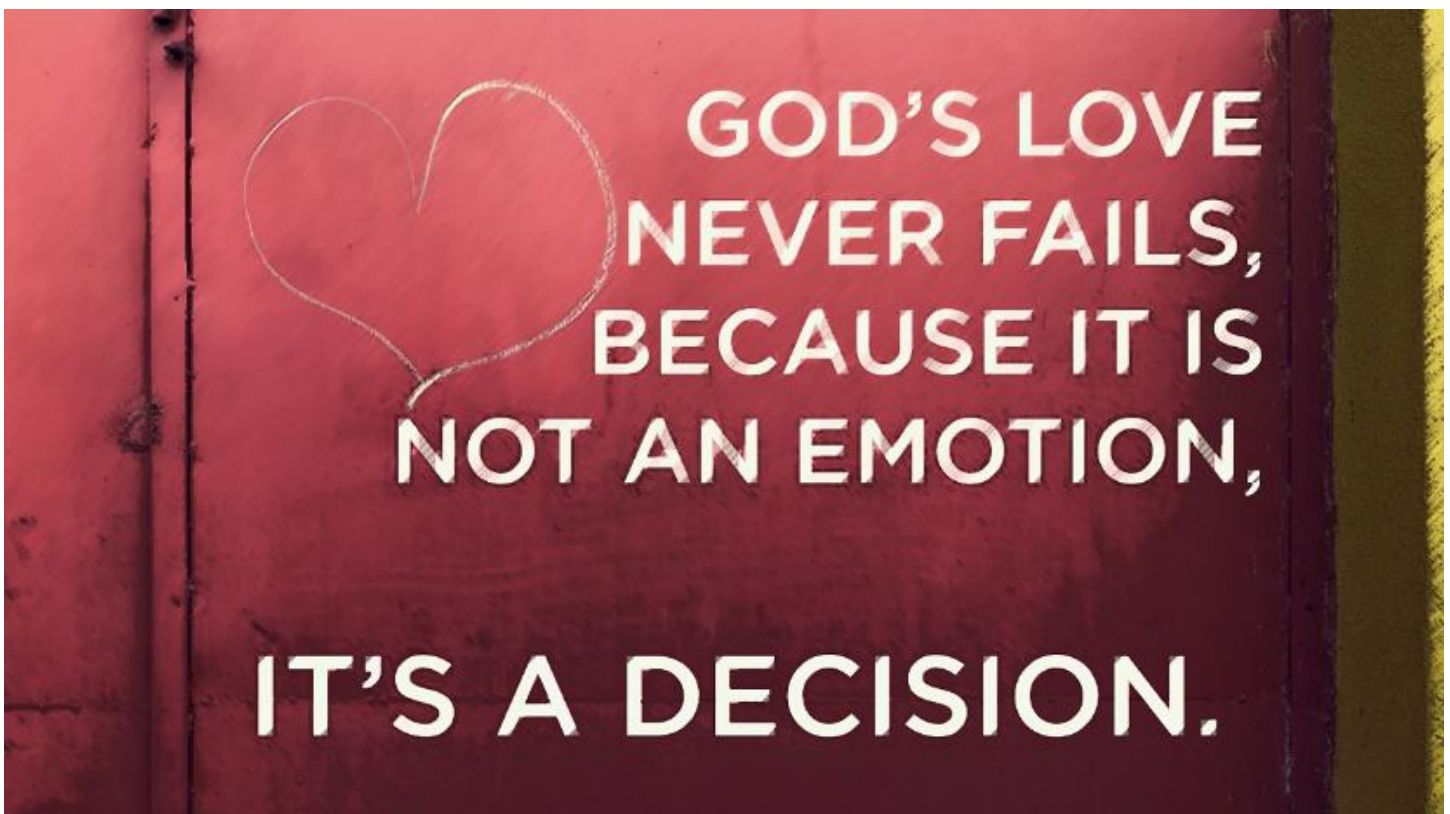


Love is a state of
temporary psychosis.

Sigmund Freud

Why? You've got to ask yourself why? Because we are full of self, which means that we are full of fear, which means we defend ourselves even when the threat is only imagined. We love with a human love that is fickle according to God. In Hosea 10:2, God told the people that very thing, "The hearts of the people are fickle," or "False," or "Faithless," or "Devious," or "Divided," or "Dishonest," or "Deceitful," or take your pick of a translation... That's several of them, there's more. Bottom line, in our human experience all we've ever known is a fickle human love and it is so ingrained in each of us that we cannot fully grasp the love of God. If we ever did, it would drive all fear from us, and we would be able to love unconditionally just as He does.

What's my point? The reason God can be three in one is because He doesn't have any fear within Him at all and so he loves perfectly. Perfect love is completely harmonious. God is an eternally and internally relational Being. He has been internally relating for all eternity - for all time without beginning. Forever He has been in one accord with Himself and that is why three can legitimately be called one.



It's all about Agapê. That choice to love another, not based upon their character, their conduct, or their performance... A choice to love another based upon the lover's character, not the lovability of the loved.

To demonstrate I'll use myself in both roles so as not to offend anyone. I constantly have people get irritated with me and in one way or another they let me know.



If you think about it at all, what has happened, is that I have failed to meet the standard that they have set for me. In other words, I have failed to live up to their minimum acceptable requirement and so, have become the source of their unmet expectation. You don't want to be the source of someone's unmet expectation.

That rarely passes without some kind of punishment - a pound of flesh - penance to be forgiven for failing to make the grade in their eyes.

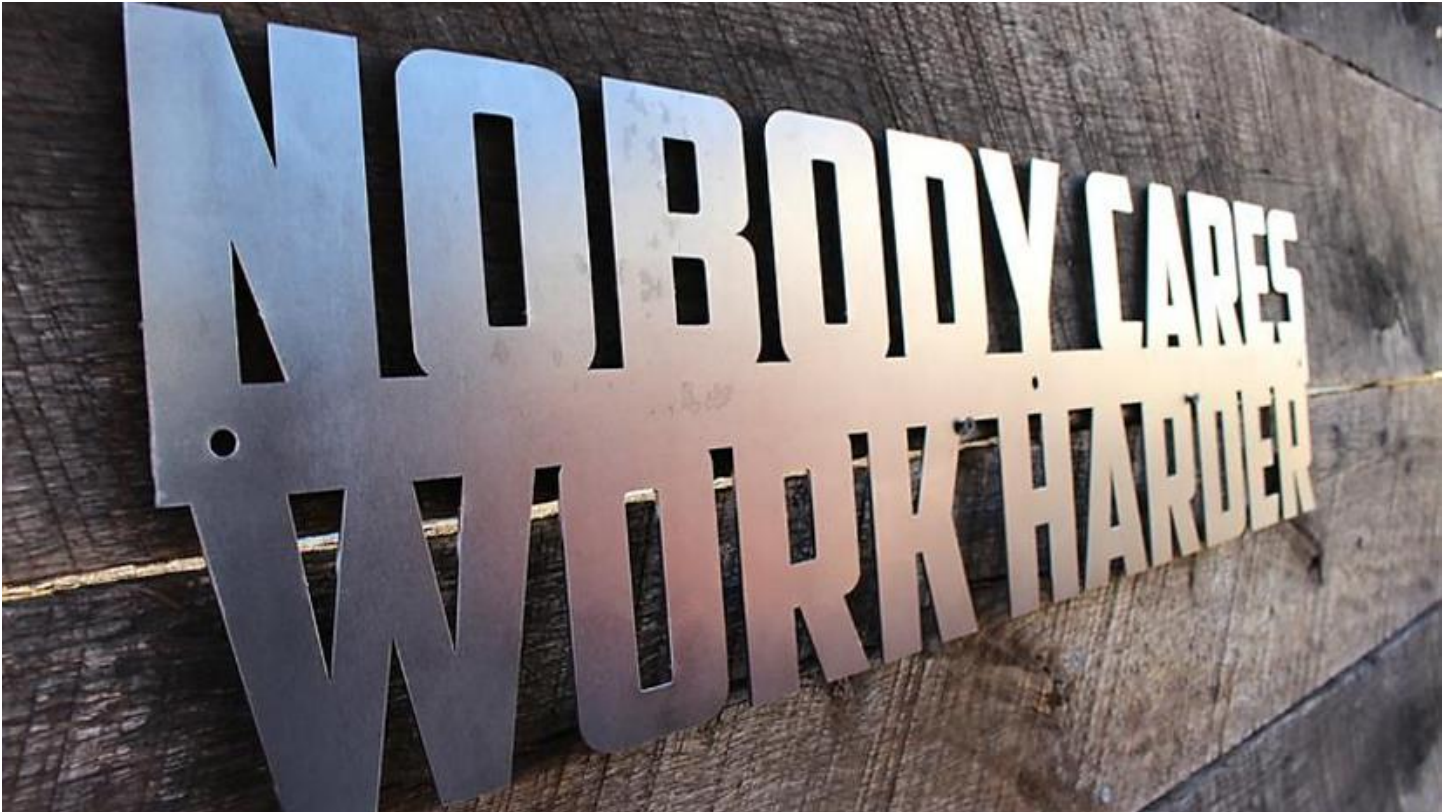
If you reason beyond that a bit you will see that the unmet expectation is always what works for the person holding the expectation. It's how they want the world to work for their satisfaction. What I mean is that if I hadn't failed, but instead had met the person's expectation, they would not have been irritated. My performance in their eyes would have been satisfactory because it worked for them - it provided an outcome that pleased them. Take that a step further, and you see that our human love is fickle because it is performance-based. Now switching myself to the other side... So long as someone performs acceptably to me, I can love them. Once their performance is below that mark, it's not working for me anymore and I get irritated. It isn't long before my irritation turns far darker.

What's required to get back on track? Well, I've been offended, or hurt and so I need to see some penalty applied. There needs to be some suffering, or at least some serious groveling before we talk about forgiveness and some extra credit before we get back

to business as usual. This is the way we humans operate.



Is it any wonder that so much of Christianity is that? Human beings make human religion. How can you tell the difference between relationship with God and man-made religion? Get rid of all the fluff, all the smoke and mirrors and examine what is in the center. In Biblical Christianity you will find God there. In all other religions you will find man in the middle.



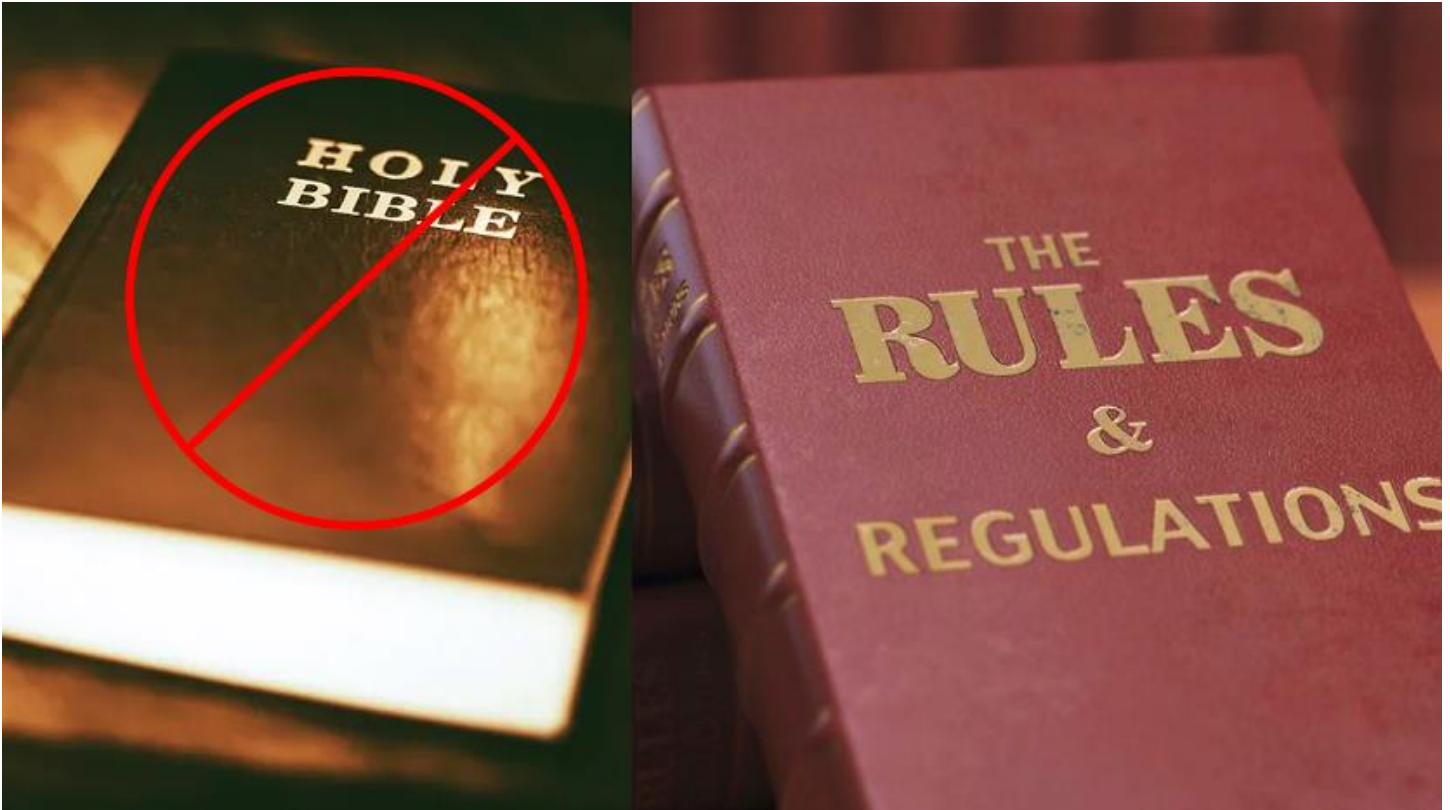
What is legalism other than man working to be accepted? What is penance, whether that given out by a priest in the form of prayers and candle lighting, or that imposed upon yourself in the form of self-inflicted depression and guilt... Other than an effort to pay for your own sins? What's the focus of both the legalistic effort to please God and the self-loathing flagellation to be punished when you fall short? The focus is always directly on you. Always, it is me in the middle when I make it about me in the middle.

We gravitate naturally to that form of human religion because I said to start, we are self-consumed and so we are full of fear and we know that our acceptance by

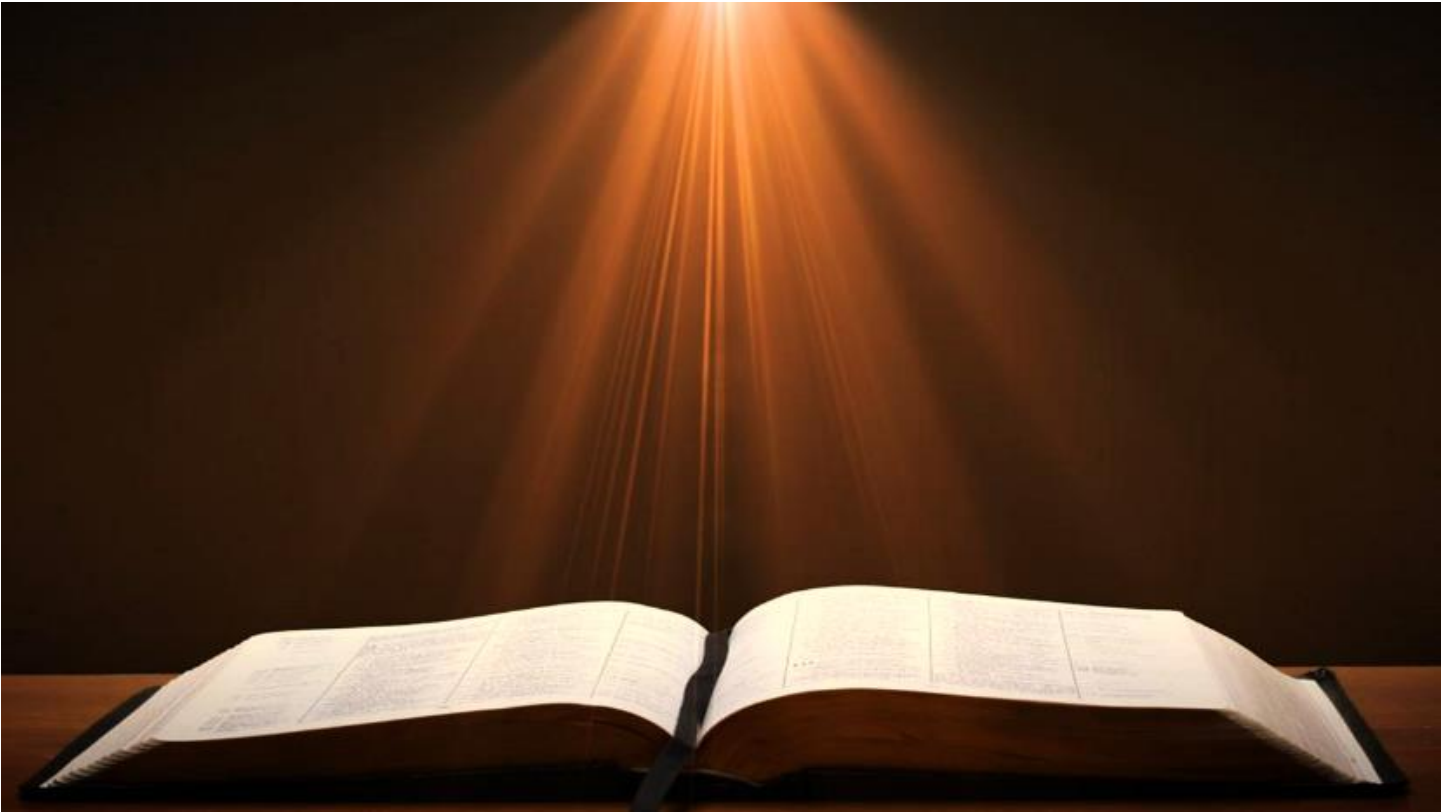
other people is solely based upon how well we make them feel about themselves.

You say Scott you're overplaying your hand. Am I? All experts agree that the very best way to make a good first impression when meeting another person is to put all the positive attention you can on them. Ask about their day, their family, their whatever... Focus in on what they want to talk about, and they will think you are awesome. Why, because you are? No, because you let them be the center of attention in a positive way.

Another example... A young guy asked to date one of my daughters. He said he loved her, and I asked him to explain how he knew that. His answers all had the common thread that he felt better when she was around. Can you see that what he loved was not my daughter, but how my daughter made him feel about himself? That means the person he really loved was himself and that as soon as my daughter stopped making him feel that way, his relationship with her would end... As it thankfully did.



Because of all that is it any wonder that we turn Christianity in to a false religion of man? That we turn Almighty God into a fickle being like us, demands a performance from you that makes Him feel good about Himself? The proud Father of a high achiever. That He's looking down on us judging our every move constantly disappointed, constantly dissatisfied with us.

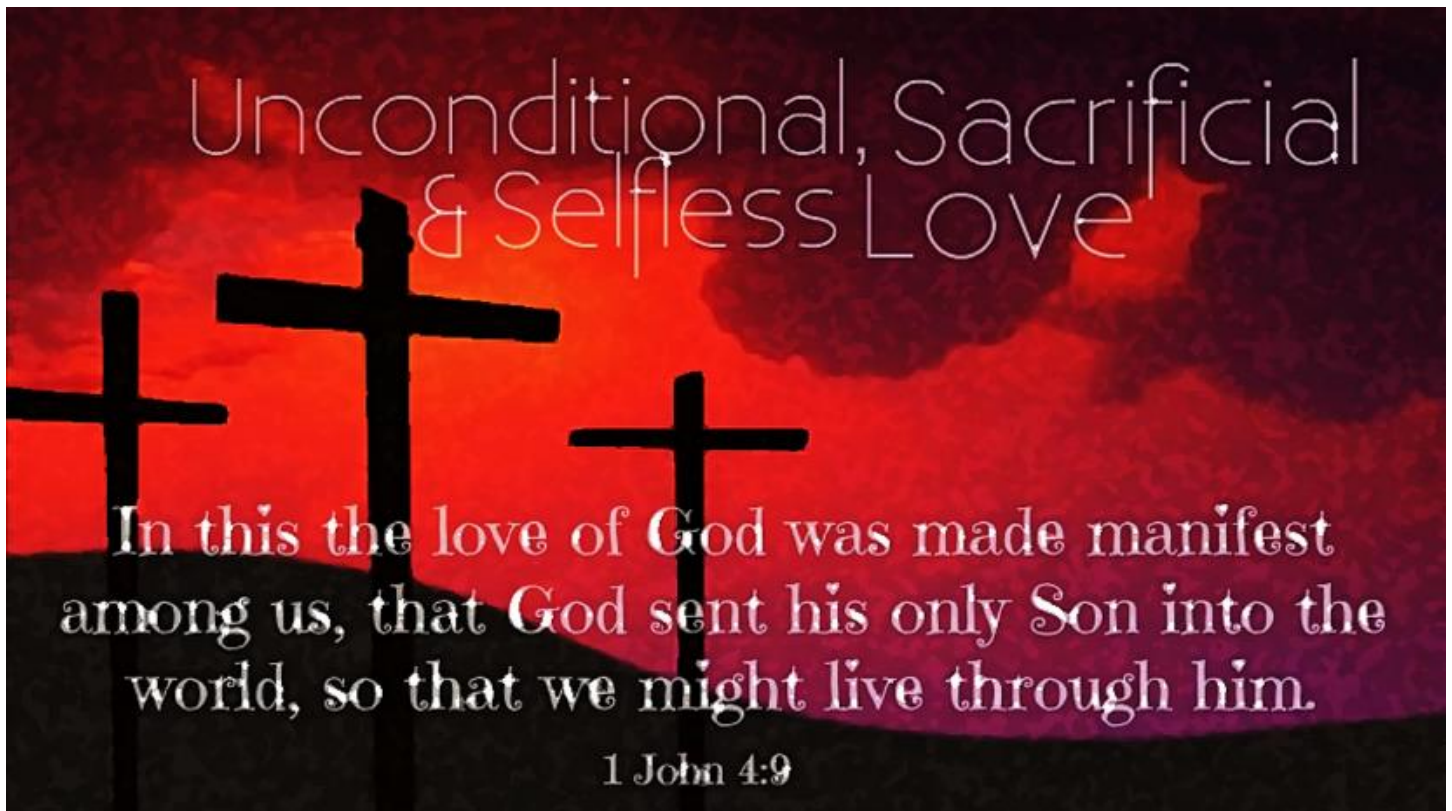


Well, through the power of the Holy Spirit illuminating the Word that God has given us, we can see that He is nothing like us in this regard.

God is first of all completely selfless. We started out talking about creation. Any Being Who could create the universe, has absolutely no need for us. There is only one possible reason that an eternally immutable Being would create us and that is to selflessly share Himself with us.

The Bible declares that God is immutable - the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow - pure existence, unchanging and unchangeable. That means He is

already completely self-actualized. He not only needs nothing to complete Him, but He also couldn't take on anything that would change Him or He would no longer be complete... Just as you cannot have more than 100%, you cannot get more complete than complete. If God got something from us that He needed, He would be different after He got it than He was beforehand.



Both the Bible and logic require this to be true, so why create? Again, the only answer is selflessness. That selfless desire to share and benefit others was proven beyond all doubt when the Word of God took on flesh and dwelt among us... Then after earning His spot back in Heaven, He allowed the Father to place my sin,

your sin, the sin of the world upon Jesus as though it was His Own sin. “He Who knew no sin, became sin.”

As I said the other day, the thought of rebelling against the Father and the Holy Spirit had never, in all of eternity, it had never even occurred to the Word and now the totality of human rebellion was His.

All for love’s sake... The Father imputed our sin to Jesus. All for love’s sake... Jesus accepted the weight of evil and paid with His life. All for love’s sake... the Holy Spirit raised Jesus to the newness of life and inspired the record we now have and currently illuminates it to those of us with the Spirit to understand. All for love’s sake.

The Gospel is the most remarkable story ever told... God chooses to love you and then proves it by giving everything to lift you out of sin and death... What does He ask in return? Actually nothing. The things asked of us are merely the proofs that we rest in His love. If we embrace Him in His love, we will simply desire to be more like Him - that’s all.



We get glimpses of God's Agapê. His pure and perfect altruistic unconditional God love... We get glimpses and no glimpse is greater than the love we oftentimes see from a mother.

We are in a fallen and depraved world where the leading cause of death among American human beings is their own mother handing them over to the executioner. That's true.

We are in a fallen and depraved world where even the best mothers are far from perfect because they are after all human. That's true as well. Yet, even though some folks have a strained relationship with their mom

and some moms have strained relationships with their kids, but in truth, I think we would all agree that a mother's love for her kids is as close as we regularly see to Agapê displayed.

Praise God for moms. Not only do each one of us owe our mothers our life, but it is also almost always our moms who instilled in us our initial concept of God. Almost always our mom who encouraged and enabled our openness to Him, the Bible and church. If it were not for faithful moms, I doubt that Christianity would exist today.

To me the greatest bit is the bit about the unconditional nature of a mom's love... Whether the birth mom or not, there is something innate in the feminine that demonstrates what God's love is like... At least when it comes to the children that they mother.

It is that mothering instinct that gives us some basis for understanding God's amazing grace - His endless patience - His astonishing capacity for full forgiveness without the requirement for penance - His unconditional self-sacrificing love.



Thank you, Lord, for giving us moms so that we can glimpse your great love for us.

