

ROMANCE AND LOVE

"Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me" (Ruth 1:16-17).

What is love?

- Love is an act of giving, *"love does not seek its own"* (1 Corinthians 13:5).
- Different types of love:
 - Earthly love - It is based on feelings and the desire. It can mean the love of pleasure, lust, money, food, learning, fame, or respect from others...etc. That is why this type of love is either a temporary or conditional pleasure, where giving is motivated by the desire to receive in return.
 - Christian love - It is only based on One source. It can only come from God, who commanded us as follows:
"And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question to test Him. 'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to them, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment" (Matthew 22:35-38).
- What is our goal in life?
- What we should have as a goal: LOVE – as the verse says **'Pursue love...'** 1 Corinthians 14:1. Chase it, yearn for it, If we practice love, we get a taste of heaven before heaven.

Why?

- The bible tells us 2 things: love God and love others.
- God created the world to share His love with us.
 - And when we fell, He still expressed His love for us through Salvation.
"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16).
- We love Him because He first loved us.
'God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God and God abides in them' (1 John 4:16).
- *"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another"* (John 13:34).
- *"Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I have become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understanding all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing"* (1 Corinthians 13:1-2).

Jesus is our example of love:

- Jesus Christ loved His father and demonstrated humility and obedience that guided all His life's actions.
- Jesus Christ loved all his enemies and never held a grudge against anyone, not even the ones who persecuted Him. That set a standard for what we should be like and what we should do.
- Jesus Christ did not seek to control people, but respected their freedom and helped them to grow in their beliefs.
- Jesus Christ cared and listened to others without being judgmental.
- Jesus Christ took the form of a servant to teach us and show us how to serve one another in love.
- Jesus Christ rebuked the moneychangers and the merchants from the temple out of His love for God.
- Jesus Christ's suffering and death on the cross demonstrated His love for all mankind, to free them from sin.
- Jesus Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it. And we as Christian families ought to do the same.

An expression of love

- A means of expressing the love that God has instilled within us is Marriage.
- Novatian (c. 235) eloquently wrote the answer quoted by many, "Wives are to be loved by their husbands even as Christ loved the Church. And wives should love their husbands also as the Church loves Christ."
- "*Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy, love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things*" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).
- Our purpose of courtship is marriage, only when we are at an appropriate age and stage in life.

How to obtain and grow our love?

- *Pray*: Can you imagine if you prayed with all your heart and invited God to your heart and told him that your wish is to serve Him. And that you hope to change just one life (can be your own) and that you long to be part of His body. How do you think God will respond to you?
- *Read the Holy Bible*: In order to have intimacy with God and His will for you, you need to read His words.

- *Attend church and Sunday School:* This will allow you to come more and more close to God and allow God's Spirit to guide you.
- *Follow God's plan:* Follow His plan with love, understanding, and patience.
 - Husband- leads the family to God.
 - Wife- should help her husband and respect him.
 - Children- obey and honour your parents and grow in God's love and knowledge.
- *Work as a team:* As a team, we can share joy, compassion, strength, friendship, and also help each other through difficult times.
- *Serve others:* It is genuine love that motivates us to do God's will. It is God's love and grace that is working in us to give us the power and the ability to accomplish our tasks.
- *How can we serve:* Serving others does not need any special skill. It only needs love, motivation and a heart to serve. We can
 - Visit the sick
 - Help parents at home
 - Clean the church
 - Befriend those who don't have friends

When God commands us to love Him and to love each other, His promise is that the Holy Spirit will produce that love within us if we open our heart to Him and ask him for His blessing.

And by receiving His love, we will also receive an abundance of fruits.

Supplementary material

The Father's Love

A love that is tender and kind
A love that is sacred and divine
A love that is the one I long for
A love that will bring my heart in tears
A love that will fill my heart
A love that never changes or warn out
A love that sacrificed His only Son for me
A love that strengthens me when I am weak
A love that makes me feel precious to Him
A love that teaches me to give all that I have
A love that is like the ocean which keeps growing
A love that will open my eyes to see His way
A love that always brings me down to my knees
A love that will never allow anyone to separate us from Him

Teach me O Lord

Teach me O Lord.....Let me learn Your ways

Lead me O Lord.....Let me do Your will

Search me O Lord.....Cleanse all my sins

Love me O Lord.....Let me love You