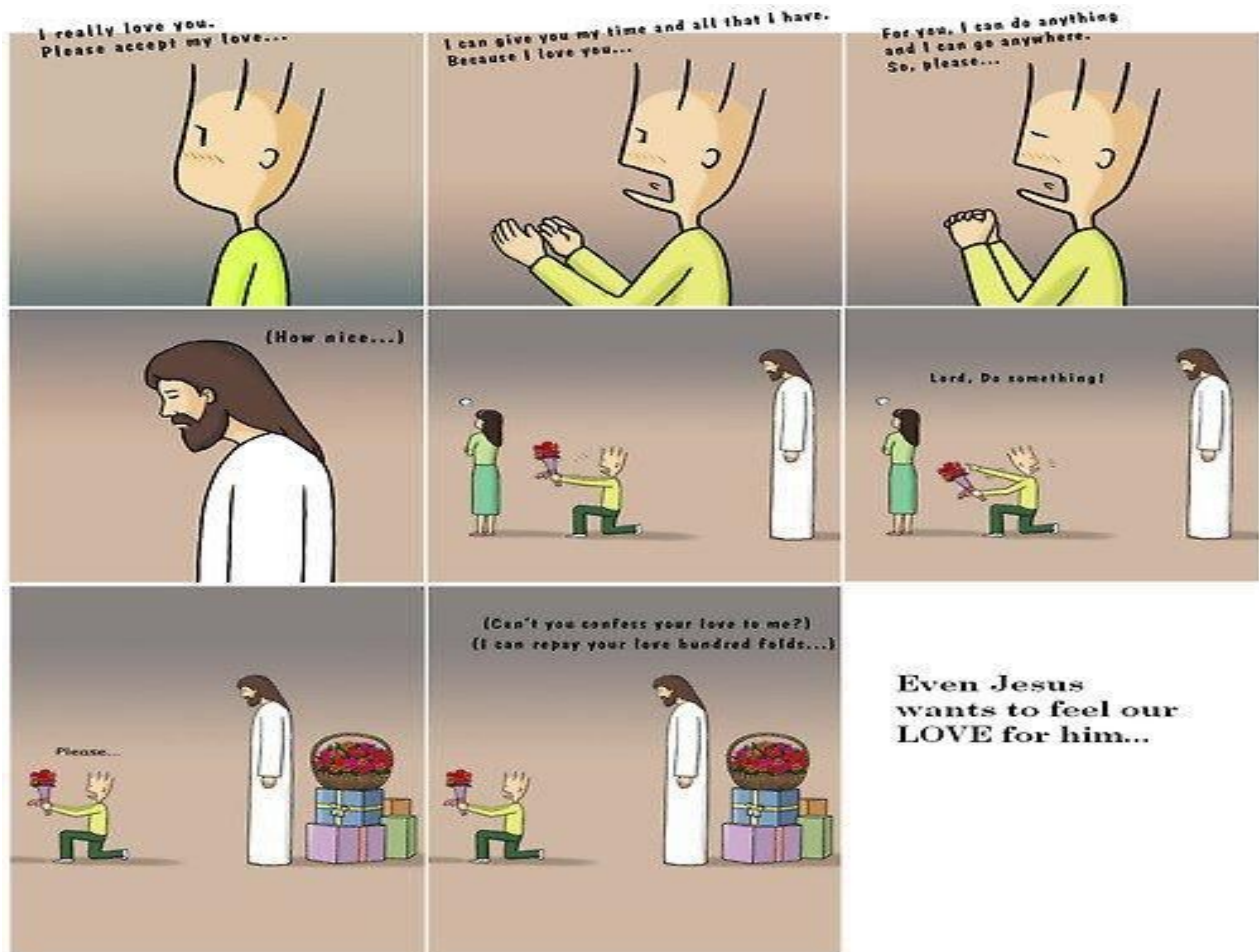


# Our Loving Father



## Thirsty for our Love

We say: I really love you. Please accept my love...  
I can give you my time and all that I have. Because I love you...  
For you, I can do anything and I can go anywhere. So, please...  
Jesus says: How nice...  
We say: Lord, do something! Please...  
Jesus says: Can't you confess your love to me?  
I can repay your love hundred folds...  
Even Jesus wants to feel our LOVE for Him.

Psalms 84:11: "For Jehovah God is our Light and our Protector. He gives us grace and glory. No good thing will he withhold from those who walk along his paths. Lord of the armies of heaven, blessed are those who trust in you."

When you think about an infant and when they are starting to learn how to walk, you know that it is a process. There is a lot of wobbling, grabbing onto things, and of course falling. However, during this process the mother or father is right there next to their child supporting and encouraging their child. At the same time, the child has to fall and learn how to get up again because if the parent continues to hold them up as they walk, the child cannot learn how to walk. It creates a dependency and the children will never learn how to truly support him/herself on their own.

Now when you take a step back, it almost seems cruel for a parent to continue to let the child fall and struggle, but without it growth cannot happen.

This is the same for our heavenly Father. He knows what is best for us and sometimes it is a trail for us to go through and we go “kicking and screaming” through that moment. However, when we come out of that moment of falling and getting back up again, we have gained something greater. It is a process of growing and knowing Him on a deeper level.

### **Read Matthew 7:7-12**

Now, you might be thinking, this says “ask and you will receive.” But look further, what does it say about God and giving gifts? In verse 11, it says our Father knows how to give good gifts to those who ask. But I put emphasis on the word “good.” We may ask for things that we think are good and will benefit us, but God really knows what is healthy for us.

Back to children. A child may think candy is good for them and want it but a parent will refuse because it would spoil their appetite for dinner or that after dinner there will be a special dessert. That parent knows that yes, it would give delight in the moment but looking forward, there wouldn't be as much joy or appreciation for that thing in the future that would be even better.

### **Think about it.**

- Have you ever asked God for something and not gotten it? What would have happened if you had received it?
- Also, was there a time that you received something and it wasn't cut out to be what you thought it would be?

God loves us so much that He wants to give of the best of the best for our lives. And that may be hard to see in the moment. Good news, and that is okay as well. But what are you going to do about it? Will you trust Him in the moment that He has something better planned or will you take it into your own hands?

## Read 1 John 3

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- Are there any things that you noted that demonstrate God's love for us?

It is important to remember that this isn't a one-sided relationship. When someone really loves us, we out of nature reciprocate. We want our actions, words, even appearance to please them.

At times, it's easy to forget that God wants to know our love for Him. However, everything that we do should reflect our love for Him.

As children, we want to please our parents. When we were little, maybe even to this day, we did everything possible to get our parents' attention in order to get praise. We were seeking that tangible and intrinsic love.

- So, why do you think it's easy for us to forget that our actions should please our Heavenly Father?
- What can we do to make this more prominent in our lives?

Throughout the Bible, God is described in many different ways. He is our foundation, protector, savior, and the list goes on and on. As our Father, He has welcomed us into a new family and given us an inheritance that is far greater than anything here on earth. Even when we make mistakes and feel like we are a disappointment, our Father continues to love us unconditionally and call us His children. It is also important to remember that our lives should reflect our love for Him.

Take a look at the picture below and discuss it.

