

**BEHOLD WHAT MANNER OF LOVE**

**1 John 3:1-24**  
**November 3, 2013**  
**The Lord's Supper**

**"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." 1 John 3:1**

We partake of the Lord's Supper today, an ordinance established by Jesus Christ at His last observance of the Passover (Matt. 26:26-29). Christ gave this ordinance as a symbolic memorial to his death, saying, "this do in remembrance of me" (Lk. 22:19). He presented the bread as His body and the wine as His blood, symbols by which generations of redeemed people would commemorate Christ's sacrifice and bloodshed "for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28).

The Lord's Supper is a memorial to Christ's love-wrought sacrifice. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). When we partake we "shew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 10:16), and we celebrate the fact that "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). In preparation for participation in the ordinance, let us "behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

First, it is a **DISCRIMINATING LOVE**. It is "bestowed upon us," and thereby distinguishes us from "the world [that] knoweth us not." Much modern theology rejects this truth, inventing a god far different from the one whom the psalmist addressed when he wrote, "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity" (Psa. 5:4, 5).

Universal love dispensed equally to all is self-contradictory, for love by its definition and nature is an excelling, surpassing and exclusive affection for one that is not held for others. "Love" that is universally equal is no love at all. John writes that God's love is "bestowed upon us," those whom the world does not know; those separated from the world by that love and destined to "see him as he is" (v. 2).

Second, it is an **EFFECTUAL LOVE**. Its recipients are "called the sons of God," whereas the rest of humanity is "the world [that] knoweth us not." Divine attributes cannot be isolated; they are one just as God is one. Thus, God's love, omniscience and omnipotence are inseparably yoked, so that His omnipotent love never fails to accomplish its objective. Jeremiah testified, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). God's love will not fail to accomplish its objective, but will prove effectual in transforming its objects from sinners into "sons of God" (1 Jn. 3:2).

Third, it is a **PERMEATING LOVE**. The word "bestowed" indicates a love that is infused into its recipient. It permeates God's child, transforming him into a son of God. He no longer loves this world-system (2:3). It develops the beauties of Christ within, for in him "is the love of God perfected" (2:5). He therefore will not hate his brother (2:9; 4:7-12), and he testifies "We love him, because he first loved us" (4:19). He becomes an alien to this world's ways and means, "therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (3:1).

**"Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all."**