



## Repentance Tabernacle Church

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### True Love!

**Scripture:** John 3:16 - 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 15:13 - Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

The Bible reveals that love is much more than just an emotion or a feeling. God's love is Agape love (unconditional love), totally different from human love (Phelos or Eros). We read that God is love (1 John 4:8), meaning this is the defining characteristic of His nature. His selfless love was demonstrated to us most dramatically when He gave up His Son in death for our salvation. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).

The world's definition of true love is characterized by mutual respect, empathy, and unwavering support. It goes beyond just feelings and is a choice to prioritize and commit to each other's happiness and growth. In true love, both partners recognize and value each other's individuality, opinions, and feelings. It is characterized by trust, security, and a deep commitment to one another. True love is unconditional and endures through thick and thin.

The entire Gospel comes to focus in verse John 3:16. **God's love is not static or self-centered; it reaches out and draws others in.** Here God sets the pattern of true love, the basis for all love relationships—when you love someone dearly, you are willing to give freely to the point of self-sacrifice. God paid dearly with the life of his Son, the highest price he could pay. Jesus accepted our punishment, paid the price for our sins, and then offered us the new life He had bought for us.

John said: *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins"* (1 John 4:9-10). When we share the Gospel with others, our love must be like Jesus'—willingly giving up our own comfort and security so that others might join us in receiving God's love.

Paul tells us, *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:6-8).

Moreover, we are to love one another as Jesus loved us, and He loved us enough to give His life for us. We may not have to die for someone, but there are other ways to practice sacrificial love: listening, helping, encouraging, giving. Jesus said: *"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another"* (John 13:34).

When we don't know Christ, we make choices as though this life were all we had. In reality, this life is just the introduction to eternity. Receive this new life by faith and begin to evaluate all that happens from an eternal perspective. To believe is more than intellectual agreement that Jesus is God. It means to put our trust and confidence in Him that He alone can save us. It is to put Christ in charge of our present plans and eternal destiny. Believing is both trusting His words as reliable and relying on Him for the power to change. If you have never trusted Christ, let this promise of everlasting life be yours.

The secular world has constructed an idea of love that is moving further and further away from true love that is found only in God. As with many things, godless people attempt to construct a false imitation of reality. When it comes to love, humanity's version is but a pale shadow compared to the truth of God's love.

The apostle Paul wrote a passage in First Corinthians that contains a concise picture of true love, **God's love:** *"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things"* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). **This is God's love and it is this type of love that God would have us show to mankind.**