

Does God Love Us?

1 John 4:9-10

Without a **doubt** the biggest **question** facing Christianity today
Is the question of **God's existence?**

Does God exist?

Thanks largely to the **enlightenment** period
And the move into a **post-modern** age

Where **truth** is not viewed as **absolute**
But now **relative, personal** and **subjective**

Where **science** and **research** is more highly prized
Then other academic disciplines like **history** and **literature**

The **major objection** most people have to Christianity
Is the question of the **existence of God**

I'm not sure if you've **heard** about these guys
But all over **London's buses** right now

Are the ads for the **atheist bus campaign**
The **slogan** says:

There probably is no god.
Now stop worrying and enjoy your life.

Probably?

Always good to preach out of **conviction** and certainty **isn't it?**

But the ads are **clever** and **catchy**
And their **facebook** group has over **23,000** people in it!

Thanks to books by **Richard Dawkins & Christopher Hitchens**
Atheism is popular

It's now **cool** to believe that you don't **believe**
It's **normal** now to think there's **no god**

But move beyond the question of **Atheism**
Move beyond the **believers** who say they **don't believe**

Of course you do **realize** that's what **atheism** is
Don't you?

It's **not** a lack of belief
It's **not** a question of faith

Though many atheist **believers**
Will still want to **argue** with you along those lines

You see like every **world-view**
Atheism still requires faith

Atheists believe **alright**
It's just they **believe** there's no god.

But move beyond the **6 million Australians**
Who say they have **no religion** according to the 2006 ABS

And the next big question facing **Christianity** today
The **question** facing Australian Christians is

What is God like?
Of course not **everyone** in main street will call him God

The **eternal spirit**,
The **higher power**,
The **force**,
Mother **Nature**
The **flying spaghetti monster**,
The **big fella upstairs!**

What is God like?

Sadly, Christians tend to give the **wrong answer**.

We talk about **creation** over the merits of **evolution**
Or we talk about our **own experiences**

We talk about **Church**
Or about **historical facts**, truth claims and **textual reliability**

And while **those** things have a place!
It's not **really** the question we're being asked to answer **is it?**

What is **God** like?
Is really the question of **what does God think about me?**

And while the **meaning** has gotten lost in the mush
Of **tolerance** and **unquestioning** acceptance

The answer is radically **profound**,
Brilliantly **simple**
And **breathtakingly** life changing

What is God like?
What God **think** of you?

God loves you!

And nowhere is the **expression** of God's **love** for us
Made anymore **clearer**

Then in the **message** we simply know as **Easter!**
John an eye-witness to **Jesus' life, death & resurrection**

Said it like this in 1 John 4:9-10

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

It's **funny** don't you think
That the church celebrates **Christmas** and **Easter**

And maybe that's how **often** some of you turn up
At **Christmas** & **Easter**

But for **John**
When it comes to the **love of God**

Christmas & Easter are not **two events**
They are **one event**

God **shows** us his love
By **sending** his only son into the world

So that we might have life **through** him
Christmas!

But how do we have life through the **Son** God sent?
Easter!

God's **sent son**
Jesus becomes the **atoning sacrifice** for our sins

The words '**atoning sacrifice**'
Are really just **one word** in the Greek New Testament

And the word is a **fancy theological word**

Which sounds **impressive** when you're in a bible study
Or chewing the **fat** with the pastor

The word is called **propitiation**
And **propitiation** is different from the idea of **expiation**

Jesus did not die to simply **expiate** our sins
No Jesus died as a **propitiation** of our sins

Well, that's just **awesome, Mike** ,I hear you say.
Thanks for clearing that up for us can we eat some **chocolate** yet?

Let me try and **explain** it another way

When we have a **problem** with one another
And we want to **move on** after we've had a fight with a friend

We **expiate** what they did to us
We **move aside** the **barrier** to our friendship

So we can **get on** with being friends
We **forgive by forgetting** what happened.

We **forgive** and **forget!**

Jesus death for our sins was **not** simply an **expiation**
Jesus **doesn't just** simply push aside what we did

When it comes to sin
Jesus **can't** simply **forgive** and **forget** it

To **simply forget** our sin
Is to show that God is not **just**

Because all sin is an **offense** towards God
All sin is **deserving of death** - eternal punishment

Only just this week **Barak Obama**
Said of the **North Koreans** lighting **firecrackers** over Japan

That laws must be **binding**
And that all **violations** must be severely **punished**

And **all of us** have sinned!
Sin **isn't** about having fun!
Sin **isn't** about enjoying your life

Sin **isn't** just limited to having **Sex**

Sin is living life as if God **doesn't** exist

Sin is having had **nothing** to do with God

Sin **isn't** just about our actions

Sin is a **whole attitude** and condition of our hearts

Sin **separates** us from God

And must be **dealt with** by God

To leave our sin **unpunished**

To **simply brush** it aside would be **unjust**

But do you want to know if God loves you?

Well Jesus isn't going to be **sending you flowers** anytime soon

Or taking you the **latest chick flick**

Jesus doesn't do **candlelight dinners!**

Jesus isn't going to appear on **video hits**

Slapping booty and singing **low** by flow rider

Jesus doesn't have a **myspace page**

Listing **long romantic** walks on the beach

Or watching the **sunrise**

And **writing poetry** as the things he likes to do

Do you want to know if God loves you?

Jesus didn't come

So you can wear **matching shirts** and ride a tandem bicycle

Jesus didn't come to be your **boyfriend**

Jesus came to be your **saviour**

And it's not like you **deserve** God's love
It's not like God's doing an **I LOVE YOU** in return

The Bible tells us it's **not** that we **loved** God
But that he **loved** us. Can you see that there?

How does God love us?

Jesus died as a **propitiation** for our sins
He didn't just **forgive** and **forget**

Jesus death doesn't **sweep** our sins under the carpet
Like some husbands tend do **housework!**

Out of sight out of mind!

No!

Jesus died as the **propitiation** for our sins
Rather than just simply **removing** the barrier

Jesus **quenched** the wrath of God for our sins
Jesus **satisfied** all God's anger by dying for us

Jesus saves us **not just** from our sins
But from the **rightful** and **just wrath** of **God**

As all of **God's anger** for our sins was **laid** on him
Jesus **cried out** from the Cross

My God, My God why have you **forsaken** me?

Jesus died the death we **deserve**
He dies the **death** we should have **died**

He **carried** all our sin
And met the **punishment** all our sin deserve

So that we can be **completely forgiven** and **restored** by God
In our relationship **with God**

Does God **love** you?
Absolutely.

Does God **love** you?
Easter nails it!

His one and only Son **died** for you
Saving us from **God's wrath** for our sins by his death

That's why its called **Good Friday!**

1 John 4:9-10

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

And **today** would be a **great friday**
For you to ask Jesus to **forgive** you for your **sins**

Today would be a **FANTASTIC FRIDAY**
To be **set free** from the burden of facing God's wrath

And knowing that because of his **love**
Jesus by his **death** has already **paid** the price for your sins

Today would be a **GOOD FRIDAY**
To leave here **forgiven by God**

Will you do **that** with me?
Let's pray.