

**TRYING TO MEASURE GOD’S LOVE:
HEIGHT, DEPTH, WIDTH AND LENGTH
Ephesians 3:18**

INTRODUCTION:

- A. In all areas of life, we use different instruments to measure things:
 - 1. A *tape measure* for distance.
 - 2. *Scales* to measure weight. (Don’t step on those....they will make you scream)
 - 3. *Measuring cup* for ounces.
 - 4. *The Richter Scale* to measure earthquakes (cf. Tsunami, 2004).
 - 5. The *electrical meter* on the side of your house to measure kilowatts of power used in a month.
- B. It seems that almost anything can be measured. (Even the wind).
- C. However, there is something that cannot really be measured, but that is what we are going to try to do today.
- D. Since tomorrow is Valentine’s Day, I began thinking about the love of God.
- E. Today I am going to attempt the impossible task of measuring God’s Love.
- F. We will begin by looking at what Paul wrote in **Ephesians 3:14-21** - “[that you] may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height [of God’s love?].” **Verse 18.**
 - 1. Commentators are somewhat divided on what he is describing in those terms: the Church, the Cross, the Love of Christ. Which is accurate? We could say: ALL OF THEM!
 - 2. For our purposes today, let’s consider the Love of Christ and God.
- G. This is our task – explore the love of God and Christ by those four dimensions

I. THE HEIGHT OF GOD’S LOVE.

- A. How many things do we measure by height?
 - 1. People
 - 2. Buildings
 - 3. Trees
 - 4. Mountains
- B. Height is also a measurement we often use to show amount or progress:
 - 1. **ILLUSTRATION:** I have an electronic indoor/outdoor thermometer. Outside our kitchen window in Florence we used to have an old-fashioned (non-digital) thermometer. We could look at it and see the temperature by how the mercury has risen or fallen.
 - 2. **ILLUSTRATION:** Recently in a fast food restaurant, I saw a chart showing how much money had been raised for Tsunami Relief. They had drawn a thermometer and filled it in each time they had met a certain level.
- C. David writes: “For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;” **Psalm 103:11.**
 - 1. If that describes the mercy of God, wouldn’t that also describe the LOVE of God?
 - 2. After all, God’s mercy is shown because of His love.
- D. God’s love is higher than any building, boulder, mountain or space station.

II. THE DEPTH OF GOD'S LOVE.

- A. We use the word depth to describe various things:
 - 1. Depth of your *convictions*.
 - 2. Depth of your *knowledge*.
 - 3. Depth of your *compassion*.
- B. How deep is God's love?
 - 1. It is deeper than our *SORROWS*.
 - 2. It is deeper than our *SINS*.
 - 3. It is deeper than the *GRAVE*.
- C. You can measure the depth of one's love by his actions, **1 John 3:17-18**.
 - 1. It is not nearly enough to say the words "I love you."
 - 2. You must follow up with proper actions to show the truthfulness of your words.
- D. What did God do to show the depth of His love?
 - 1. He sent His Son **1 John 4:9-11**.
 - a. God's love was manifested toward us, *v.9*.
 - b. He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. *v.11*.
 - 2. He established the Church, *Acts 2:14-47*.
 - 3. He gave the plan of salvation, *Acts 2:38, etc*.
 - 4. He made a second law of pardon, *Acts 8:22-24*.
 - 5. He has prepared a mansion in heaven, *John 14:1-3*.
- E. The depth of God's love can be seen in what He was willing to do for us.

III. THE WIDTH OF GOD'S LOVE.

- A. When I think of the width of God's love, I am reminded of the cartoon with a little character stretching out his arms and saying : "I love you this much."
- B. The symbolism of how much God loves us is seen in Jesus hanging on the cross with His arms outstretched.
- C. God's love is wide enough to include EVERYONE: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." **John 3:16**. This is true, regardless of:
 - 1. Rich or poor.
 - 2. Black or white.
 - 3. Good or bad.
- D. Does God REALLY love everyone?
 - 1. What about your ENEMIES? God's enemies?
 - 2. What about ATHEISTS?
 - 3. What about TERRORISTS?
 - 4. What about ME with all my sins?
- E. God does love everyone and "is not willing that any should perish," **2 Peter 3:9**.

IV. THE LENGTH OF GOD'S LOVE.

- A. Have you ever had someone say, "I'll love you forever" and have that love come to an end?
- B. What about God? How long will HE love us? God told Israel in the OT: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love," **Jeremiah 31:3.**
- C. The duration of God's love is demonstrated in the parable of the PRODIGAL SON, **Luke 15:11-24.**
- D. God's love will last so long that nothing can separate us from it, **Romans 8:38-39.**

CONCLUSION:

- A. These have all been feeble attempts to measure something that truly cannot be measured: GOD'S LOVE.
- B. However, we can learn great lessons from God's great love.
- C. Know This: God loves YOU and wants you to be SAVED. And be saved TODAY.
- D. Will you return your love to God by obeying Him today?

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