

BY PASTOR WALE AFELUMO

## LOVE IS A GIFT

### SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

John 3:16-17

### ADDITIONAL STUDY

Lamentations 3:22-23, I Corinthians  
13:4-8 & I John 4:7-8

### PRAYER

Lord, I thank You for Your gift of love to me, and Your steadfast love for me that never ceases. Today, I receive grace to show Your love to others through selfless acts of giving.

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. - John 3:16**

Love, it seems, is everywhere. You read about it in books, you see it in films and on television, you hear about it on radio and in everyday conversations...love is ever present. We grapple with it in our family and official relationships. Our lives are made richer or poorer because of the presence or absence of love.

Every Valentine's season, sights and sounds of smiling couples enjoying their "love" in pleasant and exotic destinations follow us everywhere. So the question is: should Christians or the Church be adding to the "noise" by talking about love? Should we not be focusing on more serious issues?

The answer is: Yes, the Church needs to talk about love because the world's idea of love is very distorted and we have a mission to show the world, in action and words, what true love – God's love – really means. The word 'love,' connotes different things to different people. But in its pure form, it is the nature of God. The Bible captures it simply and powerfully: "GOD IS LOVE." The world needs the love of God truly manifested through the Church of Jesus Christ.

God so loved the world that He GAVE His only begotten Son as a gift to the world. Love came to us as a gift, its core essence therefore is giving. Thus, to show the world that we are truly born of God and have His nature, we must extend our hands to selflessly give to bless others.

True love is not stingy. When love possesses the heart, it instructs the hands and the pocket. You can't say you love me if nothing has ever left you to me. Love that has not touched your pocket is only theory. Giving shows the sacrificial nature of love. So, as the world celebrates this Valentine's Day, make it a day of expressing God's love to others. Be creative in showing love: send a surprise gift to a friend, order pizza for your office, give someone a word of encouragement, write a lovely note to your spouse, take your family out, load call credit on someone's phone, help a sibling that is struggling financially with some money, buy something simple and nice for a colleague, etc. You don't need to break the bank to give something that would put smiles on people's faces today; just do something to show that they matter to God and they matter to you.

For those that may feel lonely and alone because there is no one to celebrate the day with you, I want you to know that God loves you unconditionally and calls you the apple of His eyes. Don't wallow in self-pity, make today a day to revel in His love – go out and express same to others.

Happy Valentine's Day!

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