

# What Is Love?

1. A barrier to civil conversation is whether people have the same objectives.

## What Does it mean to Love People?

2. Nearly everyone in our culture appeals to the necessity of \_\_\_\_\_ one another.
  - One might \_\_\_\_\_ this is an area where the secular world and Christians agree.
3. One issue has a lot to do with Matthew 23:36-40:
  - Loving others depends on what it means to \_\_\_\_\_ love God.
4. Christians clash with culture on what love is because of different \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Different objectives lead to \_\_\_\_\_ ideas.

## Loving Others When we First Love God

6. We need to ask the question: "Who is our \_\_\_\_\_?"
7. \_\_\_\_\_ need to love all people.
8. True religion \_\_\_\_\_ God.

## Caring for People's Souls

9. What people believe about Jesus has \_\_\_\_\_ significance.
10. When we love God first, we \_\_\_\_\_ in the truths He has revealed.
11. Jesus' command is at \_\_\_\_\_ with the view that sharing Christianity is an arrogant truth or wrong.
12. Sharing the truth of Jesus with others is one of the \_\_\_\_\_ ways we can love them.

## Caring for People's Needs

13. Caring for souls doesn't mean neglecting \_\_\_\_\_ circumstances.
14. Our love for God should translate into a \_\_\_\_\_ care for others' physical needs.
15. Caring for the poor is something people of \_\_\_\_\_ worldview can agree is important and loving.
16. Jesus meets people where they are, but He doesn't want to \_\_\_\_\_ them there.
17. Loving God first can result in a very different \_\_\_\_\_ of what it means to love others.

## Speaking Truth

18. When we love Jesus, we love \_\_\_\_\_ – and we must be ready to stand up for it.
19. There are many things a Christian should be \_\_\_\_\_ about out of a love for God and others.
  - *“Intolerance can sometimes be beautiful – that is, when you understand it from God's point of view . . . what is more beautiful than God's intolerance expressed in His moral outrage toward the tragedies of poverty, racism, sexual abuse, slavery, AIDS, bigotry and other such evils.”* (Josh McDowell)
    - Christians work with people of other worldviews who find those \_\_\_\_\_ intolerable.
    - Other moral issues lead to great \_\_\_\_\_ (between the secular world and Christians).
    - Secular love is wanting for others what \_\_\_\_\_ want for themselves.
    - God's love is wanting for others what \_\_\_\_\_ wants for them.
20. God is love, but we can't just \_\_\_\_\_ there.

## Three Key Points

- I. Christians often clash with culture over what it means to love others because we have different objectives. Christians should strive to love others given God's standards. The world strives to love given self-defined standards.
- II. Christians express a godly love for others by caring for people's souls, caring for their (earthly) needs and speaking truth about morality.
- III. Secular love often means wanting for others what they want for themselves. Godly love is wanting for others what God wants for them – even when that's not what they want for themselves.

### Opener

- When you think of what it means to love others as a Christian, what kinds of things come to mind?

### Going Further

- Read Matt. 22:36-40 Why do you think Jesus says that our love for God must come before our love for others?
  - (we won't fully understand what it means to love others unless we first understand what it means to love God)
- When Jesus said that we should love our neighbour as ourselves, who do you think that includes?
  - (Everyone – read the parable of the Good Samaritan AND Matt. 5:44, 46)
- Read Matt. 28:19-20. How is obeying Jesus' command in these verses one way of loving others?
  - (a person's relationship with Jesus has eternal significance. When we share Jesus with someone, we are caring for their soul. Discuss how the world sometimes views this as a bad thing and why we should not be deterred).
- Read Matt. 25:31-40, Luke 12:33-34 and Luke 18:18-22. What is another important way we should love others, according to these passages?
  - (we must care for people's *earthly* needs. Discuss the example of the rescue mission to show how even in this area Christian love is sometimes different from that of the world).
- What are some things in our world that all people – regardless of what they believe about God – agree are morally wrong? What are some things that Christians and nonbelievers may disagree are wrong?
  - (Use age-appropriate examples, and discuss how Christians love God and others by speaking up for truth in a fallen world).

### Application

- Lana Del Rey (singer) said, "When someone else's happiness is your happiness, that is love." Is this view consistent with the Christian meaning of love? Why or why not?

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## What Does it mean to Love People?

2. Nearly everyone in our culture appeals to the necessity of loving one another.
  - One might think this is an area where the secular world and Christians can agree.
3. One issue has a lot to do with Matthew 23:36-40.
  - Loving others depends on what it means to first love God.
4. Christians clash with culture on what love is because of different objectives.
5. Different objectives lead to conflicting ideas.

## Loving Others When we First Love God

6. We need to ask the question: "Who is our neighbour?"
7. Christians need to love all people.
8. True religion glorifies God.

## Caring for People's Souls

9. What people believe about Jesus has eternal significance.
10. When we love God first, we trust in the truths He has revealed.
11. Jesus' command is at odds with the view that sharing Christianity is an arrogant truth or wrong.
12. Sharing the truth of Jesus with others is one of the greatest ways we can love them.

## Caring for People's Needs

August 3, 2022

13. Caring for souls doesn't mean neglecting earthly circumstances.
14. Our love for God should translate into a tangible care for others' physical needs.
15. Caring for the poor is something people of any worldview can agree is important and loving.
16. Jesus meets people where they are, but He doesn't want to leave them there.
17. Loving God first can result in a very different understanding of what it means to love others.

## Speaking Truth

18. When we love Jesus, we love truth – and we must be ready to stand up for it.
19. There are many things a Christian should be intolerant about out of a love for God and others.
  - *“Intolerance can sometimes be beautiful – that is, when you understand it from God’s point of view . . . what is more beautiful than God’s intolerance expressed in His moral outrage toward the tragedies of poverty, racism, sexual abuse, slavery, AIDS, bigotry and other such evils.”* (Josh McDowell)
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