**Loving Our Neighbors**

**A Love Only God Could Inspire**

**God’s Just Love**

3 provisions of God’s just love that renders His People without excuse for their departure from Him and without excuse for not turning backing to Him

**I. Access to the Knowledge of Him and His Ways (Hosea 4:1­-3)**

A. His Word testifies specifically to His righteous standards

B. His creation provides general knowledge of Him

**Romans 1:18-21** - *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*

**II. Accountability for the Knowledge of Him and His ways (4:1-5:15)**

A. Stems from His authority as the law-giver

B. Starts with the most culpable—“the priests” (4:4, 14; 5:1)

**Deuteronomy 31:9** - *So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel.*

**James 3:1** - *Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.*

**Hebrews 13:17** - *Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.*

C. Extends to all His people (4:1, 3, 6, 9)

D. Permits freedom to depart from His standards

E. Does not permit freedom to choose the consequences (4:10-19; 5:14-15)

**III. Remedy for Falling Short of the Knowledge of Him and His ways—repentance (5:15-6:4)**

A. Acknowledging guilt—confessing God is right and I am wrong in falling short of His righteousness (5:15)

B. Seeking God’s face—turning to Him as the Only Authority able to resolve your guilt through the means He provides (5:15)

C. Accepting God’s guilt bearer and righteousness fulfiller—Jesus Christ

1. Jesus Christ is the embodiment of God’s righteous standards for the world to see (cf. Matthew 5:17, John 1:14-18).

2. We incur greater accountability and guilt in light of the fullness of righteousness being displayed to us in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:1-3).

3. Acknowledging our guilt and accepting the righteousness of Christ by faith allows us to obtain God’s righteousness in Christ (Philippians 3:8-9).

4. As children of God, growing in our understanding of Christ’s righteousness, our walk should include regular confession of guilt and turning to Christ (1 John 1:9).