

FIVE WAYS GOD SHOWS HE LOVES US

1. Before time began, God, knowing we would sin, planned for our creation and redemption. Who makes something they know will not do what it was made for? God. Consider that God knew ahead of time every sin you have ever committed and those you will commit and He made you anyway! That is love! Before God made man, He knew that the result would be immense suffering on His part. He "looked ahead" and chose to do so anyway. We can not conceive of being all powerful and having such love to be willing to go through such suffering for such flawed creatures. It is important to spend some time here to reflect on, as much as we are able, the immensity of God's love. Think through the wrongs you have done in your life. Visualize God looking at you and you know, He knows. You know that He knew before He even made you. What thoughts do you have? Now, take it to the next step, where He not only knows, but He knows He has to suffer for the wrongs that you will commit for your whole life! What are your thoughts? And despite all of that, God made you anyway. Consider for a few minutes how much love that takes. *"He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time."* 2 Tim 1:9-10

2. He died for us. Jesus took our place. We deserve punishment, the death penalty, which is eternal suffering. We deserve to be separated from God. We can not imagine the agony Jesus went through when He took ALL the sins of the world on himself. It is impossible for us to imagine the separation Jesus felt when the Father turned His back on Jesus. (Matt 27:46) The lostness, aloneness is beyond anything we can comprehend. Do your best to visualize waking up on the planet Mars with the following conditions. It is 40 degrees. You can barely breathe. You can barely see. There is no sound. You see the bright Earth in the distance and you are alone without hope. He did far beyond that for you. What more could God do to show he loves you? *"He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed."* I Pet 2:24 *This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.* 1 John 4:10 *Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* Romans 5:7-8

3. He calls us sons. Jesus, so to speak, took our place in prison. We were not left out on the street to start over, fend for ourselves, or find meaning. We were adopted into the family of God. Most of us never having been an orphan can feel the excitement of a family not only taking us into their home but adopting us, giving us their name, caring for us as one of their own and including us in their will.

We do not feel loved being part of God's family at times because Satan blinds us to the truth, the immensity of love it takes to adopt. *"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."* I John 3:1-2

4. God glorifies Himself in us. Every one of us is a unique creation of God. When we do the will of God, loving others, we have a unique light that shines. When it does, God is glorified. (Matt 5:16) Consider that God's glory is shining through broken you! He has chosen you to be the vessel of His love. Wow! What love it takes to use broken vessels to show glory when God could choose to do it without us. *"In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory."* Eph 1:11-12

5. He is preparing a place for us beyond our imagination. Can you even imagine? No! If someone told you that in a year you would receive not only what you have wished you could have, but it is 100 times better. You would be so excited and feel so cared for. You were not given a house, but a huge mansion with servants. You were not given a vacation, but months in the best resorts in the world. We would look forward to it every day. We would wake up thinking about it, counting down the days until we were there. Should not we have even more excitement about a gift that never ends? We are not doing what it says to do in Col 3:1-3. *What more can God do to show how much He loves you? "However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived" the things God has prepared for those who love him"* I Cor 2:9