

Command of Christ → Love God / Love others
Scripture reference → Matthew 22:37-40

Love is a relational term.

- A verb → an action word. (1 John 3:18)
- Labor of love (1 Thessalonians 1:3; Hebrews 6:10)]
- A sacrificial action. (John 3:16)
- There is a cost to the one loving. (It is an investment in someone else.)

How can we love someone / something that we do not know?

- Our love for God grows out of an understanding of what He has done for us.
- We learn and it is revealed through life experience.
 - We have to believe in love. (It is an act of faith) 1 John 4:7, 8
 - We have to know love. (Ephesians 3:17-19)
 - We have to receive love. (Romans 8)
 - We are taught to love. (1 Thessalonians 4:9)
 - Our hearts have to follow His guidance into love. (2 Thess. 3:5)
 - We can “provoke” each other into love. (Hebrews
- Our love for God is a “response” to His love for us. (1 John 4:9, 10)

How can we prove our love for God?

- By keeping His commandments. (1 John 5:2, 3)
 - It is a “relational,” not legalistic obedience.
- By loving each other. (1 John 4:11)

What is the foundation of our love for God?

- He loved us first. (1 John 4:19)
- While we were yet sinners, He died for us. (He made the first movement towards us.)

We will never be able to love each other apart from receiving His love for us first.

- What is the main hindrance to loving each other? → FEAR
- What does maturing love do? → drives out fear!

- Does a child automatically love his father? No.
- Love is developed through bonding experiences of trust.
- The father’s love comes first.

We can love others (including our enemies) because we are the sons of love.

- 1 John 3:1, 2 --- His nature is in us. His love is living through us.
- Love is a sign of eternal life. (1 John 3:13-16)

Keep yourself in the love of God! → Jude 21