

Looking for Love?

All of us are born with a *need* for love and acceptance. God made us this way.

Studies show that babies who are held and loved do far better than those who are not.

Because of this innate need, many of us spend our lives looking for love—sometimes in all the wrong places. We want to belong, to be part of something or someone. We seek acceptance and a sense of belonging wherever we go.

Being driven by our need can cause all kinds of problems. It might lead us to cling to our children, smothering rather than loving them, and stifling their growth and development. Or it might tempt us to live in a fantasy world, dreaming of a knight in shining armor who will fill the void in our lives.

It always causes us to look to others for affirmation: family members, friends, co-workers and so on. We rely on their esteem to convince ourselves we are worthy of esteem.

The truth is that as Christians, we are already *fully* accepted in the Beloved. We are members of God's family, precious daughters of the King, who are totally and unconditionally loved!

There isn't anything we can do to earn this love. God freely bestows it upon us, and He will

never discard those
who seek Him. He has assured us, “‘The one who comes to Me I
will certainly not
cast out’” (John 6:37, NKJV).

We do not need to look for satisfaction anywhere else. Yet,
even though I
know this, at times I have found myself seeking affirmation
from others—and
feeling unloved and rejected when I didn’t receive it.

When I asked the Lord about my actions and responses He
said, “Whenever you look to *others* for
love or acceptance, you *will* be
disappointed. You are already loved; you are already accepted
by Me. Come to Me
and receive your fill, then you will be able to be a giver of
love. Seek to
share My love with others rather than looking to receive it
from them. As you
give, you will receive because you will reap what you sow.

“Seek to accept others even as I
have accepted and continue to accept you—not because you’re
perfect but because
I love you and count you worthy of the price of My blood. You
are a gift to me,
bought and cherished. Cherish others as I cherish you. Love
others as I love
you.”

Now that’s affirmation! Because I am *already* accepted and
loved beyond measure, I
don’t *need* to
look to others for love. I can love them without *any*
expectation of reciprocity. I can
release them to be who they are without placing demands upon
them. I can love

unconditionally.

They are also free *not* to do something for me just because I did something for them. In fact, Jesus told us that it is better for us to invite those to dinner who *can't* repay us. As a matter of fact, we actually receive a greater reward when we do something for people who can't or don't pay us back—it is a greater indicator of our love.

If you are looking for love, quit looking in all the wrong places and find it in your God. His unconditional love will embrace and transform you into a vessel of beauty and honor. Then His love will flow through you to others and bring His healing, restoring presence. Receive it from *Him* that you may give it out—and watch how you reap what you sow!

PRAYER POWER WEEK OF 2/14/2011

As you pray this week embrace God's unconditional love for you, let it fill you heart, express it back to Him and share it with others. Ask Him to direct your steps to those who desperately need to know they are loved so that you can be a vessel of reconciliation and acceptance. Pray for those struggling through personal and economic loss as well as the ravages of winter weather. Pray for Australia's recovery from the cyclone and floods and ask the Lord to intervene for His glory in Egypt, Israel, the Middle East and our own nation. Jer. 31:3; John

6:37; 1 John 1:4