

San Juan church of Christ

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What Does God's Word Say About... Real Love

Have you known parents who claim that they love their children too much to spank them? Have you ever known someone who tried to justify having sex outside of marriage because they loved the person? Have you ever known a Christian who would not rebuke or correct religious error because they loved others too much to hurt their feelings in this way? In each of these cases love is being blamed for something it has nothing to do with. The Bible plainly teaches that love motivates us to do exactly the opposite of what was described in each of the proceeding examples.

Love will cause us to discipline our children. "He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently" (Prov. 13:24). Proverbs also explains that parents who apply the rod of punishment drive out folly (Prov. 22:15); so that the child will not follow the path of destruction (Prov.19:18, 23:13-14). Parental discipline is rooted in love (Prov. 3:11-12).

Love demands that we abstain from sexual immorality. If we love someone, we are not going to participate with them in an act that will condemn their soul! If we do, we are being selfish, not loving. In Ephesians 5:2-3, God's word explains that walking in love involves avoiding fornication: "And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But immorality [fornication]...let it not even be named among you, as is proper among saints."

Love will move us to rebuke sin and correct error. Love will not allow us to stand idly by and watch those we care about lose their souls by committing sin or believing doctrinal error. Jesus said, "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent" (Rev. 3:19). The apostle Paul strongly rebuked the Christians at Corinth. In 2 Corinthians 2:4 he explains why: "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love I have especially for you."

The right kind of love will never cause us to do wrong to others. Paul wrote that love "does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered" (1 Cor. 13:6). The secular world will celebrate Valentine's Day this next week. Remember that real love will never be used to justify sin; rather, it will be used to help us identify what is right and good. Love always seeks the most lasting love for the one being loved. Love is focused on the eternal welfare of the one who is loved. "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth"(1 John 3:18).

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:
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