

THE LOVE OF GOD

(Moerewa CF – 17/7/86 – EKB)

Readings: *1Jn 4:7-12, 1Cor 13, Gal 5:22,23, 1Jn 3:1,11,14,16-18, Jn 13:34,35, Rom 5:5-8, Jn 3:16,17, Lk 15:20.*

The meaning of love, (Greek – agape), is to unselfishly seek the highest good of another person. It is to be helpful and kind, and do good, as in *Lk 10:33-37*.

God's nature is love. *1Jn 4:8* – “God is love.”

Love is acting in a particular kind of a way towards another person. It is doing the best thing you can for them, even when they do not deserve it. As God's Word says, “God reconciled us to Himself by the death of His Son, even when we were His enemies.” *Rom 5:8,10.*

Mat 25:35,36. As unconverted sinners we were God's enemies. We lived independent of God, pleased ourselves and disobeyed the laws of God.

The greatest act of love, ever, was that “God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.....God sent His Son to be the payment price for our sins.”

1Jn 4:9,10. **Thank God for the Cross!**

Love is unselfish. It does not seek its own, *1Cor 13:5, Lk 10:34, Mat 25:35,36.* Love never acts for its own benefit at the expense of others. Love acts for the benefit of others at its own expense.

1Cor 13:4-8 describes the actions of love. “**Love** suffers long and is kind; **love** does not envy; **love** does not parade itself; **love** is not puffed up; **love** does not behave rudely....” In this passage of scripture, in place of love we can write **Jesus or God**. And in *Jn 13:34*, Jesus is saying we are to live, in such a way, that we can **write our own name** in this passage, in place of **love**. The Holy Spirit in us, is God's love, in us. *Gal 5:22,23, Rom 5:5, 1Jn 4:19, 1Jn 4:11.*

Love is so important, that without, it all our speaking, prophesying, knowledge, faith and sacrifice is worth nothing, *1Cor 13:1-3.*

The parable of the Prodigal Son, in *Lk 15:11-24*, is a picture of the love of the Father heart of God: in His mercy, forgiveness and acceptance. He receives the returning son and blesses him, with robe, ring, shoes, feast and restoration to the family.

The love of God in our hearts. God has given His love to us by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Rom 5:5, Gal 5:22,23, 1Jn 4:7. When we repent, believe in Jesus Christ and are baptised,

Ac 2:38,39, we receive the Holy Spirit, who floods our hearts with God's love, *Rom 5:5*. In our baptism into Christ, *Rom 6:3*, we are baptised into Christ's death, *Rom 6:4*, and the old sin nature is **shattered**, *Rom 6:3*(Living Bible). The Holy Spirit comes in, and lifts us up to live in newness of life, *Rom 6:4*. “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets us free from the law of sin and death.” *Rom 8:2*. Christ is now living His life in us, *Gal 2:20*.

We are now **free to love God and other people**, *Mk 12:29-31*.

Whenever we become aware of a sinful habit in our lives, **we are able to overcome it**, by believing and confessing the truth promises of *Rom 6:6* and *Rom 6:11*. Also *Ezk 36:25-27*, *Rom 8:2*, *2Cor 7:1*, *2Pet 1:3,4*, etc. Sin is a defeated foe because the new life of Christ in us is greater than the old life of sin. *Gal 2:20*, *Eph 4:22,24*.

We are now free to love God and do His will. *Jn 14:15*, *1Jn 5:3*, *Deut 30:6*, *Ps 40:8*, *Heb 8:10*, *Rom 5:5*.

Also we are now free to love other people, as we love ourselves.

1Jn 4:7 We love one another because God gives us His love.

1Jn 4:19 We love, because He first loved us.

1Jn 4:11 We treat others as God has loved us.

Mat 7:12 As we want to be loved, so we love others.

Mat 22:39 We love our neighbours as we love ourselves. (*Rom 13:9*, *Gal 5:14*, love fulfils all the law.)

Eph 4:32 We pass on God's kindness to others.

Mat 18:21-35 We pass on God's mercy and forgiveness to others.

Rom 14:3,15:7 We accept, receive and bless others as Christ has received us.

We are able to forgive those who hurt, offend, ridicule, or criticise us. We can refuse resentment, unforgiveness, pride, hate, anger and revenge. God's love in us is what enables us, *Rom 6:14*.

We are able to overcome selfishness and live for the benefit of others, *1Jn 4:7*, **NOW!**