

## A Prayer for True Love

By Marjorie Jackson

*"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love." 1 John 4:8 (NASB)*

God's love for you and me is passionate, pure and beyond anything we've ever experienced, accepting us as we are. Our good, our sins, our past and our flaws are all bare before His eyes, yet being the perfect Gentleman and Father He is, He washes, changes, teaches and grows us tenderly. He reminds us of our worth and beauty as His daughters. He wants to forgive, bless and take care of us. He loves us with unconditional *agape* love. Good news: His love never fails. (**1 Corinthians 13:8**) We can love like that, too — not in our own strength or willpower, but by the **Holy Spirit** perfecting God's love in our hearts. (**1 John 4:12**) The deeper we know God and His arduous, purposeful love for us and for others, the easier we can love others as an act of loving obedience to God.

**1 John 4:20** tells it like it is: *"If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen."* (NASB)

Of course. How can we defy God's command to love the people He has placed in our lives and *still* claim to love Him? Our obedience to God's Word comes from our love and reverence for Him who gave His *all* so we could keep on giving and loving like He has done for us.

It is only when we love God first and foremost that we can reach our full potential in loving others as friends, sisters, daughters, wives and mothers. As we grow in our love for God and in our knowledge of His love, we begin to change. We begin to see and love others differently.

In reality, true love happens when the stars don't align, sparks dim and butterflies fly away. Love happens when we sacrifice, knowing we'll get nothing in return. We are patient, kind, never envious or boastful, modeling **1 Corinthians 13** in our hearts and with our behavior without expecting payback or accolade. We lay down our lives in love.

Today's key verse, **1 John 4:8** says, *"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love."* I hope you find true love. I hope you and I grow so close to God that we naturally begin to *"love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith"* (**1 Timothy 1:5b**, NASB). May you and I so overflow with God's love that it runs up and over onto everyone we meet. His love will never fail, because God Himself is true love, and God never fails.

***Heavenly Father, Thank You for loving me long before I ever loved You. Affirm Your love to me so I may know it well and pour it out on those around me. You are good, and Your love is perfect. In Jesus' Name, Amen.***