

- **\*Read I Corinthians 13:4-7\*** I feel pretty confident in saying that every woman here is well aware of what today is, and that at least some men here are about to have a mini freak out in their heads because they didn't realize that today is Valentine's Day. The wonderful day full of chocolates, candy, flowers, and just a little bit of love. The roots of Valentine's Day are not known for sure, but February has always been associated and known as the month of romance. Thus, it makes sense for the holiday associated with love to take place within this month of romance.
- Love is a funny thing. If you ask 10 different people to explain love, then you will probably get about 11 different answers. The world would tell us that love is one thing, while I believe that God's Word would teach us that love is something very different. The truth is that most people wouldn't describe love as God does in **I Corinthians 13:4-7**. This morning, I would like for us to consider the subject of love according to God. We might know love according to people, but what is love according to God?

## **I. The world seeks to distort true love.**

A. Satan is truly behind these efforts to distort true love in the minds of people.

1. On a day such as today in Valentine's Day, we look all around us and what do people associate with love? They associate those things I mentioned earlier...candy, chocolate, flowers, and other things that can be bought with money. The world has turned love into something that is bought. Last year, American's spent \$18.9 billion dollars on Valentines Day gifts. Nothing wrong with gifts, but they are not the true essence of love.
2. Others would say that love means that you allow others to do whatever they want because telling them no is unloving and it restricts their true desires and wishes.
3. But I'd say that the most popular lie that we are told in regards to love is when it is purported to us that love is nothing more than a state of being, feeling, or an emotion. This facade of love is empty and void, but it is what this world and it's ruler would have us to believe.

B. A distortion of love causes problems in the lives of man.

1. When we think that love is tied with money and physical means...then what happens when we the money runs out? What happens when we don't have the ability to give every physical want that one might desire? What results is unhappiness because we think that love is shown through what we can buy and give to another person. When we can't give as much then it might be perceived that we don't love as much.
2. When we think love is tied in with a permissive attitude then what happens when we say no? Do we no longer love that person? Or what happens if our permissive attitude of love allows them to do something that gets them hurt? If we ever say no then it must be that we don't love that person anymore.
3. Finally, what happens when we believe that love is just an emotion and a feeling? The major problem is that emotions and feelings quickly fade and change. Love that is nothing more than a feeling is shallow and can come and go as it pleases. It is not a fulfilling love.
4. The love that the world propagates is not true love. It is a cheap version of it, and if we want to know and enjoy true love then we must turn to God.

## **II. Love originates from the mind of God**

A. God is love, and love radiates from Him.

1. Everything about God goes back to the concept of love and the fact that He is love. He created us out of love, and to the extent that He made us in His own image. He sustains us out of His love. He saves us out of His perfect love. For God so LOVED the world that He gave His only begotten Son. **(John 3:16)**
2. The text that really sums up this idea that God is love, that He is the source of love, and also includes the message of **John 3:16** is **I John 4:7-12**.
3. God is love and if one wants to love then he must do so according to the love that God possesses.

B. God has shown us through His own actions and the Scriptures that love is so much more than just a feeling or a state of being.

1. In both **John 3 & I John 4**, God teaches us that His love is a love of action. He loved us enough to show us His love through the giving of His Son, Jesus Christ. And then Jesus showed His love through the giving of Himself for the church. **(Eph. 5:25)**

2. God expects for us to love as He loves. He expects for us to show our love who our actions, and we know this for certain because God in the flesh said so in **John 14:15**.
3. So if love is more than just a feeling, if it is more than money, if it is more than an attitude....if it is action ,then we must determine what type of actions love exhibits.

### **III. God has defined for us the true qualities of love.**

- A. As with all things, God has the right to dictate the true nature of love.
  1. Because of His sovereign nature, His ultimate power as the creator of the universe and all that is in it, God has the right to tell us what love truly is.
  2. And He also expects for us to show our love for others not just one day a year, but at all times. The love that God expects for His people to exude is a love that we should continually show through how we live our lives and how we treat others each and every day.
  3. Thankfully, God has told us exactly how our love should be manifested towards us through the writing of His inspired Biblical authors.
- B. God has defined what love does in **I Corinthians 13:4-7**.
  - 1. Love is Patient:** it endures the failures of others.
  - 2. Love Is Kind:** It is willing to help or assist others in their time of need.
  - 3. Love Is Not Jealous:** It doesn't act spitefully towards others who have been blessed.
  - 4. Love Does Not Brag:** It doesn't seek to belittle others by speaking glowingly of self.
  - 5. Love Is Not Arrogant:** It doesn't seek superiority through the way it behaves.
  - 6. Love Does Not Act Unbecomingly:** It is not rude towards its neighbor. It is polite and gracious.
  - 7. Love Does Not Seek It's Own:** It is not selfish and self serving in its endeavors to the detriment of others.
  - 8. Love Is Not Provoked:** It does not lose its cool easily, but stays cool under fire.
  - 9. Love Does Not Take Into Account A Wrong Suffered:** It is not resentful and does not hold grudge against those who have done it wrong.
  - 10. Love Does Not Rejoice In Unrighteousness:** It does not take pleasure in the sins and consequences of others.
  - 11. Love Rejoices With Truth:** It congratulates and supports those who walk according to the truth of God's Word.
  - 12. Love Bears All Things:** It bears with the shortcomings of others.
  - 13. Love Believes All Things:** It gives the benefit of the doubt without automatically thinking the worse.
  - 14. Love Hopes All Things:** It gives every effort to hope and make a situation come out with the best outcome.
  - 15. Love Endures All Things:** It is willing to bear down and endure the problems that others might bring to us through their weaknesses.

So many people would love to ignore the fact that love takes effort because it is so much more than just a feeling or an attitude. Love takes actions. Saying "I love \_\_\_\_\_" is very easy, but it takes so much more to prove that our words have weight behind them. May God help us all to embrace love according to His standards. May we love our neighbors every single day in the way that God has designated for us to love them. May God be praised and others served through our love towards them.