

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** I John 4:7-12 "... He who does not love does not know God, for *God is love*. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us."

**Quote:** "Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made, Were every stalk on earth a quill, And every man a scribe by trade, To write the love of God above, Would drain the ocean dry. Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched from sky to sky." From: *The Love of God* by Frederick M. Lehman

**G**od is love. "This means more than 'God is loving' or that God sometimes loves. It means that He loves, not because He finds objects worthy of His love, but because *it is His nature to love*. His love for us depends not on what we are, but on *what He is*. He loves us because He is that kind of God, because He is love."<sup>1</sup> The Greek word for love is *agape*—a deliberate demonstration of pure benevolence for the highest good of the person or object loved. *Agape* far exceeds the love of passion, or of fondness between family and friends because it is part of the fruit of the Spirit. *Agape* is unmerited; it cannot be earned. *Agape* is unconditional; it has no prerequisites of any kind. *Agape* is unreserved; it has no areas that it does not address. *Agape* is unending; it never ceases to fulfill its duty. *Agape* is unselfish; it often involves sacrificial investment for the love object. *Agape* is unpretentious; it does not flaunt itself.

God graciously expressed the essence of Who He is in sending Christ into the world to "save His people from their sins."<sup>2</sup> "Christ died that we might live 'through' Him, 'for' Him, and 'with' Him."<sup>3</sup> In John 17, Jesus Himself referenced the love of God for those whom He gave to Christ. "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and *have loved them*

as *You have loved Me*. Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for *You loved Me before the foundation of the world*. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, *that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.*"<sup>4</sup> In Romans 8, Paul boldly declared that absolutely nothing can separate believers from the love of Christ and of God.

Shortly before embracing the cup of God's wrath on behalf of His own, Jesus told His disciples, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."<sup>5</sup>

Isaac Watts captured the awe and gratitude with which any Christian should contemplate the love of God that rescued him at the awful cost of Christ's own blood. "When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ my God! All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood. See from His head, His hands, His feet, *sorrow and love flow mingled down! Did e'er such love and sorrow meet*, or thorns compose so rich a crown? Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small; *love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.*"

1 The New Bible Commentary 2 Matthew 1:21 3 W. Wiersbe; I Jn.4:9; 2 Cor.5:15; 1 Thes.5:9-10 4 John 17:23-26 5 John 13:34, 35; 15:9-14