

LOVING U AS U R!

FACTS ABOUT LOVE

It's a Universal Need = we are all looking for love!

There's a Universal Solution = God loves all people everywhere and longs to meet the deepest needs of their hearts for love!

There's a Tragic Disconnection = Nevertheless, most people remain starved for love for three primary reasons:

1. They don't know God loves them.
2. They know God's love, but they have not received it.
3. They have received God's love, but don't know how to experience it in daily life.

"Over the years, I have come to realize that the greatest trap in our life is not success, popularity, or power, but self-rejection. Success, popularity, and power can indeed present a great temptation, but their seductive quality often comes from the way they are part of the much larger temptation to self-rejection. When we have come to believe in the voices that call us worthless and unlovable, then success, popularity, and power are easily perceived as attractive solutions. The real trap, however is self-rejection... Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the 'Beloved.' Being the Beloved constitutes the core truth of our existence." -Henry Nouwen

THE LOVE OF GOD

God's love is His holy disposition toward all He has created that compels Him to express unconditional affection and selective correction to provide the highest and best quality of existences both now and forever for the objects of His love.

Characteristics of God's agape love

- It is a **giving, sacrificial, unconditional, and boundless love** –

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (NKJV)*

Ephesians 3:14-21 *"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or*

think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (NKJV)

God's love is expressed primarily through His **goodness, mercy, longsuffering, and grace**. God's love for you means....

1. His thoughts, intentions, desires, and plans for you are always for your good and never for your harm.
2. He is kind, open, approachable, frank, and eager to be your friend.
3. He emotionally identifies with your pain, joy, hopes, and dreams and has chosen to allow your happiness to affect His own.
4. He takes pleasure in you just for who you are totally apart from your performance and/or accomplishments.
5. He is actively and creatively orchestrating people, circumstances, and events to express His affection and selective correction to provide for your highest good.

GOD REVEALS HIS LOVE TO US

1. He made you for himself.



Genesis 1:26-27 *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

Colossians 1:16 *"For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him."*

2. He shows His kindness to all.

Matthew 5:44-45 *"But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."*

Acts 17:24-27 *"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. 26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. 27 God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us."*

3. His is proactively pursuing you.

Luke 19:10 *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

John 4:23-24 *“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”*

4. He chastises us to protect us from self-destructive behavior.

Hebrews 12:6 *“because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.”*

5. He supernaturally pours His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 5:5 *“And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”*

6. Jesus revealed the nature of God’s love for us.

a. His life modeled compassion, grace and truth –

John 1:14 *“and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (NKJV)*

b. His teaching explained God’s love – Luke 15

c. His death demonstrated the extend of God’s love -

1 John 3:16 *“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (NKJV)*

Romans 5:8 *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (NKJV)*

Responses to guilty feelings			
Fight	Flee	Surrender to Guilt	Surrender to God
Develop defense strategies and skills	Run, Hide, Escape—Develop masks and disguises	Become enslaved to guilt, condemnation, and self-punishment	Discern source of guilt. If false: Ignore & Evade. It true: Respond with Godly sorrow-Conviction & confession, Forgiveness & Freedom
Belief: All guilt is bad, unwanted.			Belief: Some guilt is bad, some good.
Results: Distracts us from God.			Result: Draws us to God.

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 *yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. 11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.*

Responses to objective Guilt

GODLY SORROW (Constructive Guilt)	WORLDLY SORROW (Psychogological Guilt)
<p>Involves: A God focus. Conviction – concerning future relationship. Remorse (over sin and broken relationship with God)</p> <p>Attitude = dependence, “Christ Paid”.</p> <p>Motivation for change = LOVE</p> <p><u>Which lead to:</u> Repentance Forgiveness Salvation Spiritual Life (i.e. = Peter, Matthew 26:69-75)</p>	<p>Involves: A self focus. Condemnation – over past misdeeds. Regret or remorse (over consequences of sin and personal pain.)</p> <p>Attitude = autonomy, “I’ll pay.”</p> <p>Motivation for change = get rid of guilty feelings</p> <p><u>Which lead to:</u> Spiritual death. (i.e. = Judas, Matthews 27:10)</p>