What Is Love?

Greg Kline · 1 Corinthians 13:1–7

INTRODUCTION

- Love in the New Testament is primarily focused on how all of us treat one another.
- If I give away all that I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

1 True Love Is Modeled by God

1 John 4:7–12; Romans 5:8; Matthew 5:43–48

- What is agape love? Shortly put, you might say that it's active goodwill.
- We know what love is because God has first shown us love.
- First of all, it is a sacrificial love. And secondly, that it is a love that is for all.
- But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.

2 Love Is Not Optional

Matthew 5:43–44; Matthew 5:38–39

- I think sometimes we view love as optional. You notice Jesus doesn't see it that way.
- There's no wiggle room for a lack of love.
- It's because I withhold love from people I feel don't deserve it.
- True love defined by God, modeled by him, that's sacrificial and for all, recognizes love is not optional regardless of how somebody else treats me.

3 Sacrifice Is Love, and Sacrifice Is Hard

Luke 9:23; Galatians 6:1–2; 1 John 3:16–18

- Three times Jesus prayed, not my will, but thine be done. Love is submissive to the will and the model of the Father.
- If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow after me.
- Love is hard. Because sacrifice is giving up, by definition, something of value.
- I think we struggle to show love because it takes constant thought, constant planning, and a heart that says, Not my will, but thine be done.

4 God First Loved Me

Romans 5:6–10; Hebrews 4:14–16

- But God shows his love for us, and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- Time and again we are described as weak, ungodly, sinners, and yes, even enemies of Christ.
- The truth is, Jesus does know what it's like.

5 I Have to Put Myself Aside

1 Corinthians 13:4–7

- Love is patient and kind. Love does not envy or boast. It is not arrogant or rude.
- People don't do what we think they should. People don't even do what we know they should. And yet, verse 4 says, love is patient.
- Love is sacrificial. Love is selfless to the highest degree.
- It means going out of my way to put somebody else first. And anything short of that is a failure.

6 Love Takes Opportunities

1 John 3:17; Romans 12:1–2; James 1:19–20

- True love takes the opportunity. It sees a brother in need, says, I have the ability to help, so I will, case closed.
- I'm not only going to take the opportunities, I'm going to make them.
- Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath or anger.
- And a refusal to listen is a refusal to love.

> THE CHALLENGE
>
> **Can you improve in showing love? I know I sure can. I know we all can.**

MY NOTES