

"Extreme LOVE"

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Tuesday is Valentine's Day. A day when people give each other "valentine's cards" shaped like hearts, always red or pink. Often a Valentine's Card includes cute or funny sayings revealing their love. I like the ones we gave the boys in rangers on Wednesday. They were all built on a "Godzilla" theme.

I saved one of them to give to Tara. The card has a picture of Godzilla stepping on stuff and it said, "I have a BIG CRUSH on YOU!!!"

Valentine's Day, although it's often hokey, is a time when people think about love. What a perfect time for us to remember God's awesome love for us.

I. God's LOVE for us is UNFAILING!!!

Psalm 13:5 NIV

But I trust in your **unfailing love**;
my heart rejoices in your salvation

Psalm 21:7 NIV (David-about himself and God)

For the king trusts in the Lord;
through the **unfailing love** of the Most High
he will not be shaken.

David made God's LOVE the foundation of his life. His trust was in God, and because of David's trust in God, David could not be shaken. God's LOVE for us is permanent and unfailing. If we remember that, nothing anyone else does or says can shake us.

Illustration:

I used to be a very shy and withdrawn person. I was afraid to be myself. I was afraid to talk to people I didn't know. There were only a few close people that I felt comfortable talking to, and I was AFRAID to talk to anyone else. I felt like I was a "nobody". When I was 14 I never would have been able to get up in front of people and say anything. I believed that I was the least of the least and that I didn't matter, not to anybody. I was sure that even God was ashamed of me, and could never accept me.

I hope you've noticed there's been a change!!! I still have my uncertainties at times, but I am unafraid. And what should I fear??? Let me explain...

God allowed me to join a youth group that was full of people that were in love with JESUS. God was moving mightily among this little group of young people, and often during our youth services we would have time at the altar, where we would meet with God. During one of those times at the altar, I had come forward to get prayed for and I knew God would do something in my life. A lady named Andrea Bello, a mighty woman of God, and one of the youth leaders at the time, prayed for me. She obeyed God and as she prayed passionately, she spoke words sent by God to me. God spoke to me that night words I will never forget. God said, "You are a mighty man of valor. You see yourself as the least of people, like Gideon in the Bible. But God says, you are a mighty man of God. I have chosen you. You are a mighty man of valor."

God has shown me that I matter to Him. He has proven to me that His love for me is great... and He has revealed His love to me time and again. I am fully convinced of God's love for me, and for all mankind, because I have experienced it, and it has changed my life. He loves you just like He loves me, and His love never fails. Now, why I should care what people think of me??? Why should I be ashamed to speak out, and even to speak boldly for God... The God that created the universe loves me.

Understanding God's Love is what allowed David to be the bold King of Israel. God's love helped David not to be shaken, and His same love empowers me to live an awesome life. God's same unfailing love is for you too.

Psalm 100:5 NIV

For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

His love and faithfulness is for every generation. Whether you are a baby boomer, a generation X-er, a Senior, or small child... God's love and faithfulness is for you!!!

Like the song we sing.

Sing:

"I give thanks to the Lord, our God and King, His love endures forever... For He is good, He is above all things, His love endures forever..."

**God's love for us really does endure forever.
God's love for us is UNFAILING.**

II. God's LOVE for us is EXTREME!!!

John 15:13-14 NIV

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life
for his friends. [14] You are my friends if you do what I
command.

These words of Jesus mean even more to us now than when they were spoken. We can look back on the cross and know that Christ revealed HIS GREAT LOVE by laying down His life for us. NO one has ever lived a greater life of PASSION than Jesus Christ.

God's love for us is so EXTREME that He gave Christ for us.

Romans 5:8 NIV

But **God demonstrates his own love for us** in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Even while we were in sin, even though God knew that we would be born into sin, and follow our own lusts and be sinners, Jesus shed His blood as the payment for us. We can only come to God in a relationship of LOVE through JESUS CHRIST. **God had such an awesome LOVE for us, that He would pay any price, and He did so we could live a life of LOVE for HIM.**

Which brings me to my next point.

III. We Are Called To EXTREME LOVE for God

Jesus gave His very life as an act of LOVE for you and ME. God did the most romantic thing anyone has ever done. CHRIST died for you in me, and He did it so we could LOVE HIM in return. **As we begin to understand God's love for us, it is not hard to LOVE Him in return.**

Rhetorical ?: **-And how do we show our love for God???**

We just read John 15:14...

John 15:14NIV You are my friends if you do what I command.

God asks that in return for His ultimate sacrifice, that we follow Him and obey Him. And is that too much to ask???

NO WAY!!!

God deserves our total obedience and devotion. God deserves our LOVE. God IS LOVE and has introduced us to the deepest form of LOVE. The question is; do we love in return???

And what are the commands of God???

Mark 12:30-31 NIV

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' [31] The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

I ask do you LOVE with EVERYTHING you have???. Do you give yourself to God for anything He calls you to???. Do you Love Him with every part of you???. Do you LOVE others, like yourself???

I know my "love life" with God needs constant work. I'm not as in LOVE with God as I want to be. If you, like me, need more LOVE for God and for others, than find a place right now to meet with God.

Ask the youth worship team to come up and play Jesus, Lover of My Soul. As we do I ask you to express your love to God.

If you are struggling with obeying God's commands, if you have sin in your life, now is a perfect time to ask God for his forgiveness. Now is the perfect time to turn away from sin, and turn towards God. If you have something you need to get right with God, do it. Admit your sin and ask God's forgiveness, then turn away from it.

Let's show our love for God right now. Find a place and think about God's love for you. Thank God for His Love, and tell Him how much you love Him. God's a romantic, show Him some love tonight.

