

## 7 Reasons Why God is Worthy of Worship (part 4 of 6)

**Description:** 7 reasons for why we must worship God and dedicate all acts of worship to Him alone. Part 4: Three more reasons discussed.

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### # 3 God provides us with innumerable favours

**"And if you should [try to] count the favours of God, you could not enumerate them. Indeed mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful." (Quran 14:34)**

We should be eternally grateful to God because we could never thank Him for His blessings. The heart is an appropriate example to illustrate this point. The human heart beats around 100,000 times a day, which is approximately 37,000,000 times a year. If we were to live up to the age of 75, the number of heartbeats would reach 2,759,400,000. How many of us have



even counted that number of heartbeats? No one ever has. It is actually impossible to count that many heartbeats. Firstly, for the first few years of your life you cannot count. Already there's a few years of backlog. Secondly, you cannot count your heartbeats while you are sleeping. To be able to count a lifetime's worth of heartbeats, you would have had to start counting each heartbeat from the day you were born and while you were asleep. This would interfere with your ability to live a normal life, as you would always be counting every time your heart started a new beat. As a practical matter it is impossible. However, every heartbeat is precious to us. Anyone of us would sacrifice a mountain of gold to ensure that our hearts function properly to keep us alive. Yet we forget and deny the One who created our hearts and enables them to function. This illustration forces us

to conclude that we must be grateful to God, and gratitude is a form of worship. The above discussion just refers to heartbeats, so imagine the gratitude we must express for all the other blessings God has given us. From this perspective anything other than a heartbeat is a bonus. God has given us favours we cannot enumerate, and if we could count them we would have to thank Him for the ability to do so.

#### **# 4 If we love ourselves, we must love God**

Loving God is a fundamental aspect of worship. There are many types of love and one of these includes self-love. This occurs due to the desire to prolong our existence, feel pleasure and avoid pain, as well as the need to satisfy our human needs and motivations. We all have this natural love for ourselves because we want to be happy and content. The psychologist Erich Fromm argued that loving oneself is not a form of arrogance or egocentricity. Rather, self-love is about caring, taking responsibility and having respect for ourselves. This type of love is necessary in order to love others. If we cannot love ourselves, how then can we love other people? There is nothing closer to us than our own selves; if we cannot care for and respect ourselves, how then can we care for and respect others? Loving ourselves is a form of 'self-empathy'. We connect with our own feelings, thoughts and aspirations. If we cannot connect with our own selves, how then can we empathise and connect with others? Eric Fromm echoes this idea by saying that love "implies that respect for one's own integrity and uniqueness, love for an understanding of one's own self, cannot be separated from respect and love and understanding for another individual."[\[1\]](#)

If a person's love for himself is necessary, this should lead him to love the One who made him. Why? Because God created the physical causes and means for human beings to achieve happiness and pleasure, and avoid pain. God has freely given us every precious moment of our existence, yet we do not earn or own these moments. The great theologian Al-Ghazali aptly explains that if we love ourselves we must love God:

"Therefore, if man's love for himself be necessary, then his love for Him through whom, first his coming-to-be, and second, his continuance in his essential being with all his inward and outward traits, his substance and his accidents, occur must also be necessary. Whoever is so besotted by his fleshy appetites as to lack this love neglects his Lord and Creator. He possesses no authentic knowledge of Him; his gaze is limited to his cravings and to things of sense."[\[2\]](#)

#### **# 5 God is The-Loving, and His love is the purest form of love**

God is The-Loving. He has the purest form of love. This should make anyone want to love Him, and loving Him is a key part of worship. Imagine if I were to tell you that there was this person who was the most loving person ever, and that no other love could match his love; wouldn't that instil a strong desire to get to know this person, and eventually love him too? God's love is the purest and most intense form of love; therefore, any sane person would want to love him too.

Given that the English word for love encompasses a range of meanings, the best way

to elaborate on the Islamic conception of God's love is to look into the actual Quranic terms used to describe Divine love: His mercy (*rahmah*), His special mercy (*raheem*) and His special love (*muwadda*). By understanding these terms and how they relate to the Divine nature, our hearts will learn to love God.

### *Mercy*

It is said that another word for love is mercy. One of God's names is The-Merciful; the Arabic word used is *Ar-Rahmaan*. This English translation does not fully represent the depth and intensity that the meaning of this word carries. The name *Ar-Rahmaan* has three major connotations: the first is that God's mercy is an intense mercy; the second is that His mercy is an immediate mercy; and the third is a mercy so powerful that nothing can stop it. God's mercy encompasses all things and He prefers guidance for people. In God's book, the Quran, He says,

**"...but My mercy encompasses all things...." (Quran 7:156)**

**"It is the Lord of Mercy who taught the Quran." (Quran 55:1-2)**

In the above verse, God says He is The-Merciful, which can be understood as the "Lord of Mercy", and that He taught the Quran. This is a linguistic indication to highlight that the Quran was revealed as a manifestation of God's mercy. In other words, the Quran is like one big love-letter to humanity. As with true love, the one who loves wants good for the beloved, and warns them of pitfalls and obstacles, and shows them the way to happiness. The Quran is no different: it calls out to humanity, and it also warns and expresses glad tidings.

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Endnotes:

[1] Fromm, E. (1956). *The Art of Loving*. New York: Harper & Row, pp. 58-59.

[2] Al-Ghazali. (2011) *Al-Ghazali on Love, Longing, Intimacy & Contentment*. Translated with an introduction and notes by Eric Ormsby. Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, p. 25.

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