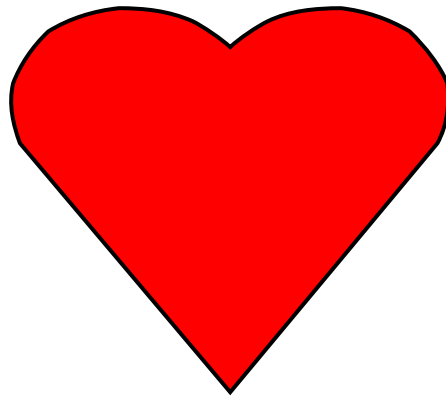


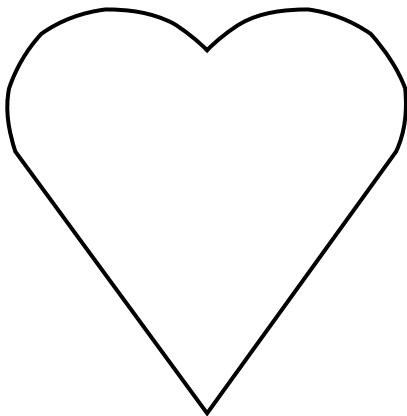
**14 REALITIES
OF GOD'S LOVE
THAT TRANSFORMS**



LIFE



&



MINISTRY

Let me explain:

This material is a study guide into the 14 realities of God's Love that I have been able to discern over many years of ministry, I am sure there are many more. If you can discern others, please let me know I would be very interested in them. What you do have with these lessons are thoughts and scripture references for you to ponder and look up, hopefully you will take notes. This could be life changing for you, it was for me. <>< Tom

14 REALITIES OF GOD'S LOVE THAT TRANSFORM LIFE & MINISTRY

"We love, because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

INTRODUCTION: Since our love for God is dependent on our comprehension of God's love for us, then we need to grow in our understanding of God's love. As we deepen our understanding of God's love our love will grow and become an ever-increasing reality.

Additional Thoughts: We love because He first loved us and He first loved us because "God is love" (I Jn. 4:8,16), and love is I Cor. 13:4-8a.

What do you think? Since man was made in the image of God doesn't that mean he was made with a great capacity to love? This fallen capacity to love needs to be renewed within the regenerated believer. Love is not merely an intellectual issue. God changes our heart, making it possible for His love to be a life-changing reality in our lives. Time, experience, scripture, and understanding moves every believer further along in this process of love renewal – II Pet. 1:5-7; Eph. 3:17-19 – making the Image complete.

(Please read and meditate on each of the scriptures below and determine if you agree with my basic observation (that is what I call a reality) at the end of each section of scriptures. Also note that each point builds on each other.)

A. This section declares the fact of God's love initiating His actions towards us.

1. John 3:16
2. Rom. 5:8
3. Eph. 2:4-6
4. John 15:9
5. John 17:23-26
6. I Thess. 3:5

B. This section reveals that God's purpose is a life-style change motivated from a transformed heart.

1. Eph. 3:14-19
2. Eph. 1:4,5
3. Rom. 8:29
4. Rom. 6:11
5. Heb. 12:6,10

What do you think? What changes take place once a person becomes united with God through the salvation that comes by faith in Jesus Christ?

Reality #1: - *Though God loves you the way you are,
He loves you too much to leave you that way.*

Action points: 1. Believe the **fact** that God loves you unconditionally.
2. Confess as sin your doubt about how much God loves you.
3. Surrender yourself to the Lord, who loves you so much, to do in you that which needs to be changed for a better you.

What do you think? Since God's love for you, before you became a Christian, was 100% of how much He could love you and was not conditional on anything from you, on anything you did. Is His love for you now as a Christian based on your performance (on what you do) and consequently less than a 100% of what it was before you were a Christian?

I don't think so.

1. Rom. 8:37-39
2. I John 4:19
3. 1 Cor. 2:9
4. Luke 15:11-32
5. II Cor. 5:14,15
6. Matt. 22:37,39
7. Rom. 8:28
8. John 14:21

Reality #2: - *There is nothing you can do to make God love you more,
There is nothing you can do to make God love you less,
But there is a lot you can do to enjoy the love God has for you.*

What do you think? *What are the benefits of cultivating a love relationship with God?
How does a Christian cultivate a love relationship with God?*

Action points:

1. Take by faith the **fact** that God loves you with a love that is not dependent on something *from* you.
2. Determine to learn what you can to enjoy more fully the love God has for you.
3. Take some practical steps to cultivate a growing love relationship with Jesus Christ.

Often individual believers think that God very likely would love committed Christians more than He does them because of their lack of commitment (failures, weaknesses, and inconsistencies). Then there might be times when a believer is doing well in their walk with the Lord and think that God loves them more than others who are not living a life as honoring to Him as they are. Check out these verses and see if you agree with reality number three.

1. Luke 7:36-50
2. Luke 18:9-14
3. Matt. 18:21-35
4. Isa. 53:1-12
5. I John 4:7-10

Reality #3: - *The Love of God is equal at the foot of the Cross; therefore, God's love is the same for everyone. God loves others as much as He loves you and visa versa.*

What do you think?

1. What is the relationship between the love of God and forgiveness of sins?
2. And then, what is the relationship between loving others and forgiving others?

What do you think? Do not all the verses that declare God's love for me also declare His love for others?

Action points:

1. Do not play the role of judge by judging whether others deserve God's love or not.
2. Understand that the people you don't like are loved by God as much as you are.
3. Never believe that you have gone too far for God to love you.

What do you think? 1. Is it enough for you to grow and deepen your knowledge and awareness of God's love?
2. Do you have a responsibility before God to do more with what you know and understand about His love?

1. Rom. 5:5
2. John 7:37-39

DOESN'T IT MAKES SENSE THAT WHAT GOD POURS INTO A PERSON'S LIFE IS WHAT HE WANTS TO FLOW FROM THAT PERSON'S LIFE? Since God pours His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, He wants love to flow out of our lives by the Holy Spirit.

3. John 13:34, 35
4. Gal. 5:13, 22
6. I Thess. 3:12,13;
7. II Thess. 3:5
8. I John 4:7-21

Reality #4: - *God wants you to be an extension of His love to others; therefore, you must allow God the freedom to love others through your life.*

Action points: 1. Understand that God's love is not a possession that needs your protection, nor is it limited so that you need to hoard as much as you can get of it.
2. Determine not to put conditions on allowing God to love others through your life.
3. Seek practical ways to express God's love to others.

Love is a choice that we need to make every day – first, to be loved by God; then second to loving God and then loving people.

1. I Cor. 13:1-8(a)
2. I John 3:1,16,23; 4:21
3. I Tim. 4:11(b), 12
4. I Pet. 1:22; 4:8
5. I Thess. 1:3; Gal. 5:13
6. Matt. 5:44
7. Rom. 12:9-21

Reality #5: - *Demonstrate both the reality of being loved by God and the reality of your love for God by the way you treat others.*

Action points:

1. Determine what it means to demonstrate your love for God in the way you love/treat others.
 2. Try to make it a prayer that every time you are with people that God's love will flow through your life into theirs.
 3. Be sure to guard your heart by keeping your focus on God first, others second and yourself third.
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As believers we should allow God's love to flow through our lives into the lives of others. Our attitude towards every person is important to God, but He has a special interest, concern and desire for us when it comes to loving other believers in particular. Check out the verses below and determine your attitude and relationship to others who will share heaven with you.

1. John 15:12
2. John 13:34,35
3. I John 3:16; 4:7,11,12,20,21
4. I Thess. 3:12; 4:9
5. I Pet. 1:22
6. Gal. 5:13

Reality #6 - *Loving other believers is a major demonstration of being a true disciple of Christ.*

What do you think?

1. Why is it so hard to love other believers?
2. What is the relationship between loving other believers and being a good witness?
3. Why is it important to prove / demonstrate that you are a disciple of Christ?

Action points:

1. Confess as sin your allowing wrong feelings toward other believers to fester.
2. Determine to pray for the Lord's blessing in each believer every time you are tempted to think improperly towards them.
3. Never speak unkindly of another believer.

It is important to understand that love is at the very heart of our relationship with God. His desire for us is to be conscious of His love in such a way that it impacts everything about us, our heart, mind and will.

This reality of God's love has to do with what the scriptures call "**abiding in God's love & a love perfection**" that impacts the very foundation of a Christian's life, changing their whole perspective of life and of the world around them.

- 1 John 17: 23,26
- 2 John 15: 9,10
- 3 I John 2:5
- 4 I John 4:12,16-18
- 6 Psalm 139
- 7 I John 2:10

Reality #7 - *It is God's desire that each believer obtain a consciousness of His love for them that transcends and elevates every aspect of their daily lives causing a heaven on earth type life experience.*

What do you think? What is true of heaven that can be in part true for a believer on earth?

Action points:

1. Believe the scriptures when it says that God loves you as the Father does the Son.
2. Try to understand what it means to live within the context of God's love.
3. Do not believe that you understand everything there is about the love of God.

What do you think? Is it possible that the love that should be focused on God, then on others, often focuses on wrong things? Can a person's love for God fade or can it be deluded and/or misdirected?

(This is a negative point) There is a major problem of misdirected love that short circuits a person's love for God and aborts their opportunity for God to love another through their life. Every believer must be aware of this problem and guard themselves from this terrible possibility of loving the wrong things.

1. Prov. 4:23
2. I Cor. 11:3
3. I John 2:15-17
4. I Tim. 6:10
5. II Tim. 3:2-4; 4:10
6. John 12:43
7. Psalm 4:2b
8. Matt. 6:24
9. Matt. 24:12
10. John 3:19,20
11. Rev. 2:4

Reality #8 - *Misdirected love will never satisfy, rather it only brings regret.*

What do you think? Why is there such an intense struggle for your affection?

Action points:

1. A. What are the areas in your life where your love is most often misdirected?
B. What can you do to ensure that misdirected love is properly dealt with?
 2. Determine when your love for God is most likely to be attacked and what are you going to do about it?
 3. What can you do to keep your love for God pure, strong, and growing?
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Something to think about:

Since obeying God is primarily a heart issue, you will find that as your awareness of God's love for you deepens, your love for God will grow deeper and wider, and your desire will change from wanting to do your own will to wanting to do God's will for your life. Thus your effectiveness as a believer will also grow and increase. Consequently, you will discover that without love it is so hard to obey God but with love you cannot help but obey. Therefore

1. John 14:21
2. John 15: 9 – 14
3. I Cor. 5:14,15
4. Matt. 22:37,39
5. Luke 8:11-15
6. Rom. 13:8-11
7. II Tim. 4:7,8; James 1:12
8. II Pet. 1:3-10

Reality #9 - *Obedience and fruitfulness are by-products of realizing the love of God and loving God. Loving God is demonstrated by a desire to please Him and serve Him resulting in a fruitful life.*

Action points: *Since love is the great motivator:*

1. Pray for others that they will be consumed by the love of God.
 2. When confessing sin, remember to confess your failure to abide in the love of God.
 3. Make it your prayer that you will be an example of a person who loves God.
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A basic observation:

A person cannot be a student of the Word and not come to the conclusion that:
LOVE IS CRITICAL IN / TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

Love is the critical difference in Christian service. The difference is between service motivated from the love of God resulting in loving God & loving others and service that is otherwise motivated (like motivated by duty).

1. I Cor. 13:1
 :2
 :3
2. II Thess. 1:3
3. Matt. 9:36
4. John 15:9-17
5. I Tim. 1:5
6. Gal. 2:20

It is clear that all service not primarily motivated by the Love of God in and through a believer is of no value to God. Herein lays the great need, the great lie and the great conflict.

What do you think? What do you think is the relationship between loving one another and Christian service?

John 15:12; 13:34, 35
I John. 3:16; 4:7, 11, 12, 20, 21

Reality #10 – Christian service must be a Christ like “labor of love”.

- Action points:**
1. Pray that your heart will overflow with the love of God.
 2. Confess as sin any time you are aware that you are serving God for the wrong reason.
 3. Learn what it means to love people into the Kingdom.
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An another basic observation:

When God's love is a reality in a believer's life there is a spiritual benefit that allows them to minister to others regardless of the damage that sin has had. That includes both the past sins of the believer and past, present, and future sins of those being ministered to. God's love cannot be overcome by evil; rather it overcomes evil.

1. 1 Pet. 4:8
2. I Cor. 13:4
 13:5
 13:6
 13:7
 13:8a
3. Rom. 8:37-39
4. Rom. 5:8
5. Rom. 8:28
6. Pro. 10:12; James 5:20

Consider the verses below in light of the love of God being stronger than sin.

Luke 15:21-24 – The father responded to the return and repentance of the prodigal son rather than to the sin of the prodigal son.

I Thess. 1:3 – “labor of love”

Heb. 10:24 – “consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds”

Rev. 1:5 – “... To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and He made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father,”

Amos 5:15 – “Hate evil, love good, ...”

Rom. 12:9 – “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.”

Reality #11 - The love of God in and through a believer is greater than their sin, the sin of another and /or the sin that is in the world.

What do you think? Is not the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ the greatest demonstration that love is greater and of greater power than sin?

Action points:

1. Reflect back in your life or in the life of another and observe the out come when love was greater than sin. Was it a good thing or not?
2. Make it your goal to be a person who overcomes sin by being a person who is overcome by God's love.
3. Understand that when it comes to the love of God; action and words speak / work together. Otherwise the language of love is not heard.

To those who are cultivating a deep and ongoing love relationship with God, sacrifice, trials and temptations cannot shake their confidence in the reality of a loving God. Neither is temporal things seen as an end in themselves. Gifts are not of greater value than the giver. Life is lived with a deep confidence that God will do what is right by them for purposes that are of His choosing.

1. I Pet. 4:19
2. Psalm 63:3
3. I Cor. 13:13
4. Gal. 2:20
5. Lam. 3:19-38
6. Ps. 27:4,5; 84:8-12
7. Psalm 136
8. II Cor. 4:16-18
9. Rom. 8:28

Reality #12 – When you are consumed by the love of God, everything else in life pales in comparison.

Action points:

1. Determine not to allow circumstances to cause you to doubt God's love for you.
2. Think of the difference it would be to live outside of God's love.
3. Think of anything that is more important to you than the love of God in your life and then determine how you are going to deal with it.

“Love never fails” – I Cor. 13:8a The scriptures declare that God's love will never fail. The implications of that statement are overwhelming.

What do you think? What are we to understand from the statement “love never fails”?

It is important to believe that God's love overcomes the efforts of the forces of evil and of the evil one. God's love overcomes sin and sinful men.

Also God's love not only **overcomes** but it also **empowers**. It empowers believers to continue under any and all circumstances.

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| 1. Rom. 8:37-39 | 4. II Cor. 2:14 |
| 2. Rom. 8:28 | 5. Eph. 5:2 |
| 3. Rom. 2:4 | 6. John 13:1 |

What do you think? Since God is love (I John 4:8) and God can never fail, wouldn't it make sense that love (God's love) would never fail either?

Reality #13 – *The love of God never fails; therefore, it will succeed in what God is motivated to do and cannot be stopped from what is desired to do. The love of God is irresistible.*

Action points:

1. Believe that God's love will never fail you.
2. Believe that God's love will never fail others, those you love and those you would not love if you were not committed to Jesus.
3. Pray that you will be able to help others to believe in the unfailing love of God.

In order for the love of God to flow in and through your life, you need to practice and promote the 14 realities of the love of God with other believers.

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| 1. II Tim. 2:2 | 6. Col. 1:28-29 |
| 2. Phil. 4:9 | 7. Col. 2:1-3 |
| 3. 1 Cor. 11:1 | 8. I Pet. 4:8 |
| 4. Eph. 5:1-2 | 9. Heb. 10:24 |
| 5. Phil. 2:1-4 | |

Heed the challenge of scripture:

1. I Cor. 13:1-3
2. Rev. 2:4
3. Jude v.21

Reality #14 – *Your awareness of God's love increases when you bring others into a greater awareness of God's love.*

What do you think? Doesn't the spiritual principle of giving also apply to God's love?

- Matt. 10:8c "freely you have received, freely give."
- Acts 20:35c "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Action points:

1. Learn how to communicate and to demonstrate the reality of God's love to others so that they too will become agents of His love.
2. Ask the Lord to use you every day as an agent of His love to others.
3. Make it your prayer that every day you will thank God for His unconditional love for you.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT FROM THESE 14 "LOVE LESSONS":

**My security, my awareness of love,
My acceptance, my hope of the future,
And my value as a person rests in Jesus Christ
and in His love which is unconditional for me.
No matter how I feel, I know that God does not change
and I am complete in Him.
Therefore my mission in life is to love God
and bring others into a life changing awareness
of His love for them
and His desire to love others through their lives.**