

Wednesday in the Word
Digging Deeper
February 9, 2022
What Is Love?

According to the experts;

It gives me a headache to think about that stuff. I'm just a kid. I don't need that kind of trouble."
(Kenny, 7)

"No one is sure why it happens, but I heard it has something to do with how you smell. That's why perfume and deodorant are so popular." (Jan 9)

"I think you're supposed to get shot with an arrow or something, but the rest of it isn't supposed to be so painful." (Harlen, 8)

1 John 4:7-21 KJVS

[7] Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. [8] He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. [9] In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. [10] Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [11] Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. [12] No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. [13] Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. [14] And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. [15] Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. [16] And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. [17] Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. [18] There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. [19] We love him, because he first loved us. [20] If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? [21] And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 KJVS

[4] Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, [5] Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh not evil; [6] Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; [7] Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. [8] Charity never faileth:

Matthew 5:43-44 KJVS

[43] Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

[44] But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

What is love? Agape Love is God's love. It is sacrificial love; love that gives. The same root word is used in all the above passages. Our passage in 1 John describes God as love personified and manifested in Christ, the greatest act of sacrificial love we can know. John speaks of loving our brother and if we don't, then we are not of God. Loving God equals loving our brother. Paul, in 1 Corinthians describes love by its character and behavior. In reading through that passage, can we say we love our brother or sister accurately, properly and completely? John is testing us. Paul is instructing us. In Matthew, Jesus raises the bar. In fact he upsets the whole apple cart, as it were. Love your enemies? Certainly He has something else in mind, doesn't He? No. All of Matthew 5 and even all of His Sermon on the Mount in chapters 6 and 7 speak of a life of other centered, selfless love of all those around us. Brothers, sisters, friends and enemies. Let's go back and reread these three passages again and see how completely we love both the lovable and the unlovable. Think about that one person you just can't stand! That person too? What is Jesus' intention in teaching this? Did He model it for us? Does following Him mean we are expected to comply? Let's look at a few more points made for us in God's Word.

In no particular order: 1 Peter 4:8, Colossians 3:14, John 15:13, John 13:34-35, Proverbs 10:12, Mark 12:29-31, Romans 5:8, Ephesians 4:2-3, Proverbs 17:17, Romans 13:8, Luke 6:27-38, Galatians 5:22, John 14:21, 15:12, 1 John 3:16. This can go on all night. Can it go on for the rest of our lives? Is there a difference between loving a brother and loving an enemy? How might that be? Can the same heart of love display itself in various ways as we encounter various people? Is it legitimate to sometimes love others while withholding our outward actions? Can I love an enemy but separate myself from interacting with him? How should my heart behave? 1 Samuel 24:1-22. As a lawyer asked Jesus "who is my neighbor?" Luke 10:29-37, we might well ask "who is my enemy?" Proverbs 25:21-22. Difficult? Yes. Impossible without God. Doable? Yes. In Christ. Your enemy might even get saved! In Christ all things are possible. Matthew 19:25-26. Here is yet another possibility. Romans 12:18. Do your best to love and trust God with the results.