



Two main Keys to bolster your relationship with God—the unconditional love of God and the goodness of God.

I want to share with you two key things that will bolster your relationship with God. You need to have these two things fully nailed down.

1. THE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE OF GOD

One of the greatest revelations we could ever receive is the revelation of God's unconditional love. Knowing and believing that God's love toward you is unconditional will revolutionize your relationship with God. Contrary to what some of us have heard in the past or are even hearing in the churches we go to is that God loves is proportional to our goodness. In other words, some teach that when we do right God responds with a blessing but when we do wrong, we are punished and cursed. Nothing can be further from the truth.

I used to preach, that when you give to the Lord, you have given Him a reason to bless you. That means that we can never be blessed of the Lord unless we measure up. The truth is that even on our best day; neither can we measure up to earn the blessing nor the love of God. True, there is a principle of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7-8), but it must be made clear that it is the Lord that gives seed to the sower (2 Corinthians 9:10). We were so destitute that we could not even provide our own seed. It is the Lord that gives us the seed that we sow to reap.

And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

—Genesis 25:27-28 (emphasis mine)

We live in a performance-based world. If you do well you get promoted, if you mess up you get fired. You did not get your job because of your employer's unconditional love for you. You had to earn it. If you work harder, you get a raise, or else you don't. We treat each other based on performance not unconditional love. That is how this fallen world operates. We have taken this same mindset and transposed it on God and His kingdom. We think that this is the same way God relates to us and deals with us which is not true. The kingdom of God operates quite differently from the way this world does.

For God and His kingdom, His love towards us is completely unconditional. We do not work to earn it or get it. It is all given to us by grace, not by works. For all a lifetime on this earth and all eternity, we could never perform good enough to earn the love and blessing of God. It doesn't come by performance.

It is a lie from hell that God's love for us is tied to our performance. The truth is that we all do not deserve what we get. God loves us not because we are lovely but because He is love (1 John 4:8, 16). This OT mentality of blessing and cursing needs to go because, under the NT, God deals with us and loves us not because we are lovely but because of Jesus and His finished work on the Cross. It's all because He is love not because we are lovely. If you are lonely, depressed, discouraged, and defeated, you can use some of God's unconditional love. A revelation of how much God loves you would completely revolutionize your life.

A. He first loved us

1 John 4:19 "We love him, because he first loved us." 1 John 4:10,18-19 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [18] There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. [19] We love him, because he first loved us.

a) We love God because He first loved us. We did not initiate the love relationship we have with Jesus. He did. God took the very first step towards us even before we had anything good in us.

i) It is impossible to love God first. Without Him, we have no clue how love looks like. True love is demonstrated by God to us. He had to love us first for us to love Him back.

ii) If there is another motivation other than love, you will break. You will quit. It is just a matter of time.

b) Before we were born again God reached out and extended His love to us. We hadn't fasted, tithed, or cleaned up our act. We were in a sorry state. We deserved nothing. How much more now that we are the children of God? Does God love us less now that we are in a relationship with Him or more? The truth is He loves us much more now. If He extended His love and mercy while we were yet sinners, is He now going to do less that we become His own children?

i) For instance, if you loved your husband before you married him, do you love him less after you get married, or do you love him more?

ii) You need a greater reason than a paycheck to go to work; a greater reason than I will be divorced to love your wife, on and on the list, goes.

- That greater reason is knowing how much God loves you. His love for you will cause you to do the right thing even when no one is looking.

Understanding the love of God will set you free to love, serve, give, forgive, and so forth.

- iii) If you are struggling in any area of your life, the bottom line is you do not know or understand God's love for you. A revelation of God's love for you will completely transform your life and your level of commitment to the Lord and serving.

God's love explained!

- a) Jesus loves you not because you are good, not because you are lovely. He loves you because He is love. That is His nature. (1 John 4:8, 16)
- b) Jesus loves you if you never served Him a day.
- c) His love for you is not proportional to your love for Him.
 - i) Do not serve God to earn His love. You CANNOT earn His love for you. You can only receive it as a gift. It is not a wage to be earned.
- d) If you are born again, you are pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6).
 - ii) It is faith that pleases God. Serving the Lord is very a good thing but doesn't make God love you more or less if you didn't serve.
 - iii) You need to get secure in the love of God for you and let your serving be driven by His love for you, not the other way around.
 - iv) This is the main key to commitment.
- e) If you understand that the Lord loves you, you can't help but love Him back.

B. He now loves us Much More

Romans 5:6-10 "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

- a) How do you know Jesus loves you? He died for you. He took the bullet for you/us.
 - i) Understanding this is the foundation to a greater, deeper revelation, and experience of God's love for us. Even when we do not feel loved, we can rest on the truth that Jesus died for us demonstrating His love for us.
- b) These verses have a powerful lesson we can learn about the love of God. While we were still a sinner, Jesus died for us.
 - i) We had done nothing good nor had we lived a godly life for Him to love us. In other words, His love for us was entirely based on Him—not us. It was unconditional.
 - ii) If God loved us so much to die for us while we were still sinners, He loves us much more now that we are now justified.
- c) He doesn't love us less or more but much more now that we are His children. If He loved us unconditionally while still in the world, He loves even much more unconditionally now that we are His children.
- d) Religion has taught us that we should come as we are and that God loves us unconditionally but as soon as we do and get saved, the next day they say, "If you do not straighten up and get your act together, God won't bless you. He won't love you."
 - i) What they are saying is that God's love and blessings for that person are based on their godness and holiness.
- e) How holy do you have to be to receive from God? Who sets that percentage? Brothers and sisters, it is a deception to think that you can deserve or earn a thing from God based on your holiness and goodness. At your best in all your actions, you still fail.
- f) What the mindset of performance to be blessed does to a new believer is to send him or her into condemnation and a performance-based legalistic mindset which will defeat them because none of us can ever perform 100% to deserve or earn the blessing and love of God.
- g) If our actions were what was required, then Jesus did not need to go to the cross and pay for our sins. We could have performed our way into a relationship with God. Of course, this thinking is ridiculous.
 - i) None of us qualified in our actions so God did everything for us independent of us and solely dependent on Jesus and His righteousness, not ours.

- h) I'm here to tell you that God's kind of love towards you is not dependent on how good you are, or you act but only on Jesus. You can't act well enough to deserve, qualify for, or earn the love and blessing of God. Only Jesus was qualified, and we only tap into that love, favor, and blessing because of our faith in Jesus.
 - i) If God loves you proportional to our goodness, then the OT law is still in effect. Times have changed because of Jesus. Hallelujah. Now we can love God, give worship without the fear of rejection because we failed.
- h) True, some people may be better than others in the outward act and conduct but, that is not the basis for God's blessing in our lives—Jesus is.
 - i) You may be better than me, but nothing can you receive from God based on your own goodness. Isaiah 64:6 says “that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.”

C. He IS NOT and WILL NOT imputing our sins unto us

2 Corinthians 5:19 “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

- a) Under the New Covenant, God is not imputing our sins unto us. Why? Because Jesus took all our sins and trespasses on the cross. Now God will not put sin on our account because He put it on Jesus’ account. So now we can experience the full blast of God’s love because sin is no longer an issue between us and God.
- b) The word “impute” means not to charge on one’s account, ascribe, or assign. To place the fault or responsibility for (American Heritage Dictionary)
- c) Psalm 32:2 “Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”
 - i) The Lord will not and therefore does not impute sin unto us. This is God’s will. He wills not to impute sin upon us because Jesus has paid for it all.
- d) Romans 4:8 “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”
 - i) Notice the words “will not” that are used here. “Will not” in this verse is what is called “a double negative, strongly expressing a negation” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary).
 - ii) This verse uses the strongest term or language to make the point that the Lord will not ever hold our sins against us once we have received His

forgiveness. Notice that this did not say, “did not” or “does not” but it says “will not” which implies the future.

D. Pharisee versus the Publican

Luke 18:10-14 “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

- i) Here in these verses, we see the religious mindset I described earlier—the Pharisee syndrome. It is self-trusting, it points to its achievements and good deeds—nothing Jesus, all self.
- ii) What this religious Pharisee was doing was to trust in his good deeds such as fasting, and tithing. Every time we focus on how good we are, we are not operating in the unconditional love of God because it doesn’t operate based on our goodness. It also means that we are walking and operating in pride.
- iii) This man was not pointing to Jesus but himself and this is a classic example for self-trust. It is clear that this Pharisee had no real revelation of God’s love and His righteousness based on faith in Jesus, not our own works and performance.

E. Know the Lord first, and then keep His word.

1 John 2:3-5 “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.”

- a) First, this is not talking of a mental knowing, but an intimate relationship with the Lord.
- b) Most people read this verse to say that if they keep His commandments, they will know the Lord. This is not what this is saying. It is saying that once we know the Lord, we will keep His commandments. In other words, the focus and emphasis of these verses is a relationship with the Lord which produces the fruit of keeping God’s word. It is important to know that our keeping of commandments doesn’t produce a relationship with God but rather the vice versa.
- c) We can know a person who has the love of God perfected in him by whether he keeps and adheres to God’s word. It is not the keeping of God’s word that produces

or causes us to be perfected in the love of God but it's when we are perfected in God's love that we will keep His word.

F. For God so loved the World (Jesus' finished work)

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

- a) This verse doesn't say you had to do such and such for Jesus to come and die for your sins. There is not one condition for God's love for us in this verse. Jesus took care of all your sins and shortcomings without your help. It was not required, and it couldn't be good enough.
- b) This is clearly saying that God loved us with no strings attached. There were no conditions whatsoever. It was His choice to die for us and He did it for us unconditionally. Now we receive by putting our faith in Jesus not by helping God out cleansing our sins through good deeds, keeping the law, and performance.

G. Walk as we received Him at first.

Colossians 2:6 "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:"

- a) We received Jesus by faith, and we continue to walk the same way we received, by faith.
- b) We all received salvation by faith in Jesus, not by our own good deeds and keeping of the law, but when we get born again, we start to perform to earn the blessing, favor, and love of God. This is a totally wrong approach. Although we should want to live a godly life, many have started using that to earn the rest of the provisions from the Lord which can only be appropriated and received by faith in Jesus. The way we received salvation is the same way we continue to walk our lives with God thereafter and it was by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

H. He remembers our sins no more.

Hebrews 8:12-13; 10:16-17" For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

- a) Under the New Covenant, the Lord is merciful to our sin (Unrighteousness) and our sins and iniquities He remembers no more. If sin was the issue, God has brought us

forgiveness and He doesn't remember our sins anymore. What a promise! Thank You, Jesus.

- b) For us to experience the love of God we need to reckon ourselves forgiven and that God is beholding or remembering our sins no more. With this revelation, we can enter into relationship with Him based on Jesus (the propitiation for our sins), not our own works and performances.
- I. Past, present and future sins forgiven

One day when I was just a very young believer, I asked a mature sister in the Lord what would happen if someone died before confessing their sin or sins. She replied, "Straight to hell!" I was troubled by that answer because I was thinking that if our salvation depends on confessing every single sin, then we have no hope. What happens if we forget one? If even I have been serving God and born again for the majority of life, I would go to hell for one or two unconfessed sins? I wondered what kind of God that was. I was not happy with that answer and yet I was not dealing with some sin in my life. I just knew that something was wrong about the answer she had given me. Later in my walk with God, He taught me and showed me what I'm about to get into with you.

- a) Hebrews 10:12, 14 "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;¹⁴ For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."
 - i) When the Lord died for our sins 2000 years ago, they were in the future not in the past. They were future sins. We had not committed any sin nor were we born yet, yet He went on and forgave them.
 - ii) This is proof enough that God has forgiven our future sins. If you do not believe this, you better believe it or else you can't be forgiven.
 - iii) Wo! wait a minute, how can God forgive future sins before I even commit them?" God made provision for everything we need including salvation before we ever had the need itself. All our sins were in the future at the time of His death and payment for them and if He can't forgive future sins, then you can't be forgiven and born again.
 - iv) Additionally, if God cannot forgive our future sins, then He will have to come and die again for those sins which is not possible and will not happen (Hebrews 9:27-28; 10:12, 14). Saying, "Lord, I'm sorry would not provide complete forgiveness of anyone's sins if Jesus had not died for them. It takes the shedding of blood for sins to be remitted not, "I'm sorry."

□ Hebrews 9:22 "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

b) Hebrews 9:12, 15 "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. ¹⁵ And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

i) An eternal inheritance can only be eternal if it is not dependent on our actions. In our actions and performance, we fail, and we will fail. If it is dependent on our actions until the next time we sin, then it is a temporal inheritance.

ii) At the cross, Jesus produced eternal inheritance, not temporary inheritance. Hallelujah! Our inheritance and redemption are not partial but eternal. This is the contrast we see from the Old Testament sacrifices which were temporal and so it was done again and again. However, in the New Testament, the sacrifice of Jesus was made one time, once and for all. It is not and will not be repeated like the Old Testament sacrifices because it was a perfect and permanent sacrifice. It was eternal, not temporal.

J. Our Judgment was borne by Jesus

John 12:31-32 "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

a) First, we have to understand what "all" Jesus was going to draw unto Himself. Many people believe that this is saying that Jesus will draw all men to Himself which is a true statement, but if we take a closer look, we see that the context of this verse makes it clear that Jesus is saying that He will draw all judgment unto Himself.

b) Because Jesus bore all our sins on the cross, the wrath of God (Judgment) towards sin has been satisfied (Isaiah 53:10-11). We can now enter boldly into the throne of Grace and find grace to help and mercy in the time of need (Hebrews 4:16). God is not dealing with us based on our sins because Jesus paid it all in full. He actually paid more than enough (Isaiah 40:2; Jeremiah 16:18).

i) He overpaid for our sins. God will not come after us. The debt is paid as required. Hallelujah! Jesus bore all the judgment of God. God is now satisfied with the payment Jesus made on our behalf.

- c) We can now experience and enter relationship with God and experience His love for us. There is no anger or wrath left. Thank You, Jesus.

K. We have Peace with God through Jesus

Ephesians 2:14-17 "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh."

- a) We now have peace with God because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross. We can now tap into and receive the love of God for us which is unconditional.
- b) There is no more separation between us and God.
- c) We who were once afar off have been brought near by the blood of Jesus. It is all because of the love of God (John 3:16).

L. We have been reconciled with God

2Corinthians 5:17-21 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

- a) We have been reconciled to God by the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - i) To reconcile simply means to bring two opposing parties back into relationship and fellowship.
 - ii) Jesus has done that for us, and we can now experience God's unconditional love because the barrier of sin has been taken care of.
- b) Jesus that knew no sin has become sin for us and in exchange, we have been made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

M. To know the Love of Christ

Ephesians 3:1-19 "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

- a) God's love isn't just one-dimensional. There is height, depth, length, and breadth to it. God wants us to experience and comprehend His love to the fullest.
 - i) His love is bigger and greater than most of us have ever thought or imagined. It is unconditional. We can't work or perform to get it. If we have to, then it ceases to be unconditional.
- b) If we are not filled with the fullness of God, it is because we have not experienced or known the love of God.

N. No more fear

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

1 John 4:18 "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

- a) A complete revelation of God's love for us removes and casts out all fear. If we are still walking in fear, then we have not received a revelation or tapped into God's love for us, or else we will not be fearful.
- b) We should not fear that God will not extend love and mercy unto us even though we sin and come short because His love for us is unconditional.
- c) You see, a revelation of God's love will give you boldness because you now know that it is not about you but Jesus and you are receiving because of Jesus not because of you.

O. No more condemnation from God

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

1 John 3:20-21 "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

- a) Because God's love towards us is unconditional, we should not live under condemnation. If we do, then we are not tapping into that unconditional love of God.

God is not the one condemning us, we should not let our hearts or Satan condemn us. God's kind of love that is unconditional does not condemn people. What good does condemnation do? None! It may drive people away from sin temporarily, but it will never set them free. It is like a Band-Aid on a wound, it does not heal the wound.

- b) If we condemn people, we hold them captive to whatever they are struggling with, but if we remove all condemnation, we release those people from their bondage and struggle. Condemnation does not set people free. It instead holds them back and drives them further and further from the Lord.

P. What can separate us from the Love of God?

Romans 8:32-39 "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- a) God's unconditional love is bigger than all our problems and all our challenges. No matter what we are going through, we can count on God's love for us because it is based on Jesus, not us. Therefore, it is unending and unending.
- b) God's unconditional love for us spared not Jesus but delivered Him up to die and pay for all our sins. If He could do that, He will give us all things.
- c) If you are not persuaded of God's love for you, you are missing out on what God has for you and you will not experience the fullness of God. If someone can talk you out of God's love for you, you are not persuaded of it. Nothing should separate you from the love of God.

So, if sin was the issue for stopping God from blessing us, it has been paid for and resolved. It's no longer a barrier between us and God. Isaiah 59:1-2 has been fulfilled and taken care of. Our sins no longer separate us from the Lord because they have been paid for. Now enter into a personal relationship with the Lord by receiving Jesus, the payment, and ransom for all your sins.

2. THE GOODNESS OF GOD

If you do not know or believe that God is a good God, if you have a wrong perspective of the Lord, you will not be committed. We all need a clear and biblical revelation of the goodness of God for us.

If we miss out on this revelation, we will struggle, and we will not have a vibrant relationship with God.

"Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes." Psalm 119:68

A. Doing good

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

- a) Jesus went about doing good, not bad, not evil. Why? Because He is a good God. In His doing good, He was portraying His heart and that of the Father.
- b) Healing is good. Jesus healed the sick many times.
- c) He set those who were oppressed of the devil free.
 - i) Notice that they were not oppressed by God, but of the devil.

B. The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy

John 10:10 "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

- a) Any stealing, killing, and destroying is Satan, not God. Jesus came to give life not to take life. He gave it more abundantly.

C. Destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:8 "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (Emphasis mine)

- a) This verse clearly shows you that Jesus is not on the same side as the devil. He came to destroy the evil works of the devil such as sickness, sin, and all the plunder we see today in the world.

- b) Not every work is a work of God. If that is so, then Jesus came to destroy His own work and the Father's. This verse shows that there is such a thing as the work of God and the work of the devil—not only one work, the work of God.

D. Every good and perfect gift

James 1:13-17 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

- a) What kind of gifts come from God? Not bad or evil gifts, but rather good gifts. God is a good God who gives good gifts.
- b) Anyone who thinks that the bad things come from God is in error because only good gifts come from God.

E. Not to destroy lives

Luke 9:51-56 "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye, know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."

- a) These disciples wanted to do exactly what God allowed through Elijah in the Old Testament, but the response of Jesus was out of this world. It was a shock to the disciples. He told them that he did not come to destroy lives but to save them.
- b) How can you save those that you came to destroy and kill? Will any be left to die for?
- c) The Word of God makes it clear over and over again that God has no pleasure in death and destruction.
 - i) "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."—Ezekiel 18:30-32; Ezekiel 33:11.

Rich Kanyal