

From The Pastor's Study Is God's Love Real

Love is the glue that holds us together; whether it is playful love, brotherhood or a love that is soul deep declaring that you will give your life for someone else out of love. Without love there is chaos and war. Love was so important to Jesus during his ministry on earth that many of his teachings and sermons were based on love. There are 597 times love shows up in scripture, of those 231 show up in the New Testament. That tells me love is the basis of much scripture.

In the stat of Virginia since 2010 there have been over 5,000 cases of domestic violence each year, people who “loved” one another physically bring harm to those people. I have been through the Bible at least three times and I can't find anywhere that scripture says “If you love them, hurt them.”

“I love you” has almost become “Goodbye” and has lost much of it's meaning, not heartfelt, just words. So, how do we deal within families where love has become anger and rage; where children fear instead of love. I was raised in one of those households though that rage never reached me, my mother made sure of that. But not every child is so lucky.

What would Jesus have done if He saw a husband abuse his wife, or a parent abuse a child? He called down His disciples when they attempted to keep children from approaching Him. He spoke sharply to the leaders of the time when he saw them abusing the people, I am very certain He would have some very harsh words for someone who abused someone less than themselves. He never spoke of hate or rage except to reject it. Even in the garden when He was arrested He ordered His disciples to stand down.

Last week the FAQ was “Is God Real?” If you came to the determination that God isn't real, asking if God loves you is pretty senseless but if you decided that God *is* real the question is mute because God is love.

Why would God not love his creation? An artist paints a picture, how does he feel about it? He has taken a blank canvas and with each loving stroke of the brush he changes the canvas, bringing it to life. Certainly he must love his creation. A woman takes a log, removes the bark and begins to chisel away parts of the wood and continues until her creation moves from a simple log to a beautiful rendition of a Bald Eagle. How can they not fall in love with these creations?

Do you have a pet or have you had one? That cute little puppy comes into the house and every day love for it grows deeper. Puppies are cute for a reason, they make us fall in love with them as they move from family pet to part of the family almost as much as one of the children. That cute little kitten comes purring into your life until you can't imagine your home without that little bundle of fur.

Even inanimate objects become a part of us. A friend of mine loves her collection of stuffed pets and the lighted flamingo in her garden has a name. She loves all of them as though they are living breathing animals. While this might not be your cup of tea, this is a real thing. My favorite aunt was deep in the throws of dementia and missed her dog, her daughters bought a beautiful stuffed puppy. I don't know whether she recognized it wasn't a real pup, but her love for it was certainly real.

God's love shows throughout His creation, He created us to love, he didn't create us to fight, to kill, to hate, He is love therefor His creation was built to love. Love can be powerful or fragile; it can bring us joy or cause pain but the love of God endures all things.

⁴ *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant*

⁵ *or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;*

⁶ *it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.*

⁷ *Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

⁸ *Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. **1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (ESV)***

Don't forget **John 3:16 (ESV)**

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

Once again love is shown, God's love for us so great He sacrificed His Son. His love is eternal and can't be destroyed, only we can stop feeling God's love for His creation. We are called to love just as Jesus loves.