

## **The Love Of God**

### **About this Message**

**This is a fun message to share. It lends itself well to humor and can be given in a semi-casual way. It works well at cafes', prisons, youth gigs and even women's sewing groups. Once when I spoke at a café' I shared the first half leaning on the counter. The prerequisite for sharing this message is –you must have at least one tattoo (and maybe a railroad spike) because you need to be able to tell the story/meaning/significance of the tattoo and relate it to Isaiah 49:15-16.**

**The strength of this message is also its limitation-your visuals can only be seen by so many people.**

**You will learn a lot from just using this message just once; I was amazed to see how quickly people warmed up to me when I shared this message.**

**Don't preach this message just share it; use humor and stories but don't take too long.**

**You will notice the atmosphere change a little as you transition from the story to the scripture and finally to the Gospel and invitation. When you get to the invitation plant your feet, stand square on and go for it- now's your chance to preach!!! .... I have included my stories below just to show you how to use the tattoos to "hook" the "audience."**

Is anyone here madly deeply in love? Love can make you do crazy things, for example. Some people even tattoo the names of their boyfriend or girlfriend on their bodies. I knew a guy once with a huge love heart on his arm and "I love Suzie" tattooed in the center- but his wife's name was Kate.

I was never that dumb, my mates and I had a saying, 'if you want your girlfriend to dump you, tattoo her name on your arm you're guaranteed to get dumped.'

**Transition:** While on the subject of tattoos there is a saying that, "every picture tells a story", well I got a couple of pictures of my own and some stories (show your tattoo-if it's in an appropriate part of your body) to go with it...

When I was 21- before I became a Christian, I had a girlfriend she was only little (about this high) but together we were big trouble, she was always trying to make me jealous I had so many fights over her I didn't think I'd survive the relationship. ☺ I left my home town of Napier and moved to the other side of the North Island to New Plymouth. I was there on my own and it wasn't long before I was lonely and depressed.

The only ones that kept in contact with me were my mum who phoned me regularly and my dad who'd travel all the way to New Plymouth every 2 or 3 weeks just to see me. If it wasn't for them I would have killed myself.

Anyway I missed them so much I had their names – "mum and dad" tattooed on

my forearms (show the tattoo/s or explain what it looks like for those that can't see) on rose and a swallow.

So my tattoos are a remembrance or a memorial to the love I have for my mum and dad. Tattoos have for a long time been used that way- even in the Bible

In Bible the Book of Isaiah tells how the Babylonians sacked the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586 BC and took all the Israeli youth back to Babylon. The Israelite mothers were so heartbroken they tattooed the names of their children on the palms of their hands so they could remember their children every day. So, years later when the people of Judah complained that God had deserted them, God replied *"can a mother forget her nursing child, can she feel no love for the child she has borne? But even if it were possible I would not forget you. See I have written your name on the palm of my hands"* Isaiah 49:15-16

**What does God's tattoo look like?** It's the shape of a Roman nail!!! (I show an old rail-road spike I had fashioned into a Roman nail). Even if you were the worst sinner in the world God isn't that far away from you because Jesus Christ lived and died for you.

How could that be and why? Well it's because of sin (explain what it is if you haven't already)

God, because He is holy and perfect can't stand the sight of sin and in-fact He must punish it and it was Jesus that was punished in our place. The Bible says, *"God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."* Jesus chose willingly to come to earth and die for us.

What makes that even more amazing is what the Bible says about Jesus true identity, it says He is *"the visible image of the invisible God."*

One of His own followers a guy called Thomas called Him, *"My Lord and my God"* and even worshipped Him as God- Jesus is God

From any view point and by anyone's standard Jesus life was awesome not only did He live a sinless life but thru His life He made God known to all of us.

He healed the sick; raised the dead and cast out demons. He even claimed Himself to be the way the truth and the life.

God's Law required a sacrifice for sin so Jesus died willingly on the cross for you and me so we can be forgiven, but He didn't stay dead. He rose from the dead three later three days later to prove that He is God and has the power to change us from the inside out.

Have you trusted Jesus to take away your sin yet, if you haven't you will have to pay for your own sin when you die and the punishment for sin is eternal death in a place called hell and the only way you can ever be forgiven is for you to turn from your sin and turn to God: **Ok you've just preached the Gospel now call for a response ☺**