

# GOD IS LOVE

## PSALM 136:1–4

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. <sup>2</sup>Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever. <sup>3</sup>Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever; <sup>4</sup>to him who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever ...

## 1 JOHN 4:16

So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

**Additional Reading:** Psalm 103:8–13; Psalm 136; Lamentations 3:20–23

In our time of prayer and fasting, we have reflected on our awesome God: He is with us, and He is our comforter, guide, and restorer. These describe who He is, not just what He does for us. They go back to His very being and nature: God is love.

In the Old Testament, when God talks about who He is, He describes Himself as *abounding in steadfast love* (Psalm 103:8). The original word translated as “steadfast love” in the English Standard Version is the Hebrew word *khesed*. It is a word so full of meaning that many languages, including English and Filipino, do not have an equivalent word for it. *Khesed* has been translated as love, steadfast

love, loyal love, faithful love, loving-kindness, and mercy. These all capture aspects of *khesed*, but not its entirety.

God's *khesed* has been translated as "love" because it speaks of His motivation, which is other-centeredness. God is not selfish; He puts others' interests above His own. *Khesed* has been translated as "loving-kindness" and "mercy" because His love is not merely sentimental. In His loving-kindness and mercy, He acts for the benefit of those He loves. It has also been rendered as "steadfast love" because it is constant and never fails. It is not dependent on whether or not we are worthy or faithful. He always remains faithful.

In addition, it has been translated as "loyal love," "faithful love," and "covenantal love" because it shows that the basis of God's love is His loyalty to the covenant He made with His people. He remains committed and loyal to His people.

Out of God's steadfast and covenantal love, He gave His only Son, Jesus Christ, to be with us and to save us (John 3:16). Because of His loving commitment that never fails, He brings us comfort and hope (Psalm 119:76; Lamentations 3:20–23), He is committed to lead and guide us (Exodus 15:13), and we can trust Him for restoration (Jeremiah 33:11–13). Whatever good thing we have lost, He can restore and give us something better, whether in this age or in the next.

God's love assures us that He will continue to be the awesome God that He is.

**THEREFORE, WE CAN END OUR MIDYEAR PRAYER AND FASTING AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE REST OF THE YEAR GIVING THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD AND HIS STEADFAST LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.**

## **Reflect**

Read Lamentations 3:20–23. How have you experienced God’s love? How does your understanding of His mercies, love, and faithfulness give you strength and assurance to face the future?

Think of one family member or friend who needs a reminder of God’s love. How can you reflect Christ to this person? What can you do for him or her today?



# PRAY

*Dear Lord, thank You for Your love, which is steadfast, loyal, and active. Thank You that You never give up on me. Help me understand that Your love endures forever and Your mercies never come to an end. I pray that I would be rooted and grounded in Your love. May I face the future with the certainty of Your love and faithfulness to me. May I reflect Your love to everyone around me, honoring You and pointing them to Christ. I pray for people in my home, community, and nation to know Your love and turn to You. In Jesus' name, amen.*