

Love

Key Verse

“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God.”
1 John 3:1

Basic Biblical Understanding

Love. Each of us craves it, and yet for many, we may be unfulfilled by it. Society distorts our view of love through movies, sultry romance novels, and wishful thinking. We settle for intentions rather than action, grand gestures rather than substance. Love is more than intention and romantic gestures. Love is a willful action that continually pursues, works, and perseveres. Because our view of love is often distorted, this kind of love may seem far beyond our grasp. Here’s the good news (although it won’t seem that way at first). We’ll never find fulfillment in the distorted love of imagination and wishful thinking, but true love has found us (1 John 4:9–11).

“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10 NIV). Motivated by a love that surpasses our earthly comprehension, Jesus died for our sin, and rose so that we can experience God’s perfect love. God did not make this sacrifice because we were good and deserved it; he made this sacrifice because he is good and loves us (John 3:16).

Are you looking for love in all the wrong places? If you’re struggling to find love, feel loved, or act loving, you must go back to the Source of love. God is love (1 John 4:8). He is not just loving; he is love embodied. The only reason we can truly love others is because he first loved us (1 John 4:19). Said in a different way, we must first experience God’s love before we can truly love others.

God’s love calls out to those who will listen. Stop settling for cheap imitations. Recognize the distortions and press in to the ever-present, never-ending, all-consuming love of God. His love comes for you and rescues you (Matthew 18:12–14), welcomes you (Luke 15:11–32), sacrifices for you (Romans 5:8), and truly loves you (John 15:9)!

Verses (ask God to show you how they apply to your life)

- “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” 1 John 4:11
- “For love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” 1 John 4:7b
- “Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.” 1 Corinthians 13:4–8

Helpful Questions and Application

1. Do you believe God loves you? If yes, how should that impact you today? If no, what would make you unlovable?
2. Where are you pursuing an imitation of love and not true love?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4–8, and rate your level of love by each description. Ten would be to love like Jesus, and zero would be loveless. Where is God pinpointing deficiencies in your love?

Additional Resources

Scripture references: John 13; Ephesians 2:4–5; Zephaniah 3:17; Matthew 22:37–39; Romans 8:38–39

WordTruth articles: [“Are You A Loving Person \(The Love Test\)”](#)

[“God’s Perfect Love: Amazing, Available, and Applicable”](#)