

31. Love

The importance of love could hardly be more emphatically stated by the Bible. Love should encompass every area of our lives and be the basis of all that we do in relating to people. Other personal qualities reflective of love are also discussed in this chapter.

Loving Others

What love is

Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or ⁵rude. Love isn't selfish or quick tempered. It doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do. ⁶Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil. ⁷Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4–7 CEV

Love others as you love yourself – which sums up God's law

Let love be your only debt! *If you love others, you have done all that the Law demands.* ⁹In the Law there are many commands, such as, “Be faithful in marriage. Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not want what belongs to others.” But *all of these are summed up in the command that says, “Love others as much as you love yourself.”* ¹⁰No one who loves others will harm them. So love is all that the Law demands. ROMANS 13:8–10 CEV

The whole moral law – all that involves our relationships with other people – is summed up by the command to love others as ourselves. In doing so, we fulfill or carry out God's law.

Love your enemies and do good to them

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ... ³¹Treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you. LUKE 6:27B–28, 31 NET

Showing Mercy

Show mercy – and God will show you mercy

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. LUKE 6:36 ISV

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. MATTHEW 5:7 NET

Forgive others and God will forgive you

If you forgive others for the wrongs they do to you, your Father in heaven will forgive you. ¹⁵But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins. MATTHEW 6:14–15 CEV

Further Things to Do

Be humble, gentle and patient

Be humble and gentle in every way. Be patient with each other and lovingly accept each other. EPHESIANS 4:2 GW

Be generous and share with others

[PAUL, TELLING TIMOTHY WHAT TO SAY TO CHURCH MEMBERS:] Command them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share with others. 1 TIMOTHY 6:18 GNT

Things to Avoid

Avoid anger

Do not become angry easily, ²⁰because anger will not help you live the right kind of life God wants. JAMES 1:19B–20 NCV™

Do not hate

You must not hate your fellow citizen in your heart. LEVITICUS 19:17A NCV™

Do not murder

You shall not murder. EXODUS 20:13 ISV