

Daily Devotional, April 26,2021 Take Action—Love One Another!

If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:17-18

Here is a simple truth to remember; love is a *verb*. Hopefully, we all remember from grammar school that a verb is a word that puts action to something, it is the moving part, the part that brings excitement and motivates us to move in a particular direction as we read. So often when we think about love, we make it static, we love something, but truth is, we only love it as much as it brings meaning to us at a particular point in time. As it is, our love can often fade, or become ordinary, and it may no longer have the same impact that it once had on a certain matter as time fades and takes its toll.

True love, however, is something that should and will grow over time. We might be reminded of what the apostle Paul says about love in 1 Corinthians 13 in the great list of things love will and will not do, yet the most important thing for us to remember is that love is a verb. Love is active, and it remains active in so many different directions. Love comes to us from God, who first loves us (1 John 4:19).

We are loved by a God who sent his son to forgive us of all the ways we had mistreated and misinterpreted love, and in such forgiveness, we find that we are truly free to be loved by God. In our love from God, we begin to turn toward and love God, we love God for the forgiveness and freedom that we have, we love God for the removal of guilt, we love God for the renewal of life that we have found in the resurrection. And with this, we find that God then asks us to use our freedom to love others.

So, we peer out into this world and we start to love what God created. We begin to love who God has created, but it is limited. Even though we have an unlimited love from God our love is limited. We might find people who think like us, act like us, enjoy the same things as us, they are easy for us to love. However, we are called to love *all of* our neighbors.

When Jesus wanted to teach those people who would listen about what it meant to love one's neighbor he told a story. He told a story of a good Samaritan (Luke 10). In the story the one that was most different from those hearing the story was the one who understood love as a verb, as a term of action. In the same way, John reminds us that we can claim the love of God all we want, we can speak about, we can preach about, we can tell others how to show it. However, unless we show such love in our actions, as the truth of who we are, we are still missing out.

Love is a verb, love is the actions we show to others because sometimes words aren't understood, sometimes words aren't enough. Love is best known when it is lived through treating others in the same way, if not better than we, ourselves hope to be treated. Let love be in the actions you perform this week, from home, in work, in everything we do. Allow love to be the verb.

Dear God, Thank you that you are a loving, gracious God. Thank you for the forgiveness you have offered and the gift of new life in you. Thank you that your love is perfect, it never fails, and that nothing can separate us from your love.

We pray that our lives would be filled and overflowing with the power of your love so we can make a difference in this world and bring honor to you. We ask for your help in reminding us that the most important things are not what we do outwardly, it's not based on any talent or gift, but the most significant thing we can do in this life is simply to love you and to choose to love others.

Lord thank you that your love is patient. Help us show patience and kindness with those around us, Amen.