



fležj: to grow the plummage necessary for flight



Lost Words: Love The Custom Love of Salvation

In the last two fledges, we learned that *love is more than warm feelings*. And it also *requires knowledge* that helps customize our actions to our beloved's needs.

LOVE is not demanding, it does not seek its own way, it is not "full of itself" (1 Cor 13). When any two people, as lovers, as friends, as family take time to know one another for the purpose of working good in each other, then **LOVE** is taking root in their lives.

LOVE flourishes when I become a scholar of my sister; it grows when she wants to know me. We must both give ourselves to be known without demanding a certain response. When I mutter, "If my sister really cared about loving me, she would _____ (fill in the blank)," then **LOVE** is suffocated. **LOVE** ceases to be good when we demand it from another. C.S. Lewis said it well, "**LOVE** ceases to be a demon, only when it ceases to be a god." Our God is loving, but **LOVE** is not God. **LOVE** is a beam of the Son of God, pointing us back to him.

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Most people would agree that God is **LOVE** and that God is all-knowing. Then, it makes sense that God can give some stunningly appropriate gifts. He doesn't need marketing ads to help him purchase the item that will bring that smile to our faces or that glow of delight when we rip the package open. God doesn't need our Christmas list. He knows how to give great gifts because he knows us! But the sad, strange observation I've made of this Christmas time is that Jesus is not seen as a **LOVING** gift. He's seen as a stumbling block. We sometimes hear questions like, "Why is there just one way to God? Why can't all religions lead to God?"

G.K. Chesterton responded well to this objection, "We should not complain that there are not ten ways into heaven. Instead, we should be grateful that there is at least one." If God wants our good, then it is for our good that there is only one way to heaven. God knows we need the gift of exclusivity. God knows us best; he is the best **LOVER** of our souls, both in this life and the next. If there is only one way to heaven we can be rest assured that his one way is precisely what we need. But we don't do well with accepting God's gifts. If you were born physically healthy, how often do you ridicule your physical appearance? We sort of doubt that God knows how



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to give good things. Perhaps we make excuses for him that he was distracted when he gave us the body we now have.

James says that every good and perfect comes down from the Father of lights who does not get distracted or change his mind ([James 1:17](#)). I think it would be safe to say Jesus is about the best and most perfect of all gifts in our lives. Jesus is more perfect than our spouse, than our church, than our talents, than our families. If Jesus is a good gift, then this gift was not an accident. Jesus was customized for human beings on planet earth.

This Christmas gift of Jesus does not stop with Calvary. While Jesus is the way for all of us to know God, God's way for each of us is further tailored to our lives and needs. He draws us uniquely; the Spirit of God is distinctly working in each of our lives. As we enter into knowing and loving God, he takes us on our own adventurous walk to LOVE him with more freedom and joy.

My dear, dear friends, if God loved us like this, we certainly ought to love each other. If we love one another, God dwells deeply within us, and his love becomes complete in us—perfect LOVE!



*This is how we know we're living steadily and deeply in him, and he in us: He's given us life from his life, from his very own Spirit. Also, we've seen for ourselves and continue to state openly that the Father sent his Son as Savior of the world. Everyone who confesses that Jesus is God's Son participates continuously in an intimate relationship with God. We know it so well, we've embraced it heart and soul, this love that comes from God. ([1 John 4:11-16](#), *The Message*).*

May God's gift give you the freedom to walk into the comfort and joy of his love this Christmas.

Got questions/comments?
Feel free to **email us**.
OR
Join us for **Ask! LIVE**
Wednesdays 6-gPM pacific
Bring any question or puzzling life situation

