Chapter 1

How I Know God Loves Me Personally

Hilda was reared in a Christian home, but Christianity did not appeal to her. She was not a bad girl. She just did not understand the wonderful love of Jesus.

As Hilda was growing up, her brothers and sisters were all baptized and united with the church. But she held back. Maturing into womanhood, she married and had three children. Even though she realized that her children needed the Lord, Hilda did not accept the challenge to begin the better life. Then her husband died.

Sometime later, Hilda remarried. Now it was discovered that, as much as she wanted another child, it was physically impossible. This the doctor made clear with a simple explanation that left Hilda almost heart-broken.

An Answer Undeserved

It was at this time that Hilda prayed, "O Lord, please let me have another baby. I want so very much to have another child." But she never promised the Lord that she would serve Him. Nor did she vow to teach the child she so much wanted about God's love if her prayers were answered. She merely prayed and wept before the Lord.

Within six weeks Hilda was pregnant. Of all things! She could have a baby regardless of the physical "impossibility"! Her doctor had not made a mistake. It was nothing less than a miracle from the hand of the Lord, whom Hilda had still not accepted

When Hilda's baby, Sharon, was born, it was observed that she had a tiny lump in her left side about the size of a small marble. Neither Hilda nor the doctor were particularly concerned. But as the days stretched into weeks and months, Sharon did not show the ruddy, healthy development that one would expect of a growing baby. And by the time the next Christmas came, less than a year after her birth, fever developed. By New Year's Eve it had increased to around 105 degrees. It was then that Sharon was rushed to the hospital.

A Hopeless Case?

The specialist sent Hilda home and later in the evening called her, instructing her not to return to the hospital that night. In sad tones the

doctor said, "You should think of Sharon as you saw her last, and not as she looks now, for she will pass away before morning. There is absolutely no hope. Still, be assured, we will do all we can for her."

A few hours before the New Year was to be ushered in, Hilda and her good Methodist husband slipped over to her sister Mary's home. She had called the hospital and given them her sister's phone number so they could reach her there if necessary. Hilda and her husband, Dan, and her sister, Mary, discussed the grim situation. Mary, a devout Christian, suggested having her pastor and another minister come over to pray for Sharon. Hilda and Dan agreed to this. So Mary called them.

When the pastors arrived and were seated in Mary's home, Hilda could not restrain her tears. She knew in her heart that, barring God's intervention, Sharon would soon leave them. "I prayed for this child when pregnancy was a physical impossibility," Hilda explained, "and God gave her to me. Now I wonder if He would be willing to spare her life."

Pastor Johnson kindly asked Hilda, "Do you know of any reason why God should not answer your prayer?" There were several other ways he could have asked the question. He could have bluntly demanded, "Have you fulfilled this condition to answered prayer, 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me' (Ps. 66: 18)?" Or he could have scolded, "Hilda, you know the truth. You were brought up in it. You have no excuse for not having given your heart to Christ long ago. Now, Hilda, you are only reaping what you have sown." But no, Pastor Johnson had partaken of the spirit and character of the One of whom it was prophesied, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." Isa. 42:3, 4.

This shows how to get people to accept God's law - by not smothering in any soul the smallest flame, which is likened to a smoking flax. There is scarcely a spark to be seen in that smoke. But the Lord is careful not to extinguish even one tiny, though hidden, spark. Nor will He count as nothing that unexpressed longing for the better life, that secret hunger, which is detected by none but Himself. It is written, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." Isa. 50:4.

A Commitment

The Holy Spirit impressed Hilda to make a commitment to the Lord. She knew Pastor Johnson was the Lord's messenger sent to tell her of His love. Her reply was almost explosive. She blurted out in repentance: "I know plenty of reasons why the Lord should not answer my prayer!" Then she went on to state that, although she had been reared in a Christian home, she had never responded to the invitation of Jesus to bring her sins to Him and accept His cleansing love. The promise is: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Yes, God is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26. Although "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), God can still be absolutely just, while at the same time forgiving and cleansing the repentant sinner. I say that is wonderful! Amazing!

Hilda recalled how, unrepentant and unsurrendered to the Lord, she had prayed for this baby. Also, how God had heard without her having fulfilled a single condition to answered prayer. Well might the words of the psalmist have been impressed upon her sad heart, "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Ps. 103:10.

God knew all about Hilda's background. He understood the various circumstances of her early life which were the cause of her not being inclined after the Lord. It might have been an act of some professing Christian that was unloving, un-Christlike. Or perhaps a word of cruel sanctimony and belittling of others. Or it could have been that scornful countenance of a professed Christian in discussing the mistakes of some tempted child of God. All of these things, and many others, could have had their part in beclouding Hilda's mind to the real Christ. His love and tenderness. His compassion and mercy. But now, as she sat there in the home of her sister, the Holy Spirit was picturing to her a different kind of Lord. He was One who had loved her, although she had never loved Him. She had never espoused His cause, yet He had in infinite mercy and love espoused hers, and given her a baby. And this, when medical science had declared it to be an impossibility.

When Hilda exclaimed, "Yes, Pastor Johnson, I know plenty of reasons why God should not hear my prayer to heal Sharon," she added a commitment. Said she, "But, whether or not He heals my baby, whether she lives or dies, I give my life to Him right now, unreservedly. I want to be His forever."

Pastor Johnson then turned to Dan, Hilda's kind-hearted husband, and asked, "What about you, Dan?"

Dan replied soberly, "As you know, I am a Methodist. I know that Christian families ought to be united as one. I am not sure that the teachings of your church are in every particular correct. I have not studied them. But I promise God this night that I shall, with Hilda, study these doctrines. If I find them to be scriptural, I shall cast in my lot with her and the church of her background."

We do not know the exact words of Pastor Johnson as he prayed that night for Sharon. After all, it was not the specific wording that counted. It was the deep surrender of Hilda and Dan that God considered. When they rose from their knees, they thanked the two ministers for their sympathetic interest in their problem, and for coming over to help them. Then they returned to their home.

The New Year was ushered in with tears and praises as on bended knee they confirmed their surrender to Jesus Christ. And their united request to spare the life of little Sharon was wafted heavenward. After their prayer, they sat on the edge of the bed where they had knelt. Sleep was far from their eyes. After some time, they again knelt and prayed to God. Again they sat on the edge of the bed and talked together. Still once more they knelt, and besought God in behalf of their baby.

The Miracle of Love

By this time the hands of the clock pointed to around 2:30 A.M. Climbing into bed, they slept soundly until they were awakened by the phone ringing at 7:30 A.M. It was the doctor. "Hilda," he began, "I didn't sleep a wink all night. I was in Sharon's room every half hour. Each time she showed improvement. Today you may come and take your baby home. She has recovered!" Then he added, "In a few weeks, after she has regained her strength, we will do surgery on that little lump in her side."

Hilda and Dan were jubilant and awed! Sharon was healed! A few weeks later, she was returned to the hospital for the surgery. When it was over, the nurses reported to Hilda: "The little lump in Sharon's side was a baby."

Hilda gasped. "What do you mean?" she asked.

"Sharon was supposed to have been a twin," said the nurse. "But instead of the other twin being developed normally, it was enveloped in Sharon's side. There were tiny bones and hair in that little lump. But now everything is all right." I am not sure the nurse's explanation was

medically correct. But the miracle of little Sharon's healing had happened.

Today Sharon and her husband are Christian workers in Riverside, California. And Hilda and Dan are devoted children of the living God, thrilled to know that God loves them personally.

This is the God I love! What Hilda discovered, others have also discovered. They, too, have often had to learn the hard way.

Behold This Love!

Moving back in reverent imagination 2,000 years, we observe a disciple of Jesus by the name of John. He is the thunderous young man who wants to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans because of their prejudice against Christ. (Luke 9:54.) But the compassionate Savior converts his prejudice and fiery zeal. Again, we see John observing the love light in the eyes of Jesus, just after John has lost his temper. There is no condemnation registered there, and no belittling. John beholds, also, Jesus dealing with the Pharisees who demand His condemnation of the woman taken in adultery. John hears the merciful words come from the lips of Jesus, "Neither do I condemn thee." John 8:11. On another occasion, Nicodemus tells John how Jesus spoke to his haughty heart that night on the mountain. Jesus said, "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:17.

John follows Jesus as He eats at the table of the wicked Zaccheus, as well as the greedy Matthew. He hears Jesus, on still another occasion, speak kindly, lovingly, tenderly with the woman who had had five husbands, and was now living in open sin. (John, chapter 4.) What a merciful Lord John has found! What a forgiver! What a mercy extender! And to cap it all, He forgives, cleanses, and saves a thief right there beside Him on the cross of execution. It is a thief who, but a little while before, had ridiculed the One who now saves him! He promises the repentant thief eternal life - paradise, instead of eternal death, eternal separation from life and love.

No wonder John, thinking of himself as so unworthy and Christ so tender, writes of himself as the "one whom Jesus loved." It was as if he were saying, "Even me?" And the Lord replied, "Yes, even you." No wonder he calls on the world to "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. John seems to say, "I cannot describe it. I cannot portray it. I can merely call on you to see it for yourselves."

What Hilda felt, John had experienced. That is what Nicodemus beheld, too. And the woman of Samaria was brought face to face with a love that is infinite. A mercy that is immense. A tenderness that is heavenly. That is what Peter awakened to in the courtyard of Caiaphas, when Christ's forgiving eyes met his guilty gaze. That is what Saul, the cruel persecutor of Christians, discovered when he heard the voice of Jesus asking, "Saul, Saul, why per-secutest thou me?" Acts 9:4. Later, after his name was changed to Paul, he cried out, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Not tribulation. Not distress. Not persecution. Not famine. Not even nakedness, or peril, or sword. No, he triumphantly proclaimed, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:35, 38, 39.

Moving farther back in point of time to Old Testament days, we observe the same love at work in the lives of unworthy men. Those were days of darkness. Those were years of idolatry. The chosen people of God, the professed light of the world, bowed down to calves of gold. Idols of brass and wood. They were carved out by filthy hands and sordid hearts.

Arms Encircle the Rebellious

Hear the poetic description of God's loving arms surrounding that rebellious, stubborn, seditious people: "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock…. [But] they provoked him…. They sacrificed unto devils…. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful." Deut. 32: 10-18. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Deut. 33:27.

Now hear David - adulterous, murderous David. Turning to God he exclaims, "I have sinned." He receives immediate assurance. "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." 2 Sam. 12:13.

Most Cruel Sinner - Saved

As in imagination we pass through these Old Testament days, let us behold the amazing life of Manasseh, king of Judah. He was the son of the good king Hezekiah, you may remember, who led Israel into so many reforms and new allegiances to God. But Manasseh had sinned and done wickedly. He had despised and hated the noblest, most innocent, godly men of his kingdom. He had slaughtered them. Here is, briefly, the account of this monster: "Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another." 2 Kings 21:16. "One of the first to fall was Isaiah, who for over half a century had stood before Judah as the appointed messenger of Jehovah." - Prophets and Kings, p. 382. "Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Heb. 11:36-38. We cry out to Manasseh: You wretch! You beast in human form! You deserve to be struck down in one swift bolt of the lightnings of a consuming God!

Then we observe Manasseh as he is carried a prisoner to Babylon. "The Lord permitted their king to be captured by a band of Assyrian soldiers, who 'bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon,' their temporary capital." - Prophets and Kings, p. 383. Tuning our ears, we hear words that leave us almost in shock: "He besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom." 2 Chron. 33: 12, 13.

Well might Manasseh, on his way to Babylon as a captive, meditate like this: "I killed Isaiah. I sawed others asunder. I cruelly mocked and scourged many people. I tormented innocent men and women. They fled in sheepskins and goatskins. They had to hide in caves and dens of the earth. In Jerusalem, the capital of my kingdom, blood of innocent sufferers flowed like a creek. Now what right do I have to cry to God and expect an answer?" But when he prayed, God "heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom." 2 Chron. 33:13. So declares the inspired Word of God. Manasseh can cry out through the eternal ages, I know God loves me personally!

Nebuchadnezzar

Among other Old Testament experiences, we have God's amazing, forgiving love extended to Nebuchadnezzar. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had taken God's people captive. He had boasted. He had exulted against the God of heaven. Among the captives of Judah were four men who were ten times wiser than his own wise men. One of these four was Daniel. He had shown his ability, not merely to reveal what the king had dreamed, but also to give the interpretation of the dream. The monarch was greatly impressed, but not converted. Nebuchadnezzar haughtily rebelled against God. The Lord had made clear that his kingdom of gold would pass away. Three other universal kingdoms would follow. But idolatrous Nebuchadnezzar later ridiculed the revelation. He boasted that his kingdom would never pass away!

To build his godless ego, he made an image all of gold. He set it up in the Plain of Dura. He made a decree. All, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, must bow down to his image. It must be in absolute submissive worship. It must be at the sound of the royal music. Three men refused to compromise the worship of their Maker. These were three of the men who had explained to the king his dream. (Daniel, chapter 2.) But pride and arrogance saturated the king's mind. He had the temerity to command the mightiest men of his army to fling these three stalwart Hebrews into his fiery furnace. It had been

heated seven times above what it was "wont" to be heated. What rage against God! What rebellion against his Maker! It was then that he witnessed a spectacle of deliverance which was before unknown in all human history. He saw Christ, the Commander of heaven, the Potentate of the universe, walking in the midst of the fire with His obedient, non-compromising children. Following this experience, King Nebuchadnezzar temporarily extolled the God of heaven and earth. He had decreed that no one might, from that moment on, so much as speak even one word against the true God. But God does not force the will of His creatures. He draws the sinner by the bands of love. (Jer. 31:3.)

Not long after this, Nebuchadnezzar returned to his sinful life of idolatry and total rebellion against the God of love. To warn him, God gave him a dream. It is recorded in Daniel, chapter 4. This dream was of a tree so mighty that its branches seemed to reach out to the ends of the earth. It was so expansive that its fruit seemed to furnish all peoples of the earth with food. Cattle, the world over, could rest under it. People of all nations could dwell under its shade.

Daniel interpreted this dream. The king learned that he was represented by that mighty tree. His fame would cover the then-known world. Kings and princes would bow before him. Officers of state would worship him. People of all nations would hold him in reverence. What a tree! What a picture! What an interpretation!

But then came the sad follow-up. A voice cried out that this giant tree must be cut down. Daniel explained the meaning. It was that the king would be forced to abdicate his throne. He would be driven out into the fields with the cattle. And with the wild beasts. He would be compelled to live like an animal. His hair would grow like bird's feathers. His nails like bird's claws. This horrible experience would continue for seven full years. During this time he would lose his sanity. Demented, and bereft of the friendship of his trusted counselors, who would turn on him with disgust, he would walk like an ox, and try to climb trees like a monkey.

But wonder of wonders! The great King of the universe accomplishes a miracle of love. He restores to Nebuchadnezzar his sanity. Then follows another miracle of divine grace. These very officers of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, who expelled him seven years before, now welcome him back as their ruler. A God of unspeakable love accepts this former wretch into divine favor. He forgives his sins. He claims him as His child!

Yes, this actually took place! History records it. Inspiration testifies to the fact. Think of all the persecutions perpetrated by Nebuchadnezzar! All the opportunities for repentance neglected! All the calls of mercy spurned! All the testimonies he had given to the God of heaven, only to backslide! Then God forgave!

Do you want to know what God is like? Let Hilda tell you. Let John, once thunderous but now converted, picture Him. Let converted Saul of Tarsus declare Him. Hear David, the psalmist, sing of Him. Watch Manasseh, the wretched blood-letter of innocent Isaiah and his friends, write it out in letters of gold. Yea, listen to King Nebuchadnezzar. He proclaims to the world: "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment." Dan. 4:37.

Personal Testimony

We have on record a cloud of witnesses to the love of God. We have barely tapped the testimonies! Millions of martyrs have lived and

died for Christ. Their love and devotion was more precious than the plaudits of earth. Their cause was dearer to them than life itself.

When I was a little boy, Mother told me the story of the love of Jesus, and it broke my heart. I fell in love with Him. Since that day, my life has been faulty, but He has never failed me. When I was 9 years of age I had surgery. My Lord brought me through the appendectomy. When I was still young, something very serious happened to my knee. It would not heal. But again God saw me through. Later in life my wife was at death's door. God brought her back to health. In South America during a series of meetings, I was stricken down with dengue fever. The advice of the physicians was, Don't get out of bed. But throughout the entire siege, God gave me the strength to preach each night my turn came around. And I attended every night when my teammates preached.

When the doctor told me in 1953 that I had cancer, God saw me through. We never gave up our revival itinerary. Then in 1959 I lay low. I overheard my doctor speaking to another. He indicated that he held out no hope. The cancer was terminal. But I was sustained, then and since. If God spares me a few more months, I shall be 71 years of age. God is still with me. We are carrying on an amazingly heavy preaching and writing schedule.

How do I know God loves me? He told me so in His Book, the Bible. How do I know God loves me personally? He gave His beloved Son to-die for me on Calvary. How do I know God loves me personally? He has never once failed me in my weakness, my sinfulness, my sickness. He is always there.

Someday I shall see Him face to face, and be encircled in the forgiving smiles of a God to whom I have been reconciled, to sin no more. I shall bask in the sunlight of heaven. Plunge into the silvery spray of the river of the water of life, and forever be refreshed. I plan to recline under the shadow of the tree of life and never again become weary. I look forward to walking down those streets of gold, which mirror the form - the blessed person - and the forgiving face of my Savior. It is all because of His saving grace. His mercy. His pardon. I invite you to fall in love with Jesus, my Lord. To meet me in that wonderful day so soon to come.

Lucy

We heard from the lips of Pastor M. T. Battle, of Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., the account of a girl whom we shall call Lucy. She

was a teen-ager who became disgruntled. She had run away from home, much to the sorrow of her loving mother. Dissatisfied with the restrictions of the home, she decided to go out into the world to seek its tinsel. She would sip the sounds of worldly music. She would fellowship with its darkness.

In relating this story, my friend pictured the heart-broken mother on the continent of Africa, studying how she might reach her daughter with her message of love. She wanted to post, publicly, pictures of her daughter so she would know that the message was meant for her personally. But she had no picture of Lucy. After earnest study, the mother decided that she would do the only thing left for her to do. She had a picture of herself. She would have the local printer do some fliers with her picture oh them. If Lucy saw her picture, she would read the message that went with it. It read, "I have never ceased to love thee." This was the only way she knew to attract the attention of her rebellious daughter. It might woo her back to the home of love. Of endearment. Of fellowship.

The fliers were finished. The mother took the bus and went to the city where she suspected Lucy had gone. On poles, on sides of buildings, and on trees, posters were placed. Usually at these locations were posted announcements of sports events and other festivities.

When all the fliers had been posted, Mother boarded the bus and returned home. There she wept and prayed for the return of her Lucy.

One day, Lucy was walking down the street. She observed a crowd of people around a pole. Lucy drew near. She was astonished to see the face of her own mother on one of the fliers. In greater astonishment, she read the words, "I have never ceased to love thee."

Strange emotions began to stir in her rebellious heart. They were tender, submissive emotions. Walking on, she saw another group of curious people looking at a sign on a building. She drew near in curiosity. Again she saw a picture of her loving mother. Underneath were the same words, 'T have never ceased to love thee." Similar posters were seen on street after street. The same picture and love words met her gaze. Lucy could stand it no longer. With tears on her cheeks and with warmth in her heart, she rushed back to her temporary abode. There she gathered up her things, and hastily packed them. She was soon on a bus headed for home. It could not go fast enough to take her to the arms of the mother who had never ceased to love her.

From the time Adam and Eve left the home of their innocence until the day Lucy, and others, left the home of purity, our Lord's

message to backslidden humanity is, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely" (Hosea 14:4), comes ringing down the corridors of time for every rebellious, wandering son and daughter of Adam to hear, ponder, and decide whether he will choose to return to his Father's house or continue to wander in sin.

Dear one, you too, in reverent imagination, may see the face of Jesus in infinite love. He is wooing you to the One who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

You, with the psalmist, can jubilantly sing the 150th psalm:

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: Praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: Praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: Praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: Praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: Praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord."

And this is the God I love!

Prayer

Would you kneel now before the Lord and pray this prayer with me?

Dear Lord in heaven: I believe Your promise, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3.

I believe that Your love is strong enough to forgive every sin I have committed. I pray, "Take away all iniquity." Hosea 14:2. Fulfill Your promise, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." Hosea 14:4. I ask believingly because it is "impossible for God to lie." Heb. 6:18. I claim triumphantly that You have forgiven all my iniquity. That You love me freely and have healed my backslidings. I rejoice exceedingly that I am Your child. I cry out in holy joy, "I know God loves me personally!" I exclaim, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon" me that I should be a child of God, through Jesus Christ my Lord! Amen.

Review

1. God does not deal with us according to our merits. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Ps. 103:10.

2. When one is almost without hope, God does not chide. He does not quench the little spark of hope in the heart. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." Isa. 42:3.

3. Jesus does not condemn the guilty sinner. He gives him strength to sin no more. "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." John 8:11.

4. There is nothing we can do that will cause God to cease to love us. "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:38, 39.

5. God's love is everlasting and full. "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.

6. We cannot describe this love. We can only call upon others to feel it for themselves. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1.

7. God promises to forgive our sins, and to heal our backslidings. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." Hosea 14:4.