

Looking For Love

What does real love look like?



Looking for Love

When Jackie DeShannon sang, “What the world needs now is love, sweet love,” much of the world sang with her. According to her song, the world doesn’t need more mountains to climb or rivers to cross. What we need is love, “not just for some but for everyone.”

The theme of this hit song of the 60s strikes a note that resonates in all of us. Everyone is looking for love. But what is the love we all want and need? What does real love look like? How will we know when we’ve found it?

These selections from *Our Daily Bread* are intended to help you find true love. If you enjoy these articles and would like to receive the *Our Daily Bread* devotional, just complete the request form on this brochure and send it to us. There is no subscription fee.

SAY IT!

READ:

Song of Solomon 2:10-14

My beloved spoke, and
said to me: "Rise up,
my love, my fair one,
and come away."
—Song of Solomon 2:10

All too often we take for granted the ones we love. Perhaps we get caught up in the day-to-day process of living and working, and we neglect to share our true inner feelings. "She knows I love her," we tell ourselves. But we never tell our spouse or our loved ones.

Maybe you grew up in a family where positive, loving feelings were never expressed in words, so you don't know what to say. Perhaps you're afraid you'll say the wrong thing, or that if you try to express your feelings you won't be able to control them. That's okay, even if you cry.

An advertisement reads, "Say it with flowers!" Maybe that's how you tell that special someone of your love. Or perhaps you say it with a well-chosen card. My wife loves dark chocolates, so I often give her candy and a card on special occasions. She appreciates these tokens of love, but I've learned over the years not to let the card or the gift do all the work of saying what I really feel inside. I also need to say the words, "I love you."

Everyone needs to hear words of love. In the Song of Solomon, the lovers frequently used endearing terms when speaking to each other.

Today, tell that special person "I love you," not just with candy or flowers but with words. —Dave Egner

THINKING IT OVER

*When was the last time you said
"I love you" to a special person in your life?
Think of a quality you appreciate in that
person and tell him or her about it.*

**A word of love can make
a world of difference.**

LOVE LISTENS

READ:

Psalm 119:145-152

Hear my voice
according to Your
lovingkindness. —
Psalm 119:149

When we love others, we listen to them. Sure, it takes time and effort to focus on them and hear what they are saying. But when we do, it shows genuine concern and respect.

Author Wayne Alderson tells of a young minister who spent a lot of time listening to the problems of his church members. One day he came home and said to his wife, "How did your day go?" For a half-hour she told him about a problem with the car, their son's earache, and the difficulties she had getting an appliance repaired. The pastor immediately began to problem-solve, citing a list of things she should do.

But she just looked at him and sighed. "I have already done all of that," she said. "I don't need you to solve my problems. I just need you to be interested in what I've been through."

When the author of Psalm 119 pleaded, "Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness" (v.149), he was expressing the truth that the God who loves us also listens to us. Listening is a part of loving.

Listening to a wife, a husband, a fellow worker, or a Christian friend may be just what that person needs to be encouraged or to see a problem more clearly. Go ahead and listen. God Himself shows that love listens.

—Dave Egner

*My burden is now so much lighter,
I've glimpsed things I needed to see,
I have a fresh hope for tomorrow—
Because someone listened to me. —Egner*

**Listening may be the most loving thing
you do today.**

THERE IS LOVE

READ:

1 Corinthians 13

Now abide faith,
hope, love, these
three; but the
greatest of these
is love. —1
Corinthians 13:13

Some time ago, I traded e-mail with a friend who was approaching 30 and had no serious love relationship in sight. He's talented, fun, handsome, and a committed Christian. But so far, everything on his romantic horizon has turned out to be a mirage.

Several months earlier, he had been very enthusiastic about a young woman with whom he was corresponding. Two weeks before they were to meet for the first time, she was killed by a drunk driver. My friend made the trip to meet her family, experienced their pain, and dealt with his own sense of loss.

Today, many people will feel the absence of love as keenly as others celebrate its presence. In a world where love means so much, is there a word from the Lord for everyone, with or without a sweetheart?

First Corinthians 13 focuses not on being loved by another person, but on God's love for us. This love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (v.7). How is this possible? Because God's love "has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5).

Long after the cards and flowers are forgotten, there is love from God's heart to ours! —David McCasland

*On this the day when we express
Undying love and faithfulness,
Let's not forget that God above
Gave us His Son in perfect love. —Hess*

**The more we understand God's love for us,
the more love we'll show to others.**

BEST LOVE NOTE EVER

READ:

1 John 3:1-3

Behold what manner
of love the Father has
bestowed on us, that
we should be called
children of God!
—1 John 3:1

Some people looking for love have found help in an unusual place—a taxicab in New York City. Taxicab driver Ahmed Ibrahim loves to set up blind dates for his single passengers. His matchmaking services have been featured on the Fox News Channel, *The Wall Street Journal*, and NBC's *Today* show. He doesn't assist just anybody though; they have to be serious about looking to settle down with someone. Ahmed loves to help romance blossom, and he even hands out roses on Valentine's Day.

The best place to find love is not in another person but in a book, the Bible. The Bible tells of God's great love for us. This is expressed in what my friend called the best love note she has ever received. It's found in John 3:16.

For God so loVed the world,
That He gAve
His on Ly
Begott En
SoN
That whoever
Believes In Him
Should Not perish,
But have Everlasting life.

God loves us like no one else ever could. He showed that love when He sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. He's also the best companion we'll ever have. Open your Bible and learn more about Him.
—Anne Cetas

**The more you read the Bible,
the more you'll love its Author.**

NO GREATER LOVE

READ:

1 John 4:7-11

**In this 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 4:10

On our family-room wall, in a small shadowbox, hangs a “treasure” that belongs to my wife Carolyn. Oh, we have things more intrinsically valuable on the walls of our home—a handmade quilt from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Kentucky, antique mirrors, oil paintings, and a magnificent dulcimer from an artisan in the backcountry of Idaho.

Carolyn’s treasure, though, is far more valuable to her than any other possession, for it contains a gift from our granddaughter Julia. It was a present to her “Nana” on Valentine’s Day several years ago when Julia was only 6 years

old—a small, red, clay heart. Inscribed on it in childish scrawl are the words “I Luv U.”

The little heart is crudely made, ragged on the edges, and bears a number of thumbprints and smudges, but Carolyn has enshrined it in a frame made especially for that heart. Each day it reminds her of Julia’s love.

Is God’s love more valuable to you than silver or gold or any other possession? He “sent His only begotten Son into the world, that [you] might live through Him” (1 John 4:9). He did that because He loves you, not because you loved Him. And because of His love, one day you will be with Him in heaven. There is no greater love! —David Roper

Love sent my Savior to die in my stead,

Why should He love me so?

Meekly to Calvary’s cross He was led,

Why should He love me so? —Harkness

**God’s eternal love is the
source of our eternal life.**

THE LOVE OF GOD

READ:

John 15:1-13

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. —John 3:16

This is divine love: Jesus loved not only His friends but also His enemies—the God-hating, Christ-murdering world.

Jesus said in John 15:13, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.” That is as high as human love can go, to die for your friends and your own loved ones. I am willing to die for my wife or my children, but to be willing to give my son to die that my worst enemy might live would require divine love.

The Bible states, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Romans 5:8-10).

Wonder of wonders! While we were His enemies and thirsting for the blood of His sinless Son, God loved us so much that He gave His Son, whom He loved above all else, to die on the cross that we might be saved. We cannot understand it, but thank God we can believe it. And when we do, we find the peace that nothing else can bring. —Mart De Haan

*O the love that drew salvation’s plan!
O the grace that brought it down to man!
O the mighty gulf that God did span
At Calvary! —Newell*

**It will take all eternity to measure
the love of God.**