

# Love

What is 'Love'?

I believe most people would describe it as a 'feeling' you get toward something or someone similar to other feelings like anger, happiness, fear, etc. They view it as something that comes and goes like the wind, yet too such as the wind has many forms some desired (a gentle breeze on a hot summer day) while others feared or desperately sought to avoid (a hurricane or tornado).

For all the books that have been written on the subject and debates on the topic there are opinions vast and varied on the above question and I don't think we will ever achieve a 'full' understanding because its source is beyond our complete comprehension. The simple answer to the above question is: God is Love. It is birthed from Him and through Him. A gift of Himself to us. But since we cannot truly comprehend Him though as we grow in relationship, He reveals more of Himself to us still it will take forever to know Him fully if it were even possible to do so.

Yet one thing is certain which is because God 'is' Love and gives it to us as a gift then though a 'feeling' maybe associated 'with it' the feeling is **NOT** the thing (Love). Since Love is a (thing or noun) to be offered and excepted or rejected and not a feeling then why is it perceived the opposite. Perhaps because it inspires such deep emotion. It would be like saying a 'baby' was joy, or fatigue, or hope but while it evokes all of these things at varying times as our relationship with the baby evolves still it would be an inaccurate conclusion to say a baby were an emotion because while it elicits emotions it is a 'thing/person'.

The same is true of 'Love'. Like a diamond or any other gift, it 'births' a variety of emotions because we are creations of feelings/emotions that motivate us to sometimes good while other times to devastating choices and consequential actions.

Have you ever heard the saying 'Love' is a choice?

In truth when we have 'Love' it is a choice because like having a diamond do you:  
1) keep it for yourself or 2) give (share) it to someone else?

There are many types of 'Love' and we experience them in all aspects of our lives. But in the deepest parts of our beings we were created to 'be' loved and to 'give' love to others. How we offer 'Love' to others and the type of 'Love' we offer them is directly affected by our relationship with the source of 'Love' God. He is the one who understands in its entirety what it is and the effects it has on us so the closer we walk with Him the better prepared we are in perceiving His will and its use. Because like all 'gifts' it is 'given' with intent and purpose. Unfortunately if we are not walking with God in a close fellowship then we are taking His gift but trying to use it in the same way we would a car we received and trying to drive it but without the owner's manual or driver's education to help us understand its proper function.

Both examples lead to a catastrophic end because driving a car without understanding how it works and also the rules of the road ultimately would lead to serious if not devastating consequences because a car is a powerful gift filled with responsibility due to the potential impact not only to ourselves but to others around us as we use this gift. So too 'Love' is a powerful gift and when used with understanding has great potential but used without direction and instruction from its source can cause tremendous damage and harm. We need the Holy Spirit's discernment of our hearts and motivation but to the place where those are around us and how to offer this gift in a way that 'honors and glorifies' its source.

Love is a gift and we have no say in how it is received or used by the people we share it with but God's unconditional love is something we need to offer to all freely and without hesitations. This Love is not judgmental or demanding but a free gift. It is what God offers us and once we understand it in the deepest part of our beings becomes something, we cannot help but share with others because we know the freedom and joy within the bounds of this Love and wish for others to share in it. It is contagious and life changing because we are transformed from self-centered beings focused on a life of our own desires and purposes to selfless beings serving a loving God's will and plan to see 'none perish'. Though Agape Love is the most important type of love there are others like diamonds come in many forms and while all are diamonds though they may look differently so to is love.

But all forms of love require (if we want to use them as they were intended) an understanding that only God can give and outside of this the damage throughout history is clear when things are done or not done in the 'name' of Love yet in truth are far from it.

In conclusion I would say in essence 'Love' isn't a choice but **requires** one when we are in possession of it (which we all are in some forms if not all since Agape only comes from God, we cannot have this without a relationship with Him). Are we going to 'share' that form of 'Love' and if so with whom, when, where, etc.? With Agape Love the answer is simple because it is everyone, anytime, anywhere. For the other forms of love though these should and were designed to function in a specific way by God and so need to be given based on His designs often it is not the case and as a result the world has a skewed view of what 'Love' is and have been tricked into believing that the good or bad feelings associated with its use has become the thing itself. Thus it is desired or shunned based on its impact and the person associated with its giving as opposed to an understanding that it was the 'motivation of the heart' from the person who gave the 'Love' in that form which was the evil or wonderful thing to be shunned or embraced not the person (a creation of God). For we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God which is why Christ came and died for the remission of our sin making none of us worthy to judge. But we are called to reflect God's Love to the world.

Next Love is **NOT** a feeling though its use 'always' elicits emotional responses and we should be mindful in the 'form' of Love we are offering to others and its potential impact especially in light of our relationship with God.

Finally, often times the world defines 'Love' in a comparison-based perspective. One parent 'loves' their child more because they 'give' them more. Thus the 'boundaries' of love and whether or not a person has it been defined by another's perspective often associated with their needs, wants or hopes. For the parent who gives 'everything' to their child being described as the one who 'loves' their child the most and the one who doesn't as selfish and unloving. Yet unfortunately we are not equipped to judge the heart (only God sees and knows the heart of man) and as a result only He knows whether the motivation of the heart was 'loving' or not (self-serving or giving without thought of self). We find ourselves in a dangerous and perilous situation when we try to take God's place in passing judgment on a situation to which we have limited wisdom and understanding. It is always easier to judge in our favor or the favor of a friend as

we would expect from them in the same situation however, we are often deceived by our flesh and the enemy and thus why the Bible says in our current condition we see dimly. I would not want someone to operate on me in a dimly lit room because the very things they think are wrong and need to be changed or removed could be in truth what is keeping me alive like my heart or lungs. Remember in the dark our minds get twisted and imaginations run wild with what we think we hear or perceive is out there waiting to attack if we move, only in the light is the truth revealed and our fears quieted. Perfect 'Love' casts out fear because we associate fear with punishment but our punishment was already fulfilled by Christ so we have nothing to fear if we embrace the Love God gives us. Then since freely we have received freely, we need to give. Since Love is a gift we give not associated with things but action like the Good Samaritan who was noted for showing love to his neighbor by stopping to care for him when he lay beaten by the side of the road, it wasn't the 'amount' he gave to care for his neighbor but the compassion that prompted him to stop and help which was of note. When we offer love to others it may or may not live up to their expectations however that should not be the 'gauge' of loving or not and to what extent (there are other parables that address this such as the widow and the mites she gave) only God can perceive this but more importantly is 'obedience' to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and God in the situations He presents us with.