



# GOSPEL DAILY DEVOTIONAL

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A MINISTRY OF GRACE CHAPEL

For Families

## LOVE: THE GREATEST OF ALL

Start with prayer, then ask...



### DISCUSSION QUESTION:

How would you describe what it means to love someone? What are some things that other people do for you that make you feel loved?



**READ TOGETHER:** 1 Corinthians 13:1–8



### DISCUSSION QUESTION:

If you had to summarize all these qualities of love in one phrase or sentence or phrase, what would you say?



### DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Why is it so important for people who follow Jesus to love other people?

## DIGGING DEEPER

In today's passage, we're looking at the letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians where he tells them that all the spiritual gifts they're bragging about don't matter if they don't have love. Then he describes what gift is the best of all and what it is like. He is talking about LOVE!

Love is the greatest of the three things that remain because God is love. This is a hard concept to understand for kids... even for adults! The Bible says God is not just loving—He doesn't just show love to people—He is love (1 John 4:16). That means if we know God, and if we have God's Holy Spirit living in our hearts, we will have love in our hearts and show love to other people—all other people.

In fact, the apostle John said you can't say you love God if you don't show love for other people (1 John 4:20). If you are not showing this kind of love to other people, the Holy Spirit may not really be living in your heart. Or at least, you aren't letting Him rule in your heart, because God is love.

The kind of love Paul talks about here in Corinthians is a special, God-level of love that only comes from Him. All human beings love each other on a basic level because we were all created by God, and

He put that love in us. Everyone loves their family and their friends, whether they have a relationship with God or not. But this kind of love is a special God-level of love that only comes from having a relationship with Him and having the Holy Spirit live inside you.

**The Bible uses different words to talk about these two kinds of love. Let's try saying these words together: *phileo* and *agape*.**

Phileo love is a natural love you don't really have to try to have, you just do. Everyone loves their family and friends. Everybody loves people who are nice to them. The special God-level of love Paul is talking about here is called agape. Agape love is not natural. It's supernatural. Supernatural means "super" natural—more than what is natural, better than what is natural. Agape is a selfless, generous love that loves other people without expecting anything in return, like giving to the poor, knowing they could never pay you back. It is based in the kind of love God showed for us, because we could never pay Him back for all He has done for us!

When we look at the list in 1 Corinthians 13, we notice two main things about it. First, the qualities are all things love does, not how love feels. Because agape love isn't a feeling. It's a choice you make to love someone. It's not just saying you love them but showing it through your actions. It's choosing to love someone even when they aren't being very lovable. Agape love isn't just loving your friends and family. It's loving someone who annoys you, someone you don't really love to be around, even someone who has been mean to you or hurt you. Even someone you might consider your enemy, someone you would otherwise hate if you weren't a follower of Jesus. Agape love is choosing to show love to that person whether they deserve it or not. Because God loves us when we don't deserve it.

Second, the things in the list all describe ways you put other people ahead of yourself. Agape love is sacrificing yourself to help others. Putting other people's needs ahead of your own, just like Jesus did for us. Agape love is a completely other-focused love, a voluntary giving of yourself to others. A love that doesn't demand anything but only seeks the welfare of others. A love that serves.

## APPLY IT TO LIFE

This love is really hard to do. As you get older, you will see more and more how hard it is to love someone who has hurt you and to live a life of service out in the world where most people just live for themselves and their own happiness.

If we look at this list in 1 Corinthians, we might think, yeah, but I'm not very *patient*! Or, I am not always *kind*. Or, sometimes I try to *get my own way*!

Don't be discouraged. God has promised that if we walk by His Spirit, He will grow this kind of love in us over time. He compares it to a fruit, which starts out as a seed that grows into a tree that finally produces fruit. It can take a very long time to grow. Every year that we walk by the Spirit, this kind of supernatural love will come more naturally for us.



### PARENT STORY:

Describe a time when you really struggled to love someone and how God helped you to show them love anyway.

**FAMILY ACTIVITY:**

Brainstorm together how you can love someone in a selfless way this week. It may be doing something for one another, or it may be serving someone in your community. It may simply be showing more patience with one another or not demanding your own way. Choose one concrete thing and then pray for God to give you the strength and love to do it.

**PRAY TOGETHER:**

*Dear God, thank you for your incredible, selfless love for us. Thank you for making the ultimate sacrifice for us because of your great love. Help us to love other people the way you have loved us. In Jesus's name, Amen.*

**MEMORIZE TOGETHER:**

"Love never fails" – 1 Corinthians 13:8