

WORD

⁴Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never ends. . . . 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8

Love is, perhaps, the most talked-about topic in our world today. We sing songs, read books, watch movies, and even listen to radio programs about it. We've also encountered a degree of love in our own personal lives: with our family and friends, and even in the romantic relationships we may or may not have had. But what does "real love" look like? To know what real, lasting, enduring love looks like, we will look at what the Bible says.

1 Love is selfless.

⁴Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful . . . 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4,5

Real love is being mindful of others and setting aside our own needs and wants for their benefit. It is a daily decision we need to make, and is not dependent on feelings. Jesus exemplified His great love for us once for all by dying on the cross and restoring us to a right relationship with God (John 15:13). How does the Apostle Paul encourage us to follow Jesus' example of selflessness? (Philippians 2:3,4)

2 Love is sacred.

. . . it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. **1 CORINTHIANS 13:6**

Another facet of real love is honoring and obeying God's Word in all our relationships. The Bible is the ultimate standard of truth in our lives. We learn about real love by reading and applying His Word—not by following the patterns of the world (Romans 12:1,2). How does an understanding of God's Word help us live pure and holy lives? (Psalm 119:9)

3 Love is steadfast.

⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never ends. . . . **1 CORINTHIANS 13:7,8**

Despite our sin, God continues to love us unceasingly and remains faithful to us—and the right response to His love is putting our trust in and following Him. In the same way, we can love others with a steadfast, enduring love because God *first loved us* (1 John 4:19). How did God show His love to us, through Jesus? (Romans 5:8)

APPLICATION

- The Bible says that *“knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up . . .* (1 Corinthians 8:1). Knowing this truth, share how you can specifically build others up this week.
- What’s one selfless thing you can do to show God’s love to a family member or friend this week?
- What does *“steadfast love”* look like, in your own context? How can you put this into action starting today?

PRAYER

- Thank God for sending Jesus to die on the cross for us, and setting an example of love for us to follow. Pray that God would use you to show His love to others.
- Pray that you would love selflessly. Ask God to make you more like Him every day.
- Ask God for a heart that loves others the way Christ does (1 John 4:10,11). Pray for wisdom, grace, and boldness to act on your faith.



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