

What Is Love?

We often hear the word “**love**” bantered around and, more times than not, the way it is spoken has the depth of a shadow on a cloudy day. In other words, it is used without real meaning or understanding. Often the phrase, “I **love** you” is used by people who expect something in return. There are many questions that we could ask such as “Where does **love** come from?”; “What is the basis for **love**?”; “What is the result of **love**?” These questions and so many more. To get honest answers to our questions, we need an authoritative source to turn to so, let’s turn to the Word of God, the Bible.

To properly understand what **love** is, we need to look at God because He is **love**. The phrase “God is **love**” appears two times in Scripture; I John 4:8 and I John 4:16. Real **love**, the **love** that gives without expecting anything of any kind in return, originates from the heart of God because He is **love**.

God created everything that exists including planet earth and everything on it. He also created the entire universe. “In the beginning God created [made everything out of nothing] the heaven and the earth.” {Genesis 1:1} In the creation process, God created humans when He created Adam, the first human being. When God created Adam, He breathed into him the breath of life and Adam became a living soul. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” {Genesis 2:7} From Adam God created Eve. {Genesis 2:21-23}

Lucifer was once an archangel in Heaven but, he wanted to exalt himself above God and for that, he was expelled from Heaven. {Isaiah 14:12-14} Since then he has been known by many names of which the most common is Satan and has appeared in many forms. In the Garden of Eden, he appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent and caused her to question what God had said. God had given Adam the command NOT to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If he did eat of this tree, the penalty was death. {Genesis 2:17} [this included immediate spiritual death and eventual physical death] Eve listened to Satan and ate of this tree and then gave the fruit to Adam to eat. {Genesis 3:6} Because of their disobedience to God, Adam and Eve immediately died spiritually and now had a sinful nature; this is when sin came into the realm of ALL humanity. What does all of this have to do with **love**? Please read on!

Man, generically speaking, is an eternal soul and, as such, will live eternally but the question remains: Where in eternity; in the place the Bible calls Hell or in Heaven with God? There is no place in between. Luke, Chapter 16 {vss. 22-31} tells of a man who went to hell and is tormented in a flame. Revelation speaks of people who are “cast into the lake of fire.” {20:15} There is a consequence for being a sinner and, that consequence is death. “For the wages of sin is death;” {Romans 6:23 a} “...shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord ...” {2 Thessalonians 1:9} The Bible clearly says that every person who does not know Jesus Christ as personal Saviour is, at this very moment, under the wrath of God as a condemned soul. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” {John 3:36} “...he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” {John 3:18} The thought of eternal damnation is not pleasant and yet, this is what God has said in His Word. What does all of this have to do with **love**? Please read on!

God **loves** every soul so much that He made a provision for salvation and, that provision is the person of Jesus Christ. “For **God so loved the world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” {John 3:16} Even though we are sinners and alienated from God, He still “... **commendeth his love toward us**, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” {Romans 5:8} It was **God’s love** for us even though we are

a wretched bunch, that motivated Him to provide for our salvation. “Hereby perceive we the **love** of God, because he laid down his life for us:” {1 John 3:16 a} “In this was manifested the **love** of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is **love**, not that we **loved** God, but that he **loved** us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” {1 John 4:9-10} If we are as bad as the Bible says we are, then why doesn’t God just take us out? It is because of His great **love** for us and the fact that He “... is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” {2 Peter 3:9 b} Our redemption [salvation] was made possible when Jesus shed His blood and died on the Cross of Calvary for us. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:” {1 Peter 1:18-19}

Friend, have you experienced the **love** of God by repenting of sin and, by faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, trusted Him as your personal Saviour? If you will repent and call on Him, He will hear and forgive you. “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” {Romans 10:13} Now you know what **love** is; real **love** that is! God said it and that settles it – you just need to believe it.

~Richard A. Ciarrocca/2018

All Scripture references are KJV