

UNDERSTANDING LOVE

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Love means different things to different people, no matter what it means to you, one thing is certain, that we all believe in love. Love is a force that moves and drives the life of men. God is love.

“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”(1John 4:8)

Love is the nature of God that every true child of God has within him or her.

Love originates from God; therefore He should be in a better position to instruct us about love. In this study we will be looking at love from God’s angle.

Love as we have seen is a nature that comes from God for a peaceful and happy society. This love of God has been implanted in every believer.

“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.”(Romans 5:5)

So it is natural for a believer to walk in love here on earth. This love that comes from God into man is holy and makes the believer to walk in holiness. Love is the fulfillment of the law. So when one walks in love, he is keeping all the commandments of God. Love is the perfect realm of living. To live in love is to live in God.

LOVE IS SACRIFICIAL

Love is not selfish or self-centered but sacrificial. It is giving and not just receiving.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”(John 3:16)

“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the Day of Judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says ‘I love God’, yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: whoever loves God must also love his brother.”(1John 3:16-20)

In a relationship, the people involved should be on the giving side and not on the receiving side. When both are involved in giving and not waiting to receive, the relationship will be full of life and will last a lifetime. Be a giver of love and not a receiver.

God’s kind of love is love in spite of:

- Who you are,
- Your weaknesses,
- Your bad habits and character,

- Poverty or wealth,
- Sickness or health,
- Deformity,
- Social status and
- Academic attainments.

True love looks beyond material things into the heart to establish a link. With this kind of love in operation people can put up with the weaknesses of those they are in relationship with and bear the unexpected that will come up.

When searching for a partner look beyond the facial looks. Look beyond the figure. Look beyond the size of his pocket. Look out for this love that comes from God. That is what you need to make your relationship succeed.

LOVE IS PATIENT

This love of God is patient. It is this love that enables God to bear with us despite our failures. This same love He planted in us to enable us bear with each other and patiently wait upon each other to improve and overcome our weaknesses. Anyone who claims to love someone and has no patience with that person is not sincere in his love. Let this love work in you patience so you can enjoy your life with the one you love. Relationship without patience will lead to chaos.

OTHER QUALITIES OF THIS LOVE

Love is kind. Love does not envy. Love does not boast. Love is not proud. Love is not rude. Love is not self-seeking. Love is not easily angered. Love keeps no records of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. Love always protects. Love always trusts. Love always hopes. Love always perseveres. Love never fails. (1Cor.13: 4-8)

Anyone with this kind of love operating in him or her will certainly make a good spouse. Nurture this love, which is in you as a nature, and make it take over your life. Give it expression and you will love what you will see. Let this nature influence your thoughts, words and actions.

True love is different from Erotic love, which is being manifested today by many. Erotic love is sexual love. Most of the relationships we see these days are all centered on sex. That is why people who hardly know each other end up in bed together sometimes on the first day of their meeting. Today the dressing of the world is for sex appeal, the advertising world has also added to their advert productions sex undertones. So many people go into love for the sex not for true love. And that is why we have so many broken marriages and homes today. True love keeps relationships alive when all else fails.

THE LOVE AFFAIR

Every relationship should be born out of real love. Love at first sight is not enough to build a relationship on. That you like him does not mean you should go to bed with him. When starting a relationship, sex should be forgotten completely. Sex is only for the married. Sex outside of marriage is called adultery or fornication depending on who is involved. Concentrate on knowing the person who has gotten your attention to test the quality of love in his or her heart.

Love must be based on realities and not on assumptions. Don't be blind to the things you ought to see and give attention to. Don't assume the person will change when you know clearly that this person does not see anything wrong with him or her, and is neither making effort to

change. Change starts from within a man. So if there is no desire to change, don't assume he or she will do differently especially now that the relationship is at its beginning stage.

You cannot fall in love with just anybody. You are only permitted by the word of God to relate with a Christian.

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate’, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. ‘I will be a father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,’ says the Lord.”(2Cor. 6:14:18)

Maintain a Christian relationship based on the word of God. In your friendship and courtship avoid this danger zones: Avoid meeting in lonely times and places. Avoid extreme closeness. Avoid embracing, kissing and caressing. Avoid undressing and dressing in each other's presence. Keep away from sex before marriage. The above counsel will help you stay away from sex before marriage.

THE ADVANTAGES OF NO SEX BEFORE MARRIAGE

- Protection of faith and testimony.
- Lasting mutual trust after marriage.
- Excitement of honeymoon.
- Exploration and consummation.
- Holy living.
- Heavenly blessings on marriage.