

# God's Love | Make Disciples

Do you know that God is Love?

## 1. God's Love is Real!

*16 "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. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. - John 3:16-17 (NIV)*

That verse should make us cheer! God is so good! He loves us so much!

- God's love caused God to sacrifice His only Son!
- The greatest picture of Love is Jesus dying on the cross!

*More Scriptures:*

*But God **demonstrates his own love** for us in this: While we were still sinners, **Christ died for us**. - Romans 5:8 (NIV)*

*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. - 1 John 3:16*

*9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 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 4:9-10*

- How did God communicate His love for mankind?
- He gave us His only Son to die for our sins!

**The Picture of Love and the Symbol of Love is the CROSS!**

It should fill our hearts with wonder; that God loves us so much that He gave His only Son Jesus to save us from our sins!

*How **great is the love** the Father has **lavished on us**, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! - 1 John 3:1 (NIV)*

## 2. If you receive the Love of God, you will give the Love of God.

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.** 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 18 Dear children, let us **not love** with **words or tongue** but with **actions and in truth.** - 1 John 3:16-18 (NIV)

**Reflect:** Take a moment to put this verse in your own words.

11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; **but if we love one another,** God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. - 1 John 4:11-12 (NIV)

### If we know the Love of God, we will show the Love of God

- Walk in love... walk in God
- Abide in love... abide in God
- Live in love... live in God

*The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. - 1 John 4:8 (NASB)*

*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. - 1 John 4:16 (NIV)*

19 We love because he first loved us. 20 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. 21 And he has given us **this command:** Whoever loves God **must also love his brother.** - 1 John 4:19-21 (NIV)

**Reflect:** Take a moment to put this verse (1 John 4:19-21) in your own words.

- God is the initiator of love
- God is the cause of love
- If you hate the people in your life, you are not loving God
- God gives us a command to love the people in our lives

*The Bible is clear:* Those who love God must love people. Human people with all their faults and failures. With all their good and bad attitudes. Those we like and find it easy to love and those we find it hard to love!

**Love is not a side issue, it is a priority!**

### 3. The Bible is So Simple - Two Commandments

36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" 37 Jesus replied: **"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."** 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: **'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." - Matthew 22:36-40 (NIV)

1. **Love God**
2. **Love your neighbor**

### 4. What is Love?

4 Love is **patient**, love is **kind**. It **does not envy**, it **does not boast**, it **is not proud**. 5 It **is not rude**, it **is not self-seeking**, it is **not easily angered**, it **keeps no record of wrongs**. 6 Love **does not delight in evil** but **rejoices with the truth**. 7 It always **protects**, always **trusts**, always **hopes**, always **perseveres**. - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

1. Love is patient (when you are not patient - you are not loving)
2. Love is kind (when you are not kind - you are not loving)
3. Love does not envy (when you are envious - you are not loving)
4. Love does not boast (when you are boasting - you are not loving)
5. Love is not proud (when you act pridefully - you are not loving)
6. Love is not rude (when you are rude - you are not loving)
7. Love is not self-seeking (when you are self-seeking - you are not loving)
8. Love is not easily angered (when you are easily angered - you are not loving)
9. Love keeps no record of wrongs (when you are always remembering someone's past failures and mistakes - you are not loving)

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

- Love is very practical in how we relate to others.
- Love fosters attitudes like being kind, forgiving, and patient.

**Reflect:** Which one of these 9 traits of love is the hardest for you to practice in your daily life? \_\_\_\_\_

**Pray:** *Let's Pray for each other that we would show love in our lives to the people that need it most and deserve it least!*

## 5. Two Stories of Love

Jesus would often teach by way of parables. A parable is a story with a moral and or an important lesson.

### Story #1: Who is the neighbor that we need to love?

30 Jesus replied with a story: "**A Jewish man** was traveling on a trip from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

31 "By chance **a priest** came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. 32 **A Temple assistant** walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

33 "Then a **despised Samaritan** came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. 34 Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. 35 The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.' - Luke 10:30-35 (NLT)

#### Three people saw this hurting man

1. A Priest
2. A Temple Assistant or a Levite
3. A Samaritan (looked down on as unclean)

36 "Now which of these three would you say **was a neighbor** to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. 37 The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "**Yes, now go and do the same.**" - Luke 10:36-37 (NLT)

- What does love do? It reaches people in their points of need.
- Who should we love? Those who are hurting the most.
- We need to show love to the people that need it most and deserve it least!

**Reflect:** *Is love in this story complicated or simple?*

## Story #2: The love of the Father

11 To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: "A man had two sons. 12 The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

13 "A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there **he wasted all his money in wild living.** 14 About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. 15 He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. 16 The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.

17 "When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! 18 **I will go home to my father** and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, 19 and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant."

20 "So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, **his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion,** he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. 21 His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.'

22 "But his father said to the servants, '**Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet.** 23 And kill the calf we have been fattening. **We must celebrate with a feast,** 24 for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began. - Luke 15:11-24 (NLT)

This parable goes on to tell the story of the older brother, which I encourage you to read, but for this lesson we are going to focus on the father and the younger brother.

- The boy was disrespectful, rude, sinful, and worthy of the father's disapproval and punishment.
- But the son remembered the kindness and the character of his father.

When his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him.

- No lecture just love
- No chastising just love

The young son was not worthy of mercy and forgiveness but that's what love does!

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The father fully brought him back into the family not as a slave or a servant but as a full-fledged member of the family!

The young son was undeserving of the father's kindness and forgiveness, but that is the heart of our heavenly Father.

**Reflect:** *How does it make you feel that God loves you so much?*

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## **Conclusion:**

We have been given forgiveness and mercy from God and He calls all His children to share in the same level of love and kindness to the ones who need it the most but deserve it the least!

Jesus teaches us that loving those who are hurting and suffering is loving Him!

**Mother Teresa said,**  
***“Loving the needy was loving Jesus with skin on!”***

## **Three Powerful Truths:**

- 1. God is the creator, initiator, and sustainer of love!**
- 2. Our highest priority is to love God with all that is in us!**
- 3. We love God through loving others, especially those in need!**

*Ephesians chapter 3 teaches us to pray that we would be rooted and grounded in love. That we would understand how wide and how long and how high and how deep God's love is. That we would experience Christ's love that is beyond knowledge!*

**PRAY**