

How Much Does the Lord Love His People?

Hosea, Day 7
[Hosea 2:19-23](#)

And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord.

*“And in that day I will answer, declares the Lord,
I will answer the heavens,
and they shall answer the earth,
and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and they shall answer Jezreel,
and I will sow her for myself in the land.
And I will have mercy on No Mercy,
and I will say to Not My People, ‘You are my people’;
and he shall say, ‘You are my God.’”*

- Hosea 2:19-23, ESV

What does it mean to truly love someone? We use the word "love" in many different ways, and our understanding of love can be so twisted by our selfishness. Sometimes when we say we love someone, all we mean is that they make us feel good, and as long as they make us feel good, we like having them around. Such love doesn't usually prove to be too durable when the one we "love" begins to irritate us, disappoint us, or otherwise no longer effectively scratch our feel-good itch.

Then again, on the other hand, some parents seem to define love as giving their children everything they ask for, without limit. At the end of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Willy Wonka asks Charlie, "Do you know what happened to the boy who got everything he ever wished for?" And the answer: "He lived happily ever after." If only life were that easy.

The reason why other people we think we love usually end up disappointing us or irritating us, and the reason why children who are given everything they want don't end up living happily ever after is the same: We are broken by sin and profoundly in need of deep mending.

The strength of love is found in the unyielding commitment to the deep and true good of the beloved, no matter what. True love doesn't flinch in the face of cost or trouble, and it doesn't seek so much to get as to give, but not to give what is wanted as much as what is really needed.

So, how much does the Lord love His people? He is committed to giving us what we really need most: Himself. And He is committed to doing so in such a way that transforms the broken sinful mess we are inside: *"I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness."*

This is everything we lack: We are alienated from God. We are sinful and wicked, unstable and self-serving, unfaithful and unmerciful. God says He will take us to Himself. He will make us His own. He will change us from the inside out.

What will the result be? We who do not deserve His mercy will receive it in abundance. We who were not the people of God will be made the people of God forever. He will feed us and clothe us and give us a home with Himself forever.

The depth of God's love is measured not just in how much good He is committed to doing for us, but also in how much we utterly don't deserve such goodness and in how much it cost Him to be so good to us. We deserve to be named No Mercy and Not My People. We deserve to be cut off and thrown away for what we have done. Yet God gave His Son in our place, the highest and best price, the most unbelievably costly sacrifice, to clear the way for His goodness and His love to win the day in the end.

So, how much does the Lord love His people? More than we can ever know in this life, and more than we can ever tell, even in all of eternity.