

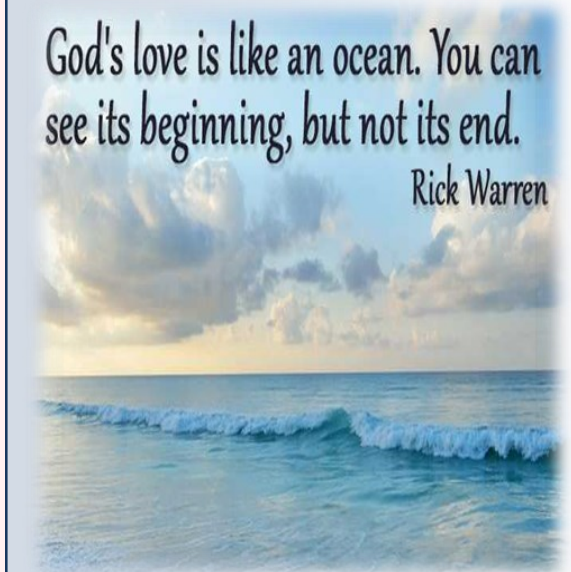
# I just can't love some people!

## Love

"Fruit of the Spirit and more. . ."

God's love is like an ocean. You can  
see its beginning, but not its end.

Rick Warren



*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16*

A pro football player is quoted as saying: *"We cannot love everyone and be loved by everyone. It would be perfection, and nothing is perfect in this world."* I feel sorry for him. There are times when it is hard to love some people but God's love is perfect and it is on this earth all the time. But if we don't know him as our Savior and Lord, it may be hard to love. If we read the

definition of love in 2 Corinthians 13 the definition of love is far different than what we think many times with our finite minds. This verse above about love says *"Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, endures all things. Love never ends"* Another passage, 1 Corinthians 13 also speaks to Love. Part of it is written below and part is also included further through this study from THE MESSAGE. It is often read at weddings and speaks of *"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal."*

Another verse in 2 John 1:6 defines love this way: *"And this is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands. As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that you walk in love"*. Is this just a feel-good verse or does Christ command that we walk in love all the time? I think there are two interpretations of this verse. We walk in His love daily, but sometimes we don't walk loving other people all the time. The love is there, we just sometimes can't get it all together. It is sometimes difficult to love certain people. We may call them the unlovely, but Christ does not see them any differently than He sees us. He loves us all the same all the time. We are told to love the sinner and hate the sin. How can we do that?

When Jesus was nearing the end of His time on this earth, many people were confused and some were angry because they saw their power dwindling.

One day Christ was speaking in parables to the crowds. Some of the Pharisees and Sadducees were a part of the crowd and they started asking questions hoping to make Christ stumble. One of the Scribes knowing the commandments asked Christ which one was the greatest. Jesus answered *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment."* Mark 12:30. But Christ didn't stop there. He issued them a challenge. It is easy to love God, but Christ continued *"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."* Mark 12:31. That one wasn't so easy. Here they were trying to trick Christ. These people thought they were in control. They were certainly better than their neighbor, but Christ told them they had to love the neighbor as they loved themselves. We have that same challenge today. Many times we also falter and think we are just a little bit better in some way.



Each person, during his or her lifetime, will learn about the most important aspect of life - love. Love is difficult to describe, but at some point, everyone will feel it. The most important kind of love is love for God - God loves you and it is unconditional, indescribable love.

No matter how good love feels it can be a confusing emotion. Attempting to understand the feelings of love can help you find a deeper, more profound love. Eugene Peterson in THE MESSAGE puts it into today's vernacular:

*“If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.*

*Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always “me first,” Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God*

*always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, but keeps going to the end. Love never dies.”*

1 Corinthians 13:3-8

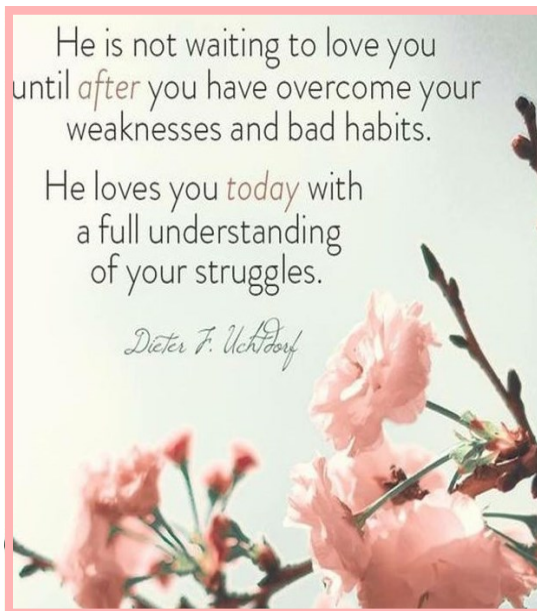


Love is a wonderful gift, but it is also a wonderful challenge for each of us. Perhaps Mother Teresa put it best *“Following Jesus is simple, but not easy. Love until it hurts, and then love more.”* God is ready to help us experience it today and forever.

He is not waiting to love you until *after* you have overcome your weaknesses and bad habits.

He loves you *today* with a full understanding of your struggles.

*Dieter F. Uchtoof*



Prayer: Dear God, You have given us so many gifts. You have told us that the gift of love is the greatest. We know that You loved us so much that you came to earth, lived among us, and then gave Your life that through this love, we may have eternal life with You. That love and eternal life is with us as soon as we accept Your love, but we are so feeble and sometimes try to do everything on our own. Help us to realize that everything is possible with Your love, and help us to show that love to others. Amen

1. How can we love the unlovely?
2. What is your definition of love?
3. Did you ever wonder why God loved us enough to come down to earth and die for our sins?
4. If we truly love, how should we act, react?

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*“A real relationship has fights, trust, faith, tears, pain, arguments, patience, secrets, jealousy and LOVE!”*



*“Love isn't about having a pretty face. Love is about having a pretty mind, a pretty heart, and a pretty soul.”*