

IMA Video Connect every 3rd Thursday of each month at 10AM Central Time. Contact IMA Home Office for more info.



Connect with IMA on social media: Facebook, Instagram & Twitter using @imaministers

If you would like to post IMA events or articles, please send information to IMA Home Office two months in advance.

Quotable Quotes

"The sin underneath all our sins is to trust the lie of the serpent that we cannot trust the love and grace of Christ and must take matters into our own hands." ~ Martin Luther

"I have given God countless reasons not to love me. None of them has been strong enough to change Him." ~ Paul Washer

"Though we are incomplete, God loves us completely. Though we are imperfect, He loves us perfectly. Though we may feel lost and without compass, God's love encompasses us completely. ...He loves every one of us, even those who are flawed, rejected, awkward, sorrowful, or broken." ~ Dieter F. Uchtdorf

"Satan loves to take what is beautiful and ruin it. God loves to take what's ruined and make it beautiful." ~ Taken

"When the time comes for you to die, you need not be afraid, because death cannot separate you from God's love." ~ Charles H. Spurgeon

"The love of God is not created—it is His nature." ~ Oswald Chambers

"God is unchanging in His love. He loves you. He has a plan for your life. Don't let the newspaper headlines frighten you. God is still sovereign; He's still on the throne." ~ Billy Graham

"The shape of true love isn't a diamond. It's a cross." ~ Taken

"No matter what storm you face, you need to know that God loves you. He has not abandoned you." ~ Franklin Graham

"Disappointment and failure are not signs that God has forsaken you or stopped loving you. The devil wants you to believe God no longer loves you, but it isn't true. God's love for us never fails." ~ Billy Graham

"God loves each of us as if there were only one of us." ~ Augustine

"Beloved, God has never failed to act but in goodness and love. When all means fail—His love prevails. Hold fast to your faith. Stand fast in His Word. There is no other hope in this world." ~ David Wilkerson

SPECIAL NOTE

The IMA National Board has made the decision to allow its members to choose whether they would like to receive the IMA Proclaim Newsletter via email or as a hard copy through mail. It is the intent of the National Board to make the newsletter easily accessible for all members to both receive and read the IMA articles, announcements, and information as is included in our monthly publication. Each member will have the opportunity to select their preferred method on the 2022 Renewal Forms, which you should have already received. Thank you for indicating your preference and for taking the time to read the IMA Proclaim monthly publication newsletter.

Relational Actional Missional

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PROCLAIM

FEBRUARY 2022

God's Love

By Madelyn Shields



"The love of God is greater far, than tongue or pen can ever tell, it goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell." The lyrics of this beautiful, timeless song resonates across my heart as I think about God's love. How does one explain something so intense, so incredible, so amazing as God's love?

It is written in John 15:13, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." God was willing to give His only begotten Son on a cruel cross of Calvary to resuscitate the entire world of lost souls. God's love for us is expressed in the great price He paid at Calvary, bearing the rage that our sins deserve. "God proves His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us!" (Rom. 5:8).

God's love is all consuming, bringing forgiveness. God's love is dynamic, tangible, and action-oriented. God's love is emotional. Jesus wept, because He loved. He searched for that one lost sheep, because He loved. He taught us that our love must be active, not in word only. 1 John 4:16 tells us, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Mercifully, there is nowhere we can go to escape His love.

Not only does God love us, but He adds numerous benefits (Psalm 103). We have all been touched by the lov-



ing hand of God and a recipient spiritually, physically, emotionally, mentally, and everlastingly. God's love is goodness bringing out the best in humanity.

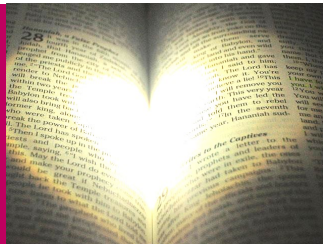
When I was about three years old, Mother and I were shopping at a Kresge Dime store. Mother was busy looking at the house dresses and I wandered off looking at the other things. I could barely get my nose above the counters, standing on my tiptoes. Suddenly, I realized that I had wandered too far from my mother; I was lost! I could not see her and I frantically began searching the aisles, crying loudly, "Mother, Mother," over and over. I had wandered too far and was in a maze. Mother, who was looking for me, heard my cry and came, taking me into her loving arms and hugging me tight saying, "Here I am."

After all these years, I can still feel the comfort and overwhelming peace that swept over me. I wasn't lost any longer; Mother had found me. That is the way God is. He loves us so much that He searches for us, finds us, then hugs us in His arms. He dries our tears of fear, anxiety, hurt, worry and concern from being lost in sin, sorrow, grief, and loneliness while searching for His everlasting love and mercy. God's magnanimous love is a continuous flow of hope seasoned with Grace and Mercy. God's Love never changes or fails. Love is a gift from God that keeps on giving, because GOD IS LOVE.



True Love

By Rev. Dr. Paul Todd



Have you ever read a word in the Bible that makes you wonder what it is doing there? Well I did. I'm from the "old school," so I was using the King James translation. Finding it in King James even made the word more peculiar. Positioned glaringly among the "thees" and "thous" was a five syllabled word. Who would have thought that a translation published in 1611 would contain such a word? This word is unusual, because it is only used twice in the entire translation. I do not recall ever using this word in a sermon or conversation. It is a word that reflects brightly on the meaning of true love.

Someone is saying: "What is the word?" I read it in Romans 12:9—

*"Let love, be without **dissimulation**."*

Basically, dissimulation means to mislead others as a fiction or fabrication. You might say that to love with dissimulation is the opposite of true love. It seems that the Apostle Paul is exhorting Christians about their walk and conduct. In Verse 9, he addresses love and uses the negative word "dissimulation" to reinforce the positive of true love.

Words mean something. It is words that we use to communicate. It seems to me, that the word "love" is bantered around so much in our language that perhaps the meaning of true love has been diluted. Just listen to what people say: I love my car, my boat, dress, shoes,

and picture, on and on.

In a sense, the official definition of love does allow for attachments and admiration for things. However, shouldn't we, as Christians, be careful with throwing that word "love" around? Perhaps it would be better to say: "I appreciate," "I enjoy," even "I like." An old song written in 1936 says, "Be sure it's true when you say I love you." The song goes on to say, "Millions of hearts have been broken, just because these words were spoken."

The Apostle Paul says that Christian love is to be "without dissimulation." Then, it seems, that there is an expectation of true love or love that is true. Much of the month of February will focus on love and many people will give cards, letters, flowers and presents because of Valentine's Day. It is a good time to remember what Jesus said,

*"That ye **love** one another as I have **loved** you" (John 13:34).*

This Valentine's season can serve as a reminder to show love to one another. Jesus loved with True Love. Let's do the same!



From the Home Office

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Greetings and blessings to you!

Renewal season is underway! By now you should have received your annual membership renewal notice. If you haven't already, please be sure to get that filled out and sent in to us as soon as you can so that we can get your 2022 membership card back to you as quickly as possible.

To expedite processing and shipping times and to avoid the current USPS delays, we encourage you to renew online at imainfo.org/2022-renewals if you are able. Feel free to contact us by phone, text, or email if you have any questions or need assistance in the renewal process. Thank you so much for being part of the IMA!

Sincerely, Rev. Sean Alexander, Member Services Coordinator

Walking in Love

By Rev. Chad Hayes; National Chairman



We live in a time in which love is a rare commodity. We can see this as we make our way through traffic on a busy day. Aggressive drivers cutting one another off, shaking their fists and breathing threats. In the political arena, we are more divided than ever. It seems that politicians grow more and more divisive every day. As this spills over into the public, it manifests in violence and rioting.

If you are a student of the Word, these things are really not all that surprising. Astonishing? Yes! However, for those of us who know the Word, we know to look for these things. Both Jesus and the Apostle Paul warned us that these things would be signs of our times.

When asked about the time of His return, Jesus indicates that sin would produce a lovelessness when the time was near. He says, "And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold" (Matt. 24:12 ESV).

Apostle Paul, speaking of the times in which we live, said, "In the last days...men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money...unloving...lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (II Timothy 3:1-4 NKJV).

When we study these passages, we understand that the world around us is loveless. Men's hearts are waxing worse and worse, and we can expect to see this manifest around us because of sin and its ravaging effects on our culture.

In contrast to this, however, we should be appalled when this lovelessness spills over into the church. Jesus told us that love would be the distinguishing mark of His people.

John 13:34-35 (NLT) says, "So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

Over and again we are reminded in both the Gospels and the Epistles to "love one another." Sadly, however, the effects of sin spill over into the church. Too often we fail to walk in love. If we think about it, it doesn't take long for us to recall instances where we have seen lovelessness manifest in our ranks. We have all seen too many instances of unloving acts in our churches.

This ought to be concerning for us. When these things manifest in the church it is an indicator that we are walking out of step with God, and it can even be an indicator that we do not know God at all.

I John 4:20-21 (NKJV) reminds us, "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also."



With this in mind, here are some things for us to consider, which can help us to understand and grow in the love of God:

☐ Love Originates With God

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God" (I John 4:7 NKJV).

God Himself is love. Apart from Him, we cannot know love or live our lives with love at the center. We can only know and demonstrate love because He first loved us.

☐ God Demonstrates His Love

"God **showed** how much he loved us by sending His one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him" (1 John 4:9 NLT).



God Himself has shown us what true love is, ultimately in sending His Son Jesus. If we look to Him and walk with Him, we can know love and we can be used of God to demonstrate His love to a lost and broken world.

☐ God's Love Is Deeper Than We Can Fathom

"This is real love—not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us **that much**, we surely ought to love each other" (1 John 4:10-11 NLT).

When we contemplate the love that God has demonstrated towards us, it is hard to comprehend. That God loved us when we were so unlovely is beyond belief. As we experience this kind of love it has a transforming effect on our hearts. The love of God compels us to love. We love, because He first loved us.

As we read through these passages of Scripture, we clearly see the importance of walking in love. Only when we comprehend and encounter the love of God, can we avoid becoming loveless ourselves.