

Hesed

Steadfast Love
Lovingkindness – Covenant Loyalty

חסד

The Faith Messenger

Faith Community Wesleyan Church

"Christ Our Faith. Christ Our Hope. Christ Our Life"

2330 Hickory Valley Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
Sunday School 10:00am • Sunday Morning Worship 11:00am

Volume #2

Issue #2

March/April 2024

Issue Focus:

Fruit of the Spirit:
Love and Faithfulness

Birthdays

Beth Pickering	→	March 27
Belinda Sedman	→	April 19

The Faith Messenger 2024 Focus



What is the Fruit of the Spirit that Galatians 5:22-23 states as proof that we are born-again in Christ and set free from the bondage of sin? What does it mean to pursue these in our Christian walk? How do we gain the Fruit of the Spirit? Why is the word, "Fruit" singular and not plural? Why does it matter in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20?

This year, each edition of The Faith Messenger will focus on the Fruit. Last issue we studied the **Fruit of Joy**.

This issue our focus is on the twin **Fruit of Love and Faithfulness**. We'll also examine the Hebrew word of "Hesed" which has an equivalent in the New Testament of "Agape." (God's steadfast, unconditional love) and why it's so important.

Don't forget to see what's on the last page. You'll find a photo collage of some of the highlights of God's faithfulness to our church in April 12, 2020, the time when tornadoes destroyed our Shallowford Road facility. But God had other plans for us as a congregation, and He brought amazing and miraculous restoration as only He could do!

Scripture Memory

"But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
—Romans 5:8

How is God's Love Defined in the Original Languages?

(Hesed: Hebrew) • (Agape: Greek)

In the tapestry of biblical language, few words carry the weight and depth of "Hesed" (חסד), a Hebrew term that appears approximately 250 times in the Old Testament. Phonetically pronounced as "kheh'-sed," this word goes beyond the conventional boundaries of love, weaving together strands of loyalty, kindness, and unfailing commitment. Strong's Concordance lists it under the reference H2617, highlighting its multifaceted nature that encompasses love, mercy, grace, kindness, and loyalty.

Hesed is not merely an emotion or feeling; it is an action-oriented expression of love that is steadfast, enduring, and deeply rooted in covenantal relationships. It is the kind of love that God shows towards His people, a love that is not conditional or fleeting but is as enduring as it is deep. This divine love is exemplified in numerous scriptural passages, offering a glimpse into the heart of God and His unwavering commitment to His creation.

Hesed is found in the book of Exodus, where God proclaims His own nature to Moses: "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love (Hesed) and faithfulness" (Exodus 34:6, NIV). Here, Hesed is intertwined with God's compassion and grace, underscoring a love that is both nurturing and faithful.

In the context of the Fruit of the Spirit, Hesed (which, in the Greek language of the New Testament, the equivalent word is "Agape"), aligns closely with the aspect of Love, as outlined in Galatians 5:22-23. This divine love is not only an attribute of God but also a quality that believers are called to emulate in their own lives.

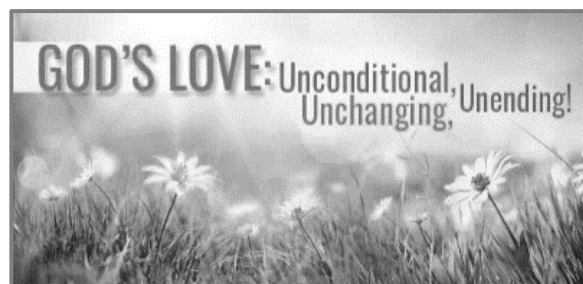
The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, echoes this sentiment, urging the faithful to "be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32, NIV). This call to love reflects God's own Hesed, a love that forgives, restores, and binds together.

The Greek equivalent of Hesed in the New Testament is "Agape" (ἀγάπη), which, like Hesed, conveys a sense of unconditional, selfless love. Agape is the love that God has for us and that we, in turn, are called to have for one another. It is this Agape love that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13, often referred to as the "Love Chapter," where he delineates the characteristics of true love—patient, kind, not envious, not boastful, and always persevering. Galatians 5:19-21 shows the fruit of the flesh, which is the direct opposite of the Holy Spirit-produced, Fruit of the Spirit.

Understanding Hesed is crucial for the Christian faith walk, as it offers a model of how to love in a manner that reflects the heart of God. It challenges believers to go beyond superficial expressions of love, inviting them into a deeper, covenantal relationship with God and with each other.

In a world where love is often conditional and fleeting, Hesed stands as a testament to the kind of sacrificial, enduring love that God calls His followers to embrace and personify.

As we reflect on the Fruit of the Spirit, let us aim to cultivate a love that mirrors the Hesed of God—a love that is steadfast, merciful, and unlimited. In doing so, we not only draw closer to the God, but become examples of His love in a world that desperately needs it.



Hesed

Steadfast Love
Lovingkindness – Covenant Loyalty

חסד

The Faith Messenger

Faith Community Wesleyan Church

"Christ Our Faith. Christ Our Hope. Christ Our Life"

2330 Hickory Valley Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
Sunday School 10:00am • Sunday Morning Worship 11:00am

Volume #2

Issue #2

March/April 2024

Issue Focus:

Fruit of the Spirit:
Love and Faithfulness



Let's Pray

Lord God, I pray for growth in the Fruit of the Spirit of Love and Faithfulness within me.

May Your divine love overflow from my heart, guiding my actions and words.

Grant me the strength to remain faithful in all circumstances, reflecting Your steadfastness and reliability.

Lord, grant me the courage to love deeply and remain faithful, even when faced with challenges and uncertainties.

Let my life be a beacon of Your love and reliability, shining Your light in a world in need. Amen.

Quotes on the Christian Duty of Hesed/Agape Love Toward Others

- **Dietrich Bonhoeffer:** "The Church is the Church only when it exists for others...not dominating but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others."
- **John Wesley:** "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."
- **C.S. Lewis:** "Do not waste time bothering whether you 'love' your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this, we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone, you will presently come to love him."
- **Mother Teresa:** "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."
- **Martin Luther King Jr.:** "I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."
- **Francis of Assisi:** "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love."
- **Teresa of Ávila:** "Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion to the world."

Quotes on the Christian Duty of Faithfulness to God

- **Charles Spurgeon:** "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not your joy in Christ that saves you; it is Christ. It is not even faith in Christ, though that is the instrument. It is Christ's blood and merits."
- **A.W. Tozer:** "Faithfulness is the hallmark of the true followers of Christ."
- **Oswald Chambers:** "Faith is deliberate confidence in the character of God whose ways you may not understand at the time."
- **R.C. Sproul:** "The promises of God are yes and amen. It is God who ensures this, not we."
- **Max Lucado:** "Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want. It is the belief that God will do what is right."
- **Corrie ten Boom:** "There is no pit so deep, that God's love is not deeper still."
- **Philip Yancey:** "Faith means believing in advance what will only make sense in reverse."

Biblical Characters Who Demonstrated Love and Faithfulness

Ruth

(Scripture: Ruth 1:16-17; Ruth 4:13-17)

The Moabite widow Ruth, who chose to stay with Naomi, her widowed mother-in-law, showcases loyalty and love, and led to her marriage to Boaz, who was a relative of Naomi's husband. She chose to remain with Naomi rather than return to her own people, and declared with great love and faithfulness to Naomi, *"Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God"* (Ruth 1:16), and my stating so, exemplified steadfast love and faithfulness. Her later marriage to Boaz, provides a beautiful picture of God's redeeming love and faithfulness to His covenant people.

Joseph

(Scripture: Genesis 45:4-8;
Genesis 50:19-21)

Betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery, Joseph remained faithful to God, which led to his rise to prominence in Egypt. Despite false accusations and imprisonment, he trusted in God's plan. His eventual reconciliation with his brothers and his provision for his family during famine proved his faithfulness to God and his family, representing God's providential care and forgiveness.

Daniel

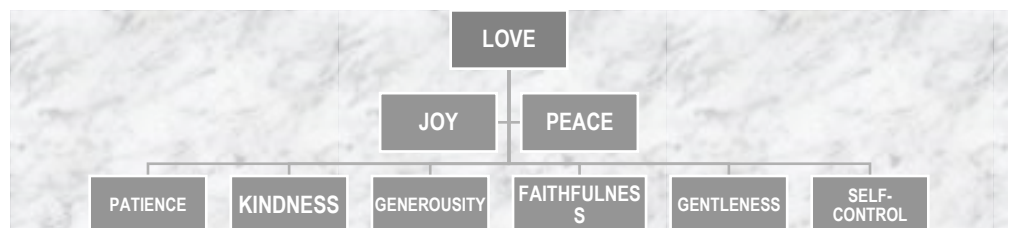
(Scripture: Daniel 6:10-23)

Daniel, a Jewish exile taken to Babylon, illustrates faithfulness to God in a foreign land. Despite the pressures to conform to pagan practices, Daniel remained committed to his faith, famously continuing to pray to God even when it resulted in his being thrown into the lions' den (Daniel 6). His unwavering faith and trust in God, even in the face of death, along with his integrity and prophetic gifts, made him a trusted advisor to kings and a powerful witness to God's sovereignty and faithfulness.

Historical Christian Figures Who Showed Love and Faithfulness

Figure	Biography & Resource
Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)	<p>Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German Lutheran pastor, theologian, anti-Nazi dissident, and key founding member of the Confessing Church. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was known for his staunch resistance to the Nazi dictatorship, including its euthanasia program and genocide of Jews. Bonhoeffer's theological writings on Christianity's role in the secular world have become widely influential, and his book "The Cost of Discipleship" is considered a classic.</p> <p>Arrested in 1943 by the Gestapo, he was executed in 1945 in a concentration camp, just weeks before the war ended. His legacy is one of profound faithfulness to God and courageous stand against injustice. The book: "Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy" by Eric Metaxas provides great insight into the true cost of obeying God by living and demonstrating the Fruit of the Spirit.</p>
Corrie ten Boom (1892-1983)	<p>Corrie ten Boom was a Dutch watchmaker and Christian who, along with her family, helped many Jews escape the Nazi Holocaust during World War II by hiding them in her home. She was arrested and sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp but released due to a clerical error just days before all women her age were executed.</p> <p>After the war, she wrote the book: "The Hiding Place," a biography (authored by Corrie ten Boom, John Sherrill, and Elizabeth Sherrill) that recounts the story of her family's efforts and her time in the concentration camp, showcasing her unwavering faith in God and her commitment to love and forgive, even in the face of unimaginable suffering.</p>
Mother Teresa (1910-1997)	<p>Mother Teresa dedicated her life to serving the needy in India, founding the Missionaries of Charity. Born Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Mother Teresa felt a calling to serve God at a young age. She moved to Ireland and then to India, where she dedicated her life to caring for the sick, poor, and dying. In 1950, she founded the Missionaries of Charity, which grew to over 4,000 sisters operating orphanages, AIDS hospices, and charity centers worldwide, serving the "poorest of the poor."</p> <p>Mother Teresa's life was a testament to Agape love, showing compassion and dignity to those often forgotten by society. She received numerous awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, for her selfless service. Her life demonstrated Agape love. The book: "Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light" by Brian Kolodziejki, provides an in-depth biography on her love of God and sacrificial service to others.</p>

Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)



Hesed

Steadfast Love
Lovingkindness – Covenant Loyalty

חסד
ו

The Faith Messenger

Faith Community Wesleyan Church

"Christ Our Faith. Christ Our Hope. Christ Our Life"

2330 Hickory Valley Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
Sunday School 10:00am • Sunday Morning Worship 11:00am

Volume #2

Issue #2

March/April 2024

Issue Focus:

Fruit of the Spirit:
Love and Faithfulness

Test Your Knowledge of the Fruit of the Spirit: Love and Faithfulness

	Question	Answer
1	What is the Hebrew word for God's love, and how often does it appear in the Old Testament?	"Hesed," appearing approximately 250 times.
2	What is the Greek equivalent of "Hesed" in the New Testament?	"Agape."
3	How does "Hesed" differ from common beliefs of love?	"Hesed" is unconditional and covenantal, unlike common, conditional love. "Covenantal" means formal, binding promise and agreement.
4	What is the Hebrew word for Faithfulness in the Old Testament?	"Emunah." (pronounced, "em-oo-naw") Definition: steadfastness, fidelity.
5	What is the Greek word for Faithfulness in the New Testament?	"Pistis." (pronounced, "p-EE-st-ees") Definition: reliability, trustworthy
6	How does God's Faithfulness contrast with human faithfulness?	God's Faithfulness is unwavering and infinite, unlike human faithfulness, which can be limited, conditional, and inconsistent.
7	Which biblical character's story best exemplifies "Hesed?"	Ruth, through her loyalty and Boaz's (her Kinsman Redeemer) kindness. See Old Testament Book of Ruth.
8	What is the ultimate example of "Agape" love in the New Testament?	Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.
9	How is Joy different from Happiness, as discussed in the previous newsletter?	Joy is a Fruit of the Spirit, enduring and not dependent on circumstances, unlike temporary happiness.
10	Why is the singular term "Fruit of the Spirit" used instead of "fruits"?	It emphasizes the unified and all-inclusive nature of the Holy Spirit's work in a believer's life.
11	What does Galatians 5:22-23 list, and why is it significant for believers?	The Fruit of the Spirit, highlighting qualities that show a life led by the Spirit.
12	How can believers cultivate the Fruit of the Spirit in their lives?	Through prayer, studying God's Word, and living in obedience to the Holy Spirit.
13	What role does the concept of Christian liberty play in Galatians 5?	It emphasizes freedom from sin's bondage, enabling a life led by the Spirit.
14	How does the story of the Prodigal Son illustrate "Agape" love? (See Luke 15:15-32)	It shows God's unconditional love and the King's agape love and readiness to forgive his wayward son.
15	What is the significance of King David's covenant in understanding "Hesed"?	It showcases God's steadfast love and faithfulness to His promises.
16	How does Paul's transformation showcase God's Faithfulness?	It highlights God's faithfulness in changing hearts and fulfilling His purposes.
17	What is a practical way to show "Hesed/Agape" love to others?	Serving others and showing compassion without expecting anything in return.
18	Why is Faithfulness considered a key aspect of Christian maturity?	It reflects trust in God and consistency in living out one's faith.
19	What does the parable of the Sower teach about Faithfulness?	It emphasizes the importance of a faithful, receptive heart for spiritual growth.
20	Why is understanding God's Faithfulness essential for believers?	It provides assurance of God's reliability and encourages trust in His promises.
21	What is one way to deepen one's understanding of "Hesed/Agape" love?	By meditating on Christ's life and teachings and looking to imitate His love.
22	How does the Fruit of the Spirit relate to making disciples, as per Matthew 28:18-20?	Displaying the Fruit of the Spirit in one's life serves as a testimony (evidence of being born-again in Christ) to others, aiding in disciple-making.
23	What is the ultimate goal of cultivating Love and Faithfulness in a believer's life?	To grow in Christ-likeness, fulfilling God's command to love and serve others, and to advance the Kingdom through discipleship.

Hesed

Steadfast Love
Lovingkindness – Covenant Loyalty

חסד
י י

The Faith Messenger

Faith Community Wesleyan Church

"Christ Our Faith. Christ Our Hope. Christ Our Life"

2330 Hickory Valley Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
Sunday School 10:00am • Sunday Morning Worship 11:00am

Volume #2

Issue #2


March/April 2024

Issue Focus:

Fruit of the Spirit:

Love and Faithfulness

Types of Love Mentioned in the Bible

Types of Love (Note: Phonetic pronunciation include; the capital letters in each pronunciation indicates to place emphasis on that part of it)	Description	Biblical Application	Scripture References
Agape [ah-GAH-pay]	Divine, unconditional love that surpasses and persists regardless of circumstance.	Practice selfless love by serving others without expecting anything in return.	John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:7-8, 1 John 4:16
Phileo [FILL-ee-oh]	Brotherly love, affection, or friendship that involves personal attachment.	Cultivate deep, godly friendships by investing time and care in relationships.	John 15:13-15, Romans 12:10, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 1 Peter 1:22
Storge [STOR-jay]	Family love, the affection among parents, children, and siblings.	Strengthen family bonds through forgiveness, patience, and dedicated family time.	Genesis 45:15, Romans 12:10, 1 Timothy 5:8, 1 John 4:20
Eros [AIR-ose]	Romantic, passionate love with a desire for physical closeness (more prominent in secular literature than explicitly detailed in the Bible, however the Book of the Song of Solomon details this type of love in the secular, and in the biblical sense this same book shows the holy intimate love of Christ and His Bride).	In the context of marriage, nurture intimacy and commitment with your spouse. 	Proverbs 5:18-19, Song of Solomon 1:2, Song of Solomon 4:10 1 Corinthians 7:3-5
Xenia [ZEE-nee-ah]	Hospitality, especially the love shown to strangers or guests.	Extend hospitality to strangers and those in need, reflecting God's welcome to us.	Leviticus 19:34, Matthew 25:35, Hebrews 13:2, 1 Peter 4:9
Pragma [PRAG-mah]	Enduring love found in long-standing relationships (while not directly named in the Bible, aspects can be seen in married life and long-term friendships).	Commit to understanding, patience, and compromise to keep and grow enduring relationships.	Proverbs 17:17, Proverbs 27:9, Ephesians 5:25-33, Colossians 3:14
Philautia [fill-AW-tee-ah]	Self-love, which can be healthy or unhealthy. The healthy form involves caring for oneself to better serve God and others.	Practice self-care and personal growth, ensuring it leads to better service to God and others.	Matthew 22:39, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 5:29

Our spiritual maturity is demonstrated not by how many verses we can recite but instead

by the depth of our love & grace for others.

Hesed

Steadfast Love
Lovingkindness – Covenant Loyalty

חסד
י י

The Faith Messenger

Faith Community Wesleyan Church

"Christ Our Faith. Christ Our Hope. Christ Our Life"

2330 Hickory Valley Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
Sunday School 10:00am • Sunday Morning Worship 11:00am

Volume #2

Issue #2

March/April 2024

Issue Focus:

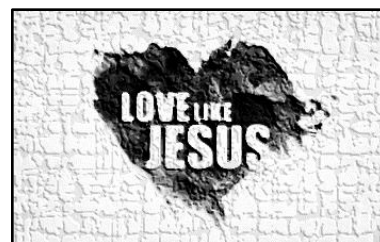
Fruit of the Spirit:
Love and Faithfulness

1 Corinthians 13 (NIV)

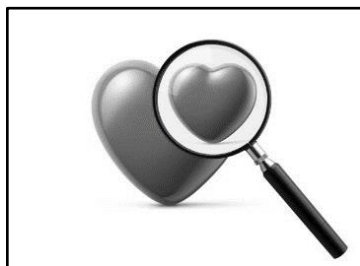
¹ If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. ¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.



Love is a Verb



1 Corinthians 13, often labeled as the Love Chapter, serves as an insightful description on the nature and supremacy of love, particularly Agape love, within the Christian faith. Paul, in

this epistle, explains the essence of love not as an abstract emotion but as a concrete display of one's faith in action.

The chapter opens with a striking contrast between the possession of spiritual gifts and the absence of love. Paul asserts that even the most remarkable gifts, such as the ability to speak in tongues (languages), prophesy (forecast), or have all knowledge, amount to nothing without love. This introduction sets the stage for understanding that love is not merely an addition to the Christian life but its very foundation.

Verses 4-7, perhaps the most quoted section, provide a detailed description of what love is and what it is not. Love is patient, kind, and rejoices with the truth; it is not envious, boastful, proud, or self-seeking. This passage invites believers to a self-audit, challenging them to reflect on whether their actions and attitudes align with these characteristics of love.

As the chapter progresses to verses 8-10, Paul emphasizes love's eternal nature, contrasting it with spiritual gifts that are temporal and will cease. This distinction underscores the enduring value of love in the believer's life, surpassing time and circumstance.

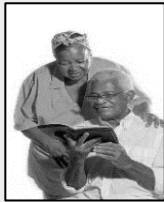
The representation of maturity in verses 11-12 offers a perspective on spiritual growth, likening our current understanding of divine mysteries to a child's understanding of the world. Just as maturity brings clarity, so will our comprehension of divine truths be fully realized in the presence of God. This comparison encourages believers to pursue growth in love as a marker of spiritual maturity.

Finally, verse 13 summarizes the chapter's message by elevating love above faith and hope. While faith and hope are fundamental virtues of the Christian life, love is presented as the greatest. This prioritization of love serves as a call to action for believers to express love as the most authentic expression of their faith.

In essence, 1 Corinthians 13 challenges believers to express Agape love as a verb, actively demonstrating it in every facet of life. It calls the Body of Christ to a higher standard, where love is the benchmark for spiritual maturity and the lens through which all actions are evaluated. By embracing this call, believers can truly become "doers of the word" (See James 1:22 and James 5:20), living out the transformative power of love in their journey of faith.

Questions to Self-Audit:

- **Reflect:** Are my actions motivated by genuine love, or are they just empty gestures?
- **Action:** Practice one aspect of love this week, such as patience or kindness, in a challenging situation.
- **Reflect:** How do I prioritize love in my spiritual practices and gifts?
- **Reflect:** In what ways am I growing in love and understanding as I mature in my faith?
- **Action:** Identify one way to prove love as a foundational principle in your life this week.

What Does the Bible Say
About Love?(Hesed) in the Old Testament (Hebrew)
(Agape) in the New Testament (Greek)

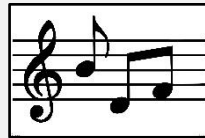
Old Testament: Exodus 15:13, Exodus 20:6, Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18-19, Deuteronomy 5:10, Deuteronomy 7:9, Deuteronomy 7:12, Ruth 1:8, Ruth 2:20, Ruth 3:10
New Testament: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 22:37, Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:30, Mark 12:31, Luke 6:27, Luke 6:35, Luke 10:27, John 13:34, John 13:35, John 15:9, John 15:12, John 15:13, John 15:17, Romans 5:5, Romans 5:8, Romans 8:35-39, Romans 12:9-10, Romans 13:8-10, 1 Corinthians 2:9

What Does the Bible Say
About Faithfulness?(Emunah) in the Old Testament (Hebrew)
(Pistis) in the New Testament (Greek)

Old Testament: Exodus 34:6, Deuteronomy 7:9, Psalm 25:10, Psalm 33:4, Psalm 36:5, Psalm 89:1-2, Psalm 100:5, Psalm 119:90, Psalm 145:13, Lamentations 3:22-23, Hosea 2:20

New Testament:

1 Corinthians 1:9, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, 2 Timothy 2:13, Hebrews 10:23, Hebrews 11:11, 1 Peter 4:19, 1 John 1:9, Revelation 1:5, Revelation 3:14, Revelation 19:11



Hymns About God's Love

**"The Love of God"**
by Frederick M. Lehman

This hymn is an insightful meditation on the vastness and immensity of God's love. Its lyrics draw on rich imagery to describe the incomprehensible nature of divine love, making it a powerful reflection of "Hesed" and "Agape."

The hymn famously includes lines that liken God's love to the most expansive measures one can imagine, only to conclude that these measures still fall short of capturing its fullness. This hymn, through all its verses, keeps a focus on the enduring, overwhelming nature of God's love, aligning closely with the concepts of "Hesed" and "Agape."

"The Love of God," was penned in 1917 by Frederick M. Lehman, a California businessman turned preacher. This hymn was born out of a period of personal reflection and devotion, during a time when Lehman was moved by the divine love he experienced in his own life. The circumstances of its creation were quite humble; Lehman was working in a Pasadena packing house, and it was there, amidst the mundane tasks of his day job, that the inspiration for this hymn struck.

The third stanza of *"The Love of God"* is particularly notable for its ancient origins. Lehman was inspired by a Jewish poem written in Aramaic, which had been found inscribed on the walls of a patient's room in an insane asylum after the patient's death. This poem, which beautifully depicted the immeasurable love of God, was adapted by Lehman and incorporated into the hymn as its third verse. This stanza, with its vivid imagery of God's love reaching beyond the highest star and reaching to the lowest hell, offers a powerful picture of the vastness of God's love.

Lehman's hymn captures the essence of "Hesed" and "Agape" by illustrating a love that is not only immense in its scope but also personal and intimate in its touch. *"The Love of God"* has since become a beloved hymn in Christian worship, cherished for its ability to clearly express the inexpressible nature of God's love for humanity.

"Here is Love, Vast as the Ocean"
by William Rees

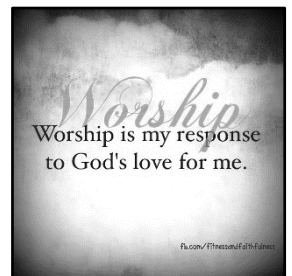
Often associated with the Welsh Revival of 1904-1905, a period marked by an immense spiritual awakening that swept through Wales and beyond. This hymn is a beautiful portrayal of God's love as deep, vast, and boundless. The imagery of love like an ocean, covering and forgiving sin, resonates with the idea of "Hesed" as a covenantal love that is faithful, merciful, and forgiving.

The hymn's verses consistently emphasize the sacrificial aspect of God's love, reflecting the "Agape" love showed through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The recurring theme of love's vastness and the sacrifice it requires makes this hymn a strong representation of divine love in its fullness.

William Rees, was a preacher and poet known by his bardic name "Gwilym Hiraethog," gained prominence during this revival, becoming its unofficial anthem. The revival itself was characterized by an overwhelming sense of God's presence and love, with countless individuals experiencing deep transformations.

The hymn's lyrics, rich with imagery of love's vastness and depth, reflect the revival's emphasis on personal and communal renewal through the understanding of God's sacrificial love. The revival meetings, often filled with singing and prayer, resonated with the hymn's themes of redemption, grace, and the overwhelming flood of God's mercy and love.

"Here is Love, Vast as the Ocean" not only captures the spirit of the Welsh Revival but also serves as a timeless reminder of the power of God's love to transcend human boundaries and limitations. Its continued use in worship settings around the world speaks to the universal appeal of its message—a message that echoes the biblical concepts of "Hesed" and "Agape."





Pastor M.C. Tolbert's Office



High atop the rubble, musician, Tracy Lynn Coats, plays on the church piano



Altar table



Hymnals unharmed by the storm

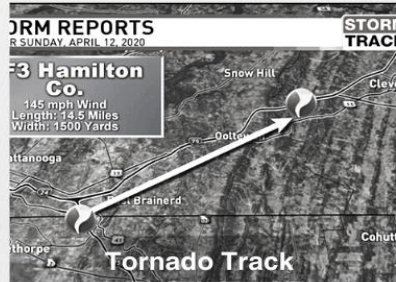


Organ



Sound Booth and Audio-Visual Media Center

Worship Leader, Beth Pickering holding the church's Jesus picture which was miraculously undamaged



On April 12, 2020, East Tennessee was devastated by EF 4 tornadoes. Winds clocked at 145 mph. Our Chattanooga church on Shallowford Road was completely destroyed. Though unexpectedly detoured, we, as God's devoted people, trusted then and still do, in His sovereign love and promises faithfully declared in Jeremiah 29:11 of hope and a future. We now worship in a new facility, holding steadfast that our Redeemer lives and His faithfulness is everlasting.

Shallowford Road



Before: Tornado



After: Tornado