

## God is Love

*In the following account of an actual counseling case, names and background details are changed to keep the privacy of the counselee.*

Jeff was a likable man. He spoke well and had a pleasant demeanor that helped him converse with anyone. He made friends wherever he went. He became a Christian just a few years ago, but hadn't attended a church that would help him grow toward maturity.

Jeff sought help. He knew God had forgiven his lifetime of sins through Jesus' blood on the cross, but he had made a pattern of dwelling on the sins of long ago and those he had sinned against.

Since Jeff had repented of sin and confessed sin to God and to those offended, he had followed the steps of Scripture for dealing with sin. He was free to stop dwelling on false guilt. But what would he think about instead? It would have to fit the criteria of Philippians 4:8. We'd like to choose something pertinent to what his problem had been and also helpful in his spiritual growth (discipleship was occurring as part of counseling).

The solution was a study on God's love. Jeff was given a few verses for each different aspect of God's love. Each day he considered two sections of verses and meditated on them. He wrote down how they applied to his life. He gave thanks for God's love. He chose to think about these things during the day.

The study included: God's love caused us to be saved: John 3:16, Ephesians 1:4-8 and 2:8-9, Colossians 2:13-14; God's love is demonstrated by His pursuit of a close, personal bond with us: Psalm 62:8, John 15:9, Hebrews 13:5-6; God's love is expressed in the provision of His Word: Psalm 1:2-3, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Peter 2:1-3; God's love is seen in his expenditure of energy to maintain His relationship with us: Romans 8:35-37, Hebrews 7:25, 1 Peter 1:3-5; He supplies a purpose for each day of life: Psalm 139: 13 and 16, Romans 5:3-5, Ephesians 2:10; God's love is seen in His ongoing grace: Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Hebrews 4:15-16; God's love is revealed in His kindness: Ephesians 1:18-21, 1 Timothy 6:17, James 1:17; His love results in a life of joy: Philippians 4:4, James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 1:6-9; God's love is manifested by His making of the new heaven, our future home: John 14:2-3, 1 John 3:2, Revelation 22:1-6; and a few other topics.

God changed Jeff's life dramatically. Downcast countenance, low energy and emptiness were replaced with joy, purpose and love. Knowing and living in God's love became the mindset of this believer. A by-product was seeking to love others as God loved them.

Jeff also became hungry for daily study of the Word. He even began sharing the gospel as a result of his joy over realizing God's love. He interpreted his circumstances through the truths of God's love.

It was an honor to expend time and energy to help this man for whom Christ died. It was important, from the beginning, to serve with the love and care of Christ. Certainly the last few weeks of meeting together were filled with joy for both of us as God did what only He can do – He caused this soul to grow and flourish through His Spirit and His Word.