

LOVE

Abide 04
November 11, 2018

Introduction: Love is frequently difficult. If we are honest, it's hard to love particular people, some fellow believers and even family members. Yet, as God's children we are called to love others as God loves us. In the real world, love is often conditional. "I'll love you as long as you love me back." Under those circumstances, we are 'paying for love'. This is not the love John speaks about in his letter. John is describing a love whose foundation goes to the very character and nature of God – a timeless love. Are you ready to take the challenge to love others as Jesus loves us?

Scripture Reading: 1 John 4:19-5:2

I. The Difficulty of the Word 'Love'.

Agape - to love, to regard with affection, loving concern, love

The definition of love is defined by God's character and nature...

*Anyone who does not love **does not know God**, because **God is love** (1 John 4:8).*

... and demonstrated by the life of Jesus.

*And we know that **the Son of God has come and has given us understanding**, so that we may **know him** who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. **He is the true God and eternal life** (1 John 5:20).*

II. God's Love is Unconditional

*"For God **so loved the world**, that **he gave** his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).*

III. Unconditional Love

¹⁹ **We love because he first loved us.** ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who **does not love his brother** whom he has seen **cannot love God** whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him: **whoever loves God must also love his brother.** ¹ Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who **loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.** ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we **love God and obey his commandments** (1 John 4:19–5:2).

³⁷ And he said to him, "You shall **love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall **love your neighbor as yourself.** ⁴⁰ **On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets**" (Matthew 22:37–40).

IV. Those Difficult to Love.

- A. How can I extend myself, with all my vulnerabilities and insecurities, into the life of this person regardless of the outcome?
- B. How can I truly act with the deepest of love toward this person without partiality?
- C. Do I often choose to protect their feelings and emotions to avoid discomfort?
- D. What boundaries should I set with this person?
- E. When wronged or neglected, am I willing to love them (and myself) enough to let go of the anger and resentment, even if they don't apologize?

⁸ *Owe no one anything, except to **love each other**, for **the one who loves another** has **fulfilled the law**.* ⁹ *For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**"* ¹⁰ ***Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law** (Romans 13:8–10).*

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Scripture Reading: 1 John 4:19-5:2

I. The Difficulty of the Word 'Love'.

The definition of love is defined by God's _____ and _____...
(1 John 4:8)

... and _____ by the life of _____. (1 John 5:20)

II. God's Love is Unconditional (John 3:16)

III. Unconditional Love (1 John 4:19-5:2) (Matthew 22:37-40)

IV. Those Difficult to Love.

A. How can I extend myself, with all my _____ and _____,
into the life of this person regardless of the _____?

B. How can I truly act with the deepest of love toward this person without _____?

C. Do I often choose to protect their _____ and _____ to
avoid _____?

D. What _____ should I set with this person?

E. When _____ or _____, am I willing to love them (and
myself) enough to let go of the _____ and _____, even if
they don't _____? (Romans 13:8-10)