

## ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE?

Perhaps if you're a child of the 60's like me, the title of this devotional has your mind singing this old Beatles tune. Perhaps you were even as convinced as I was back then of the life-fulfilling, soul-satisfying truth of these words. All I had to do was to find love! Oh, the profound simplicity of what I'm sure you have now come to realize is a complex and all too elusive reality. Perhaps in your search for this love that would meet all your needs you fell into the trap of these lyrics from another song..."Looking for love in all the wrong places, looking for love in too many faces...", a search that more often than not found more heartache and heartbreak than fulfillment. So years later the need, if not the search, lives on. Or perhaps you were one of the lucky ones who have actually been loved or found true love, but have still come to discover with the passing of the years that it doesn't seem to be all you need. There is this lingering discontent that haunts the shadows of your soul, pressing upon your heart, mind, soul, and spirit to the point your heart cries out, "Is this all there is?!" Your once youthful optimism of being completed by love has slowly been replaced by a cynical despair. So where did you go wrong? Have you been misled? Were you duped? And so, if you have yet to find a love that can satisfy your needs, why in your heart of hearts do you still want to believe it can?

Well, the answer to that is far simpler than you may have expected. It is an answer that is as old as time itself. It is one of the most well known truths of all time, yet one of the least understood, therefore seldom apprehended and experienced. The truth is that love is all you need. The catch, though, is whose love it is. There is no doubt in anyone's mind that all humans need love to have any chance of an emotionally and mentally healthy, normal, happy life. But what is not understood is that not just anyone's or any kind of love will do this. The cry of every human heart is to be loved unconditionally and forever: in other words, no matter what! Don't you long to be loved no matter how unlovable you might be or act, no matter what circumstances you find yourself in? Don't you hope to be loved even after you're gone because of the positive impact you made in others' lives? But even though that is the cry of the human heart, there is no mortal human who can actually love this way. Mothers come closest, but still fall short.

The reason the human heart cries out for this kind of love is because we were created by our Creator to be in a love relationship. God made us in His image for the very purpose of having a love relationship with us. Our hearts were made for love, for His love, for Him! God's love is all we need! His love alone satisfies us, completes us, and makes us whole thereby enabling us to both give to and receive love from Him and others. Apart from God's love making us whole, we have all sustained enough damage in this life to doubt we are even lovable enough to receive love, let alone have the wherewithal to completely meet anyone else's need for love. The Scriptures say that "God is love." (I John 4:16) This means that God's love is not just something He feels, or does, it is who He is. For Him not to love would be acting in a manner against Himself, against His very nature. This would be self-destructive and He would cease to be God. II Timothy 2:13 says that even if we are faithless, God remains faithful because He cannot deny Himself. Therefore, of all the love promised in this life, only God's promise of love can be truly believed and trusted because He must act in accordance with His nature, with His character, as He cannot deny Himself.

Also, unlike human love, God's love is unconditional. He didn't wait until we found Him, or met certain criteria that made us lovable, but He came to us, sending His own Son to die for the sin that separates us from God, so that we may have a love relationship with Him. Because God's love is unconditional it is also forever. God loves us no matter what. (Rom.5:8) You can't do anything to make Him love you more or do anything that will make Him love you less. His love for you is not based on your merit, but just the simple, amazing fact that He created you because He loves you and to love you! Therefore, God will always love you now and for eternity.

God's love is also perfect, meaning complete, lacking nothing, therefore able to accomplish its goals. God's goal in loving us is to bring us into a love relationship with Himself; a love relationship that will completely satisfy us by meeting all our needs and that will make us whole by healing all the damage inflicted upon our heart and psyche by this world. God's love is perfect and Scripture says "perfect love casts out fear". (I John 4:18) So gone will be all your insecurities, worries, doubts, and fears to be replaced by the immeasurable love and person of God Himself, the author of and the authority on both love and you! What else, what more could you possibly need?

Prayer:

My Heavenly Father, how thankful I am that You created me to be in this amazing love relationship with You. Amazing because it is totally unconditional and unchanging as it is based on Your nature and merit, not mine; amazing because it alone has fulfilled the deepest longings of my heart and mind; amazing because by being loved perfectly, I am in turn also being perfected by Your love, thereby perfected in my ability to love You back and to love others as I have been loved. Lord do whatever it takes to draw all those who read this and long to be loved like this to Yourself that they might freely receive it and never have to feel empty or unloved again.

Follow Up:

For a more complete picture of God's love read I Corinthians 13 and replace the word love with God. That's how God loves you! For a contrast replace your name or anyone else's and see how far we fall short of the perfect love of God. But don't despair, because in being loved this way by God, over time we in turn learn to love others this way as well.

Challenge:

What keeps you from receiving the amazing love God has for you? It is a free gift offered to all through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, but just like any gift, you need to start by believing it is yours and then claiming it as yours by receiving it. Why not open your heart right now and claim Him as your Lord and Savior? Surely you know by now that there is no one else that can satisfy your needs. It's not a matter of finding someone to love you, but of believing in and receiving into your heart the only One that can love you as you need, as He created you to be loved! Don't hold back, invite Him into your heart now!

For Further Study:

Proverbs 10:12; 17:17; Micah 7:18; Romans 5:6-10; 8:31-39

*By Debbie Amble...2007*