TOPIC PRINTABLE

Love

What Scripture means by love — God's love for us, love between people, and how the two are connected.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4–7

Love is patient and is kind. Love doesn't envy. Love doesn't brag, is not proud, doesn't behave itself inappropriately, doesn't seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil; doesn't rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

The Bible's best-known description of love — patient, kind, not self-seeking — written to correct a community that prized impressive gifts over care for one another.

MATTHEW 22:37–39

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. A second likewise is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

Jesus joins two commandments from the Law — love God, love your neighbor — and says everything else hangs on them.

1 JOHN 4:7–8

Beloved, let's love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. He who doesn't love doesn't know God, for God is love.

Love comes from God, and "God is love": the source of human love is God's own nature.

1 JOHN 4:19

We love Him, because He first loved us.

"We love Him, because He first loved us" — human love as response.

JOHN 15:12–13

"This is My commandment, that you love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

Jesus sets His own self-giving as the measure of love for one another.

ROMANS 5:8

But God commends His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

God's love is shown while people were still sinners — love that does not wait to be earned.

ROMANS 13:8–10

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other commandments there are, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love doesn't harm a neighbor. Love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

Love fulfills the law: Paul gathers the commandments into one.

COLOSSIANS 3:14

Above all these things, walk in love, which is the bond of perfection.

Love is "the bond of perfection" — the garment over all the other virtues.

SONG OF SONGS 8:6–7

Set me as a seal on your heart, as a seal on your arm; for love is strong as death. Jealousy is as cruel as Sheol. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a very flame of the LORD. Many waters can't quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man would give all the wealth of his house for love, he would be utterly scorned.

Love as strong as death, which many waters cannot quench: the Bible's poetry of human love.