



[John 17:23](#)

(23) I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

A Faithful Version

Consider for a moment how much [God](#) must love [Jesus Christ](#). After all, they have been working together side-by-side for literally countless years—all eternity—in perfect harmony.

Relatively few couples are blessed with outstanding marriages that last fifty years or more. After so long, the depth of their relationship must be close and intimate. If that happens between two human beings in fifty years, what would it be like after a few billion? It would be intimate beyond our comprehension. Such is the depth of [God's love](#) for Christ—far beyond our comprehension.

In this verse, Jesus is asking God to reveal two things to [the world](#): that God sent Him and that ***God loves us as much as He loves Jesus Christ***.

Understanding the full impact of this verse hinges on a little, two-letter word "as." One definition is "to the same extent or degree; equally." Equally implies no more, no less. This definition makes Jesus' request staggering in its implications! It means we can truthfully say that there is not a being in the universe—including Jesus Christ—whom God loves more than us. Each individual whom God has called can say the same thing. God loves us all at the same incredible, beyond-our-comprehension level.

This statement also shows Christ's unbelievable love for us. He has been with God forever, yet the Son feels no animosity that our Father loves us just as much, unlike the elder brother in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In fact, in His [prayer](#) Christ is asking God to broadcast this fact to the world! Christ is preeminent in position and responsibility—but not in the Father's love. As the perfect Parent, He does not love any

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one child more than the others.

To underscore this equality of love, notice how other Bible translations handle the word "as." They use words like "even as," "just as," "in the same way," "with the same love as," "as much as," and "just as much as." All emphasize the equality of the Father's love.

On the authority of Jesus Christ, the same Jesus who has been with God forever, we know the Father loves us as much as He loves Jesus—no more, no less. If we consider how much He must love Christ after spending billions of years working together in perfect harmony, that is *exactly* how much He loves us. The true depth of that love is definitely beyond our comprehension. It takes [faith](#) to believe this simple statement of fact.

— Pat Higgins

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