Clips from Psalms
Psalms 95:8-11
Praise to Jehovah and Warning against Unbelief
"Harden not your heart, as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness; When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with that generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: So I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest."

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The Love of God
A hot topic among religiously minded people is God's love. Search in the book subject line of Amazon.com, "God is Love" and you will find over 258,000 books with this subject. Hundreds of sons have been written about the love of God as well. A favorite reads, "Could we with ink the ocean fill, and were the skies of parch-ment made; were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade; to write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry; nor could the scroll contain the whole, tho stretched from sky to sky" (The Love of God; page 608 Hymns for Worship).

The most talked about and cherished subject, however, seems to be the most misunderstood. People speak of God's love as though it were their license to sin. Mark Twain once said, "God, The most popular scapegoat for our sins." The idea seems to be, God is love therefore my sins are forgiven. To properly understand any subject we must go to the source of information regarding the topic. The source of knowledge, regarding the love of God, is none other than the Bible. What does the Bible have to say about the love of God?

The Bible tells us that God is Love
The Apostle John writes, "And we know and have believed the love which God hath in us. God is love; and he that abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him" (1 John 4:16). The word "love" is from the Greek agape meaning, "Love, generosity, kindly concern, and devotedness" (Moulton's Analytical Greek Lexicon pg. 2). Love equals "a strong affection (fond or tender feeling toward) for or attachment to another person based on regard or shared experiences or interests" (American Heritage Dictionary page 744). God's love is directed at man. God is generous, kind, concerned, devoted, and has strong affection for mankind.
The Lord wants the very best for us and he will never quit on us. The Lord said, "I will not rest until her righteousness go forth as brightness and her salvation as a lamp that burns" (Isaiah 62:1).  

God's Expectations for Man

God created man and has the sovereign right to demand of us as he pleases. God's divine will for man is that we be holy and without blemish (1 Corinthians 1:1-9; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:15-17). The Lord demands that we be just as he is while we live in this world (see 1 John 4:16-17). To achieve God's objective man must be obedient to the Lord's divine will. Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you" (John 15:13-14). God demands that man love just as he loves. Man displays the love of God when he follows the commandments of God (see Psalms 103:11-18; John 15:10; 1 John 2:5-6).

Man's greatest need is forgiveness of sins. We have all sinned against God and are subject to eternal damnation (see Romans 3:23). To remain the just God that he is the Lord provided a sacrifice for all of man's sins (see Romans 3:24-26). God demonstrates his great love, kindness, and grace by offering forgiveness (see Ephesians 2:7). John writes, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16; 1 John 2:1-2). God cares for us all and is not willing that even the worst of sinners perish in their sins (2 Peter 3:9).

God has said, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3).

God Cares for Man

The Apostle Peter said, "Cast all your anxiety upon him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). The Lord demonstrates his love for man by providing ways to cause man to repent and obey his divine will. The Lord chastises man with great affliction (Hebrews 12:5-6). Lord provides the gospel of Jesus Christ to prick their conscience (Acts 2:38; Romans 1:16; Galatians 2:20). The Lord watches each man's response to chastisement and the gospel. Isaiah said, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Isaiah 63:7-9).

God's Love is Conditional

God provides all things necessary for salvation, however, man must do his part and reciprocate that love (John 3:36). Moses illustrated this great truth in the book of Exodus. The Lord told the Hebrews, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:5-6). God has always demanded man's obedience. What one sin is there that man may commit that God would not care about? The Apostle John writes, "But whoso keeps his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby we know that we are in him. He that saith he abides in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked" (1 John 2:5-6; see also John 15:10 and Psalms 103:11-18).

God's love is perfected in man's life when we meet his objective of obedience to his will. As a father and mother expect their child to obey their will even so God our Father expects us to obey him (see Malachi 1:6).

How could God ever Love Me?

David once asked God, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalms 8:4) Sometimes when we consider the years of our lives and the sin that has so easily beset us we too ask, "What is it about me that would cause God to want to forgive me?" The Apostle Paul considered himself the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). Paul's personal assessment of his life was that he was "wretched" (Romans 7:24). A study of God's mercy in times past will help us keep trying (Philippians 3:7, 13). God continued to love those who committed spiritual adultery through idolatry (Isaiah 57:3), those who debased themselves with the council of other kings (2 Kings 16:7; Isaiah 30:1-6; 57:9) and covetous (Isaiah 57:17). The prophet of God said, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it" (Isaiah 1:18-20). Yes, God will forgive the greatest of sinners (see 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

God's instruction to His people of all times is to repent of sins committed, forget the sins of their youth and press on with a contrite heart (Isaiah 54:4; 57:15; Psalms 51:17; Ezekiel 20:6-8; 23:2-4, 19). The apostle Paul overcame his past sins through great sorrow and he learned to press forward, and so must we (1 Corinthians 15:9; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; Philippians 3:7, 13). I can personally know that God loves me and will forgive me of my sins as I repent because He said this is so (Isaiah 54:9ff; 55:7; Acts 2:38; 8:22; 17:30; 1 John 1:9).