


# Love vs Holiness



## The Love of God (Part 2)
## by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you precious truths out of Scripture that have made the difference between success and failure in my life, and can do the same in yours.

The theme I've chosen for this Christmas season is The Love of God. I don't know of any phrase that better expresses the essence of Christmas. I believe my talks on this theme will give you a new and deeper understanding of the events that we celebrate at this season, and in this way your whole Christian life will be strengthened and enriched.

In my introductory talk yesterday I focused on the supreme purpose of life as Jesus declares it in John 17:3:

> "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." (NIV)

That is the true purpose of life to know God. And to know God revealed in Jesus Christ. To know God as Father, not just as Creator nor as Judge, but as Father. And that is possible only through the revelation of Jesus Christ. That is the real meaning and purpose of life.

Today I want to speak further about the nature of God as it is uniquely revealed in the Bible. I want to set side by side two amazingly simple statements from the Bible about God. Actually, each statement consists of three words of one syllable. And yet no more profound statements have ever been set down in writing. These are the two statements that I want to set side by side: The first, God is love; the second, God is light. So simple, so profound and unsearchable. The first statement, God is love, is found in the first epistle of John, chapter 4, verses 7 and 8:

> "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." (NIV)

So many religious people who don't know God. So many crimes committed in the name of religion. So much cruelty, so much prejudice, so much injustice by people who were religious but never knew God. Because God is love. That's the first statement.

The second one is also found in the same first epistle of John, chapter 1, verses 5-8:

> "This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." (NIV)

Those are very searching words, "...God is light; in him there is no darkness." So if there's any darkness in our lives, that comes between God and us. We cannot claim to be walking with God if we're walking in the dark. Because God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. You see, this isn't theology, this is revelation. And it's very practical. It lays down the conditions we must fulfill if we wish a real relationship with God.

You take those two statements together, God is love, and God is light, immediately you become aware of a kind of basic tension that affects our life. God is love, we long for love. His loves draws us, it attracts us, we reach out for it. But then God is also light, absolute pure, radiant, unsullied light. No darkness can have any fellowship with that light, no darkness can have access to that light. And so there's the tension. The love draws us, but the light keeps us away. And that's, of course, the experience that so many go through in the life of faith and in true religion. There always this tension between that in God which draws us and attracts, and that which scares us and holds us away. And the human mind left to itself has no solution for this problem. And yet there is that deep longing, that unfulfilled desire to know God.

What a terrible thought to approach the life of God with the stains of sin. Paul speaks about that light that God dwells in, that God is, a little later on first Timothy chapter 6, verses 15 and 16. He describes God thus:

> "...God the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever, Amen." (NIV)

So God is a King. He's the King of kings. He's the Lord of lords. He's the blessed and only Ruler. He alone is immortal, He alone has immortality. And He lives in unapproachable light. God is light. In Him is no darkness at all.

How can we approach that light? How can we come near to it? And yet life is empty and meaningless unless we find the love of God. And so we're drawn and yet we're held away. We have this tension. It's a tension that's contained in the Bible. But thank God the Bible also contains God's way of resolving this tension, the tension between love and light.

There could be not more appropriate season than this Christmas season to speak about the resolution of that tension. Man is drawn by the love of God, but He dare not approach the radiance of God's light. Only God could resolve the tension. And He did it. He did it in Christ. Man could not approach God, so God came down to man. But He came veiled in flesh, covered in a fleshly body. First of all in the form of a little new born baby, there came this tremendous light, veiled in flesh. This is so beautifully stated in First Timothy chapter 3, verse 16: "Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great:..." I'm so glad that there's a mystery. You know if everything could be resolved by my little puny mind, how very limited life would be. I heard somebody once say, "I don't believe in God unless I can put Him in my test tube." I said to myself, "Any god that can be put into a test tube, really isn't a god." There are mysteries and we're talking about a mystery, the mystery of God's love, and the mystery of God's light and the mystery of approaching to God. So Paul says:

> "Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He [that's God] appeared in a body [the body of a little child] was vindicated by the Spirit, [the Holy Spirit] was seen by angels, [who announced His birth] was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up into glory." (NIV)

That's a kind of summation of the great mystery of godliness. But the essence of the mystery that we're looking at just now is this, that God who is light, who cannot be approached, with whom there is no possibility of any kind of sin or evil approaching Him, God chose in His grace to veil that light in human flesh, in human weakness, in the weakness of little new born babe, and then of a man as He grew up. And because man could not approach God, God came down to man. God has always stooped in His relationship to man. When He first created man in the garden, He made a body of clay, then He stooped down over that body and breathed into

those nostrils the breath of life. But when God came down no longer merely in creation, but in redemption, He stooped yet lower. He stooped into the womb of the Virgin Mary, He stooped into the form of a little baby. And then to complete the great act of redemption, He stooped down to death, the death of a criminal on the cross. All this He did because man cannot approach God unless God first approaches man.

So God took the initiative. He laid aside His glory. He laid aside that brilliant radiance which no eye could see and He veiled Himself in flesh and He came down that He might reveal in a way that we could understand and receive that insearachable, incomprehensible love of God, that love of which we can never fully take the measurements; the depth and the height, the length and the breadth. And yet it was all contained in God's Christmas gift, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be sharing on the relationship between the love of God and the holiness of God.

## Radio Program

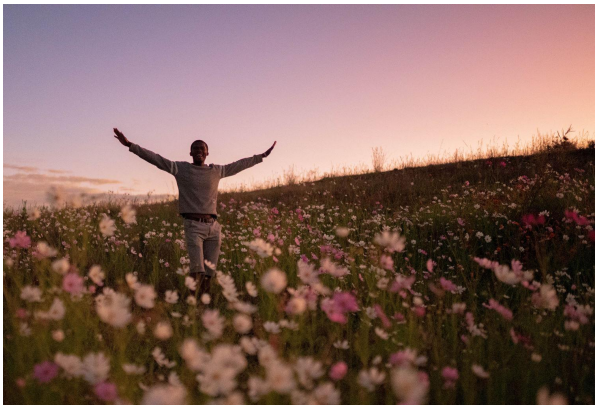
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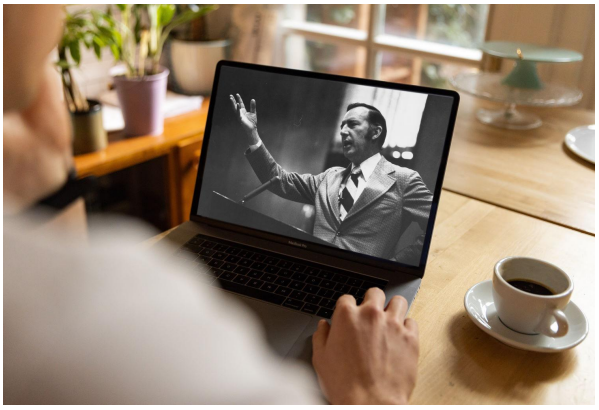
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