

County-Wide Chaplaincy

Thanks you!

June 2025

God is Love

To be loved is a deep desire within every human. Some of us are blessed to experience the love of moms, dads, grandmothers, grandfathers, other family members, and close friends who demonstrate thoughtfulness, grace, loyalty, forgiveness, and gratitude on our behalf. When my wife and I (Sam & Janet) were in our youth, we would occasionally go to church together. Every time we walked in, we were greeted by an old pastor who would embrace us together with a big bear hug and declare, "Do you know how much Jesus loves you?" That man impressed on our hearts the greatness of God's love for us.

God's Word tells us that God is love. In addition to God's love, He is also perfectly just and righteous. God's justice requires Him to punish disobedient law-breakers. In order to resolve the tension between His love and His justice, God sent Jesus Christ to take the punishment for our sins. This allowed Him to express His love toward us, forgive us, and give us eternal life in His presence.

God loves you beyond description and desires to have all of us enter into a close relationship with Him. Yet, God the Father allows each one of us to make a free choice to receive the Lord Jesus Christ and His forgiveness, or reject His offer and suffer the consequences.

What is love? In essence love is placing high value on another person to the point of self-sacrifice for the benefit of that person. God sets the standard with His love for us.

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." ^{NAU} Romans 5:8

In July of 1993 John Scully, a 28 year old attorney in San Francisco, used his body to shield his wife Michelle from a crazed gunman who shot him multiple times as he stepped in front of her. John died; Michelle was wounded but recovered. John loved his wife and laid down his life for her.

Love is practiced in many small ways in our daily lives. Here is a starter list; you can extend it without limit.

- Love is willing to have your life complicated by the needs and struggles of other people.
- Love is fighting the temptation to be judgmental toward someone, but rather thanking God for them.

- Love is being honest about yourself and humbly admitting your own faults in times of misunderstanding.
- Love is not returning hurt for hurt, but forgiving and trusting God to mend a broken relationship.
- Love is setting aside time to spend with someone in need of friendship.
- Love is being present with a grieving person who has just lost a family member.
- Love is not being provoked and not taking into account a wrong suffered.
- Love is patient, kind, not jealous, and not arrogant.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." ^{ESV} Matthew 22:37

What does it mean to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind?

- Placing highest value on Him, far above all other loves
- Knowing and practicing His written word
- Trusting Him
- Serving Him
- Praying to Him
- Thanking Him for grace and mercy

These things are possible only through His supernatural power that flows within.

Chaplains Sam LaPore and Al Walter

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