

## The Portrait of Christ's Love

Love is an overriding characteristic of God's nature. We are clearly told that God is Love. The love of God is most clearly manifest in the life and gift of Jesus Christ, God's Son. The revelation of God's love is expressed through the life, labors, attitudes and sacrifices of Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 5:2 NIV** Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

**Ephesians 5:25 NIV** ...Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

This portrait of Christ's love is frequently revealed in the Bible. In the Revelation, the glorified Christ spoke a message of grace and peace to the whole church.

**Revelation 1:5 NIV** To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood.

Then in the Gospel of John, Jesus related the love that He is demonstrating to the love of the Father. Notice that He wants us to remain in the same love.

**John 15:9-13 NIV** As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love. If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father's commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

*In Galatians 5, the singular fruit of the Spirit is a multifaceted and diversified.*

This fruit of the Spirit cannot be broken into separate parts. Each facet and characteristic works in conjunction and harmony with the others. Love works with mercy, grace, patience, kindness, joy, faithfulness, goodness, etc. Joy is full of goodness, kindness, thoughtfulness, truth, love, etc.

*It is impossible see the love of Christ manifested without the other aspects of the character of the fruit of the Spirit being revealed simultaneously.*

As we experience and know the love of Christ, we will be filled with and know His joy, goodness, kindness, and faithfulness.

*First, the love of Christ was revealed and evidenced by His love to the Father.*

The love that Jesus Christ had for the Father is the same quality and quantity of love that the Father had for His Son.

*How did Jesus demonstrate His love for the Father?*

**John 15:10 NIV** If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have

obeyed my Father's commands and remain in His love.

*Jesus demonstrated His love to the Father by obedience.*

Jesus had the highest degree of obedience. His obedience is seen in His willingness to suffer. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus demonstrated His love when He prayed: "Father, not My will, but yours be done." The agony and fervency of His commitment and prayer was demonstrated as His sweat became like great drops of blood.

*What was the ultimate sign of Christ's love for the Father?*

Look at the greatest measure of His obedience. Jesus did not just obey when it was convenient or easy. His obedience was as deep as His love.

**Philippians 2:8 NIV** He humbled Himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross!

**John 5:36 NKJV Jesus said,** "The works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me."

The extent of His love and commitment to the Father was demonstrated in His full obedience and dedication. His love for the Father was evidenced through His words.

**John 14:10 NIV** Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in Me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in Me, who is doing His work.

He was obedient in working miracles and healing the sick. He was obedient in selfless ministry and administering grace. He was obedient in what He spoke.

*Look at the portrait of Christ's love.*

*Who can measure the quality and degree of God's love?*

The obedience of Jesus Christ was as vast, wide, deep, and incomprehensible as the love of God. It is deeper than our thoughts can comprehend and greater than our capacity to imagine. He was obedient to the Father in all things even to death.

*Think about His selfless obedience!*

The degree of His obedience is incomprehensible. Nothing was left out or overlooked. He was obedient in conquering sin and Satan. He was obedient unto the death of the cross. He was obedient by defeating death. He was obedient in keeping everything that the Father committed to Him. He was obedient by exalting and honoring the Name of the Father. He was obedient in resurrection power and glory.

*We cannot measure the depth, width and height of that kind of love.*

*Second, the love of Jesus Christ was demonstrated to His disciples.*

As we consider the portrait of Christ's love in His life and ministry, pay close attention to His personal touch and consecrated sacrifice.

**John 15:9 NIV** As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you.

*How did the Father love His Own Son?*

The depth of God's love for His Son is measured in the value He places upon His Son. God loved Him as the Mediator between God and man. God's love is so great for His Son that He considered His Son's sacrifice sufficient to cover all of the sins of the world. He loved Him as the head of the church. He loved Him as the legal guardian of divine grace and favor.

*How did Jesus Christ dispense that love?*

**John 15:13 NASB95** Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

*First, Jesus became our substitute.*

Jesus Christ demonstrated this great love by suffering in our place. He gave His body for our body, His life for our life, His riches for our poverty. He knew our lost, worthless, and helpless condition. Although He knew how much His love would cost Him, He freely gave Himself for us. This is the demonstration of the vicarious atonement of Christ for us. The King of Glory suffered and died for sinners. The Son of God was given for the sons of men. The excellence of the love of Christ is unequaled.

**Romans 5:8 NASB95** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

*Second, Jesus Christ took His disciples into a covenant friendship.*

**John 15:14-15 NASB95** You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

Jesus Christ has taken believers into His close intimate fellowship as personal friends. He bears with our weaknesses and is burdened with our concerns. Our offenses are laid on Him and He is personally afflicted with our afflictions. As our High Priest, He personally intercedes to the Father for our needs.

**1 Corinthians 6:17 LB** But if you give yourself to the Lord, you and Christ are joined together as one person.

*Jesus Christ our Lord has joined with us.*

This is not our assuming fellowship with Him, He has taken us unto Himself. As a friend, He

loves at all times. He no longer calls us servants, even though we call Him Master and Lord. His love exceeds calling us friends and has unveiled the secrets of His heart.

**Matthew 11:27 NIV** All things have been committed to Me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.”

**Matthew 13:11 NIV** He replied, “*The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.*”

*Jesus demonstrates His love by tender affectionate actions.*

**John 15:16 NIV** “*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*”

We have seen what it means to be chosen and called into the fellowship of God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Deuteronomy 7:7-8 NIV** The LORD did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh King of Egypt.

*He set His affection on you and chose you because He loved you.*

The demonstration of God’s love brought Israel under the power of His deliverance and redemption. We notice this power in action throughout the Lord’s ministry. Watch it when people begged for His mercy to be healed.

**Matthew 11:5 NIV** The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

Jesus demonstrated His love and the love of the Father through His miracles, healings, constant personal care, and vicarious sufferings. Then He deepened our connection with Him by choosing and appointing us to bear the same fruit He bore. In so doing, He gave us authority or permission to use His name.

*He said, “use My Name.”*

**John 15:16** “Whatever you ask my Father, in My Name, He will give you.”

*God’s love is demonstrated to us three ways:*

*First, you can go to God and He will be a Father to you.*

*Second, Jesus has demonstrated His concern for us by His love.*

### *Third, you shall receive from the Father.*

This opens up a place for dialogue between heaven and earth. Heaven has been opened for you. This opened heaven brings us into the full expression of God's love for us and all of the benefits that are associated with that.

**John 15:9-11 NIV84** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

### *The evidence of resting in His love is fruitfulness.*

The joy of heaven will remain in you and will be so complete that your joy will be full. It may be hard for you to grasp the depth of His love. God loves you so much that He rejoices over you with singing.

**Zephaniah 3:17 NIV** The LORD your God is with you, He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.

### *How was the portrait of Christ's love revealed?*

**John 3:16-17 NKJV** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

God demonstrated His Own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8) The portrait of Christ's love was demonstrated to the world by the many wonderful things that He did. Every miracle and healing is a demonstration of love. Every need supplied unveiled His love. His ministry to captives, prisoners, the destitute, and to outcasts portrays His love. His love is filled with actions of kindness, mercy, good works, patience, goodness, and grace.