

God's Love for Your Family – A Portrait

by Moe and Paige Becnel

As scary as it is, we sometimes hear ourselves saying and see ourselves doing the same things our parents did. (When we are children we say that we will not be like our Mom and Dad. Surprises do happen!) We are products of the environment we grew up in. Our minds have been conditioned to think and respond accordingly.

But we do not have to stay the way we are. There are other sources available to us that we can use to “reprogram” our thinking and actions.

Consider God as a great source.

Describing Love

If asked to describe love, you would most likely describe it based on how you have been loved by others. And as people move into relationships in their lives, they usually extend love to others in the similar manner that love has been extended to them.

Who is the most loving person you know?

Your mother?	A co-worker?	A sister or brother?
A neighbor?	Someone at church?	A grandmother?
A teacher?	Your dog?	

(Dogs don't count, although we can learn a lot from them.)

Now think about that person's character.

How would you describe them?

What makes them so loving? Is it because they possess one or more of these traits:

Kindness	Thoughtfulness	True concern for you
Caring	Patience	Unconditional acceptance

They probably possess a combination of some of these traits.

God's Love

Here is GREAT NEWS! God loves you infinitely much more than any person ever will.

He is the epitome of true, unconditional love.

What is God's unconditional love?

That is difficult to describe in words, but a glimpse is found in 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8. [Read it slowly.]

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

(Wow! Wouldn't it be great to be loved like that?!)

More on God's unconditional love:

He sees beauty in those that are not lovely. (Isaiah 61: 3)

He has compassion on those who are empty. (Read the story in Luke 7:11-16 of the widow burying her son.)

He desires to heal the hurting, and restore the broken. (Isaiah 61:1)

He keeps no record of wrongs. (1Cor13:5) (We love that, and need to practice it.)

He sees great potential in those who have given up. (Isaiah 43:18-19)

He is no respecter of persons. He loves you the same as He does everyone else, no matter what you have done in your past. (Acts 10: 34)

He loves you as an individual. He knew you before you were born. (Jeremiah 1: 5)

He has created a plan and destiny for every person. (Jeremiah 29:11)

He is patient and long-suffering with us. (1Cor. 13:4,7)

His love never stops. He will never quit on us, or give up on us. (1Cor. 13:8)

True unconditional love is a very powerful thing. It draws us to God!
It will also draw our difficult family members to us.

As we experience God's unconditional love, we will then be able to reproduce it in our own relationships.

Relationship with God

To those who believe and receive His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, God adopts us as sons and daughters. (2 Corinthians 6:18)

He longs for intimate fellowship with you. We call it "lap-time," like when your children climb in your lap or cuddle next to you on the sofa just to be close to you. *God wants that relationship, that closeness with you!*

He wants to love on you, raise you, coach you, counsel you, advise you, and guide you in all your relationships and decisions.

He wants to protect you from making mistakes in life that cause you and others pain.

What a great God we have access to at any time!

Christ – God's Greatest Love Gift

Why was Jesus born?

He was God's perfect gift to us! If you are like us, we search through many stores at Christmas time, looking for that one and perfect gift for our loved ones. Many times, after hours of searching and digging, we finally see what we came for. That one gift that is perfect for the special person in our life. We know it when we see it!

Thousand of years ago, our Father searched heaven for the perfect, most valuable gift to give us. When He saw His son, He knew He had found the perfect gift. He became a selfless gift that would fulfill every desire and need in life! (John 3: 16)

Because of sin, man was separated from our loving Heavenly Father. In the Old Testament, the Israelites had to sacrifice animals to God for forgiveness of sins. Yet, only the Priest could go into God's Presence after he had been ceremonially washed.

Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, changed all of that! He was God's ultimate gift given to us by God to redeem us back to God. He became once-and-for-all the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" – our sins. (John 1: 29)

He came to give us abundant life – full life. (John 10:10)

Because of Jesus, you have the privilege to be God's child and to approach God in prayer anytime.

Even today, (2000 years later):



- ♥ **Father God has a plan for every detail in your life, and for every member of your family.**
- ♥ **He is very approachable, and is waiting for you to sit with Him.**
- ♥ **Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for you, and each family member.**
- ♥ **When we repent and ask forgiveness of our sins, He remembers them no more.**
- ♥ **God wants you to RECEIVE His unconditional love – no conditions, no matter what you have done.**
- ♥ **God wants you to EXTEND His unconditional love to each of your family members - no conditions, no matter what they have done.**

Unconditional love is the perfect gift you can present to each family member – through daily sacrifice and commitment.

Celebrate Christ this Christmas!
Moe & Paige Becnel

