

## JULIE'S STORY-GLIMPSES OF GOD IN EVERYDAY LIFE

# Puppy Love

**WITH ALL YOUR HEART!**

### SCRIPTURE STUDY

Psalm 32:11  
Matthew 22:37-38  
Psalm 27:4

### PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus,  
Help me to love You freely and  
worship You whole-heartedly.  
Remind me that You are my first  
love!  
In Jesus' Name,  
Amen



### THE REAL THING

I kissed the preacher's son. Okay, I admit it. We were five. We were in love. Pastor Allen poked his head into the family room thinking we were watching the Flintstones and found us lip-locked. Unruffled, he said, "Why don't you two play checkers or something?" I'm not sure I agreed. I thought kissing beat checkers by a mile.

Mike and I had been friends for eons...six months at least. It was time to take this relationship to the next level. For some unknown reason, our parents thought a summer wedding was a bit hasty. Mike's twenty-five-cent allowance probably would not allow us to live in the lap of luxury to which we'd become accustomed. After all, who would buy my Jetson's lunch box for kindergarten?

Puppy love is a blissful experience...simplicity, sincerity, and total abandonment. It's uncomplicated. My flames in later years were not nearly so ardent. I always wondered, "Did he like me for my looks?" "Would he stick around until prom?" These are the burning questions that fill the mind of a teenage girl high on hormones.

My dog Goody is a Corgie. Corgies are particularly hilarious to look at because they don't have tails to wag-just stubby stumps that wiggle like a pig's snout rooting for slop. Every time I return home from the grocery store, Goody is ecstatic. His entire southern hemisphere dances the hula. He jumps into my arms with unabashed delight.

I think God likes my love for Him to be like puppy love. Of course, there is a place for deep devotion and sacrificial surrender as well. But occasionally, He'd like for me to quietly face the back door, ears tilted, listening ever so eagerly for His gentle voice.

When He speaks, I'd run around in circles and jump into His arms. (By the way, the Greek word for rejoice means to "run in circles.") He longs for us to have puppy love-untainted, unabashed, unwavering love...a simple devotion that knits my heart to my Master and Maker.

"So rejoice in the Lord and be glad, all you who obey him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!" Psalm 32:11 NLT

"One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple." Psalm 27:4

"Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your *heart* and with all your *soul* and with all your *mind*.' This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38

- Spend some time reflecting upon the time when you first met Jesus. How were you feeling? What was the Holy Spirit saying to you? How did you express your love toward Him?
  
- David writes in Psalm 27 that the only desire he has is to remain in God's presence, beholding His glory. How do you come into God's presence most often? Through prayer? Through praise? Through meditating upon His Word?
  
- Are there obstacles that prevent you from enjoying God's presence? Do you know what they are? If you do not, then seek wise counsel and pray for God to reveal Himself to you concerning this.
  
- Loving God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength is the greatest commandment, according to Jesus. But how do you love Him like that? Is it possible to be totally devoted to Christ all of the time? List some ways you can show your love to God emotionally, mentally and spiritually. How would that impact your relationships to others? Can you show someone selfless love this week?