

THIS  
IS  
LOVE



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## THIS Is Love

In America today, 50% of all marriages end in divorce. 60% of all young people in divorced families feel rejected by at least one parent. 81% of teens say feeling isolated and lonely was a factor leading to attempted suicide. Why? Because we have forgotten how to love. This world portrays a lousy picture of love. The "love" shown in television's soap operas is not real love. The "love" being displayed in the average family is not even close to what REAL love should be like. Today there are a lot more people who really wish to be loved than there are people who are willing to really love! So many people have never known the reality of what true love is. What does the Bible mean when it commands us to: "Love thy neighbor", or "love your brother"? What is true love? In order to find out, we must take love apart, and look at it from the inside out.

Compassion is the heart of love. The word compassion can best be described as concern for the sufferings of others with the desire to help. Jesus Christ had compassion on a lost world; "But thou O Lord art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." God's Word commands us to have compassion on others; "And of some have compassion, making a difference." (Jude 22)

Real love will see the wounds and hurts and needs of others, and will be concerned and ready to help. A. J. Gordon once said; "I have long since ceased to pray, "Lord Jesus, have compassion on a lost world." I remember the day when I seemed to hear the Lord rebuking me for making such a prayer. He seemed to say to me, "I have had compassion upon a lost world, and now it is time for YOU to have compassion. I have given my heart and my life, now give yours!"

Jesus Christ loved you and me, and His heart was broken with compassion. When was the last time your heart was broken with compassion for the needs of others?

While compassion is the heart of love, Kindness is love in action. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind." (I Corinthians 13:4) "The desire of a man is his kindness." (Proverbs 19:22) Jesus was the kindest person who ever lived. Everywhere He went, He constantly showed acts of kindness and mercy, acts of REAL Love! It has been said, "One can pay back the loan of gold, but one dies forever in debt to those who are kind." Kindness is the only language the deaf can hear, the blind can see, and the dumb can understand. Whenever we come in contact with another person, we have an opportunity to show kindness.

General Marquis de Lafayette was a Frenchman. He helped General Washington when the colonies were fighting for freedom. After the war, Lafayette went back to France. In 1824 he returned to the United States. An old soldier went up to him and asked, "Sir, do you remember me?" "No." Lafayette replied. "Do you remember the cold frosts and snow of Valley Forge?" asked the soldier. "One bitterly cold night," he continued, "when you were making your rounds, you came upon a sentry who was freezing to death. You took his gun, and said, 'Go to my hut. There you will find warm clothes, a blanket, and a fire. After warming yourself, bring the blanket to me. Meanwhile, I will keep guard for you.' When the soldier returned to you, you cut the blanket in two. One piece you kept, the other you gave to that sentry." Tears ran down the cheeks of that old soldier as he said, "General, here is that half of the blanket. I am the sentry whose life you saved!"

That my friend, is the evidence of REAL love! Kindness to others is often difficult for us, but that is love in action.

Kindness is love doing little things, things that seem scarcely worth doing, and yet mean so much to those for whom they are done. Kindness lends a hand when another is burdened. It speaks a cheerful word when a heart is discouraged. It gives a cup of cold water when one is thirsty. It is always doing good things for others. True love does all of this without ever asking or expecting anything in return. Love never asks, "How much do I have to do?" but, "How much can I do, and when and how can I do more?"

Then, sacrifice is the service of love. True love will give up much for others. God loved us so much that He gave His only Son. "And walk in love, as Christ hath also loved us, and hath given himself for us..." (Ephesians 5:2) Real love doesn't count the costs, but the opportunities.

William Gladstone, in announcing the death of Princess Alice to the House of Commons, told a touching story. The little daughter of the Princess was seriously ill with diphtheria. The doctors told the Princess not to kiss her little daughter and endanger her life by breathing the child's breath. Once when the child was struggling to breathe, the mother, forgetting herself entirely, took the little girl into her arms to keep her from choking to death. Gasping and fighting for her life, the child said, "Mamma, kiss me!" Without thinking of herself, the Princess kissed her daughter.

From that kiss, she also got diptheria, and later also died. That is love!

Real love doesn't consider self. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it;" (Song of Solomon 8:7) As long as we really love, we will serve, we will give, we will sacrifice for others.

Duty makes us do things well, but love will make us do them beautifully! You may give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

Those who deserve love the least need it the most. True love doesn't look at the color, the size, the financial status, or the worth of its objects. Jesus Christ loved the entire world, and that is what true love is. If we would love the way we ought, what a difference and change would take place in our lives and in this world.

THAT MY FRIENDS IS LOVE!

In South Carolina several years ago, the chaplain led Tom Counce the last 13 steps to the electric chair, as he recited the 23rd Psalm. As they removed his shirt, tattooed across his chest were the words; "BORN TO LOSE". His last words were, "I had hoped before I died, that I could find just one person in this world, whom I knew for sure loved me." How can it be that a man can be born and live for 29 years, and then die with those words?

We live in a cruel world. A world where most people are completely wrapped up in themselves. A world that desperately needs to know TRUE LOVE! What are you doing about it?