

# Love

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## The Greatest Reason

As we read the Bible we are encouraged about how much God loves us. But God also commands us to have the same love for others – even our enemies! Our love for others should be real, not just shown through words but also through our actions, and it should be the reason for everything we do.

## God's Love

### Romans 5:8 (NIV)

(8) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

What has God done for us?  
Why?

### Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)

(38) For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,  
(39) neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

How powerful is God's love for us?

### Ephesians 3:17-19 (NIV)

(17) so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,  
(18) may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,  
(19) and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

What does God want us to do?

## God's Command to Love

### John 13:34-35, 15:12-13

#### John 13:34-35 (NIV)

(34) "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.  
(35) By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

#### John 15:12-13 (NIV)

(12) My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.  
(13) Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

What has Jesus commanded us to do?  
How will others know that we are His disciples?

### Luke 6:32-35 (NIV)

(32) "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.  
(33) And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that.  
(34) And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full.  
(35) But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

Why is it important to love your enemies?

### Ephesians 5:1-2, 2 Peter 1:6-7

#### Ephesians 5:1-2 (NIV)

(1) Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children  
(2) and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

#### 2 Peter 1:6-7 (NIV)

(6) and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;  
(7) and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.

How can we become better at loving people?

## Love Is the Reason

### 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (NIV)

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- (1) If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
- (2) If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
- (3) If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Why is love so important?

### 1 John 3:16-18 (NIV)

- (16) This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.
- (17) If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?
- (18) Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

What kind of love is described?

## Ask a Friend

Do you find it easy to love people?

What part of this study do you find the most challenging?

## Application

### Hebrews 10:24 (NIV)

- (24) And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,

Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”

What are some ways that we can show love to people?

HOMEWORK: This week, take some time to meditate on and receive God’s love. Also, evaluate your own motives – think, “When I did that, was love my motive?”

## Prayer Model

Lord Jesus, I thank You that You love me so much. I thank You that You have put Your love in me. I pray that You would help me to be guided by love in everything I do.

## Key Verse

### 1 Corinthians 13:3 (NIV)

- “If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.”