

5 Ways to Love Like Jesus

Regardless of who we are or what we've done, Jesus loves us and "he died for us while we were still sinners." (Romans 5:8) There is nothing we can do, or not do to make him love us more or less. God loves because it's in his nature to love; God is love. This *unconditional* love that God has for us isn't easy for our human nature to comprehend. We better understand the concept of earning or receiving something good based upon our performance. God's unconditional love is an act of generosity and should motivate us to love him back with a grateful heart of worship.

Unconditional love is caring about someone without limitations; loving without conditions and doing something to make someone happy without any thought for what we might get for ourselves. This type of love is rare; it's uncommon to receive kindness without strings attached. This kind of love includes risk and a willingness to fail as we give ourselves over with vulnerability.

It's putting our own needs and pride behind us and doing what's best for someone else regardless of how we feel. It requires staying close to someone, not judging or punishing them but loving without conditions. This type of love has the power to heal wounds, bring people closer together and create relationships beyond our capacity to imagine.

Unconditional love requires we love God first. Only He can provide the strength and ability to give this same love to another person. God loves unconditionally and nothing changes His love for us; this is an impressive truth.

When we love this way it gives us a certain amount of power we must not take for granted. It means we are obligated to tell people the truth with gentle, kind communication, without judgment and staying by them to see them to the better side of

their difficulties. As Christians we have a responsibility to express our love daily into the lives of others.

The benefits of loving others this way includes genuine connections, personal transformations and empowering others to step out of their comfort zones and make a difference. When we love like Christ does, this makes it possible for people to see and feel a genuine and intentional love for them.

5 Powerful Ways to Love Like Jesus:

1. Forgive: Forgiveness is a choice and not a feeling, which takes time and prayer. One of the hardest people to forgive is ourselves. When the wrongs we committed can't be justified in our minds; our hearts hold us accountable. But Jesus has already forgiven us after we ask. If *He* forgives us for every sin; we need to forgive ourselves. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

2. Sacrifice: Putting our own needs, desires and wants aside to focus on other people's needs and wants. This can be as simple as allowing someone to go ahead of us in line, choosing not to argue with someone's opinion or spending time helping someone in need. Sacrifice requires a positive attitude and an obedient heart. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." (Romans 12:1)

3. Pray: Praying for people is an act of unconditional love. Especially when we pray for our enemies. This allows us to lift others up to God in a positive manner, asking God to bless people and work in their hearts and lives according to His plan and purposes. "But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on

the just and the unjust alike.” (Matthew 5:44-45)

4. Tell others about God: Christianity isn't a secret club. We were never told to keep God a secret; but to go and tell the world about Jesus! It's not always in the perfect place, time or at our convenience. We won't always feel comfortable or accepted; but it's about sharing the message and hope of Jesus Christ for the purpose of reaching souls for the Kingdom of God. “He said to them, “Go into the entire world and preach the gospel to all creation.” (Mark 16:15)

5. Be Humble: Living with a humble opinion of ourselves takes us off our own minds and from holding a first place position. Humility teaches us that God created us for His purposes and not our own. We become peacemakers, recognizing every person has a purpose and needs to be treated with dignity and respect. Being humble requires saying no to sinful behavior or responses that want to over-ride our “Christ-like” attitude.

We may never realize or truly know the impact we have in this world; and sometimes it feels like we aren't doing enough. But God knows best and we have to be obedient to living out His word daily. We can never give too much, love too much or care too much. Let's ask God on a daily basis what we can do for Him by reaching out to others with unconditional love.

“Unconditional Love helps others know that despite any discouragement they feel or wrongs they've committed; someone cares about them.”

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