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**God's Unconditional And Conditional Love**

Most people know that God loves everybody unconditionally. But in another sense, God only loves those who love him. Let’s talk about both of these types of love.

First let’s establish the sense that God loves everybody unconditionally; and I mean everybody, even atheists.

This is why God sent His son to die for all so that all could be saved - 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."

This also means God loves everybody in the sense He wants all to repent and be saved - II Pet 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Simply put, God wants what’s best for everybody; that's what love implies.

But in another sense God only loves those who love Him by submitting to Him. This love then is conditional, and is expressed through God’s salvational favor. Meaning only those who trust and obey God will be saved from their sins.

John 14:21 asserts this idea - "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Notice then that we demonstrate our love for God by keeping His commandments (John 14:15 "If ye love me, keep my commandments"), and only those who love Jesus by keeping His commandments will be loved by God - in this sense. This love is God bestowing his salvation favor, that is, justification from our sins. God loves everybody in the sense he offers salvation to everybody, but he only loves those who trust and obey him in the sense that he applies to them salvation.

Jesus continues in John 14:23 "… If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Again, we must love God / keep His words for the Father to love us, that is, to give us salvation from sin. John 15:14 says approximately the same thing - "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

And John 15:9-10 says “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.” So we must continue in God’s love (implying that it is possible to lose God’s love), and we do that by keeping God’s commandments. That’s confirmed by Heb 5:9 – “And being made perfect, he (Jesus) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

Also John 16:27 – “For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.” So God loves those (the apostles) who love and believe in Jesus – conditional love.

Jude 21 reads “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” Again, we must keep ourselves in God’s love. You see how God’s love in this sense is conditional?

Here are some other texts that prove obedience to God’s New Testament law is required for God’s conditional love (salvation):

* Matt 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven
* I Peter 1:22a Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth …
* Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved …
* II Thess 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
* Rev 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.
* II Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.