

God's love letter to you



We can not live well without love. It is a universal truth as much as it is a cliché. Love lost, love unrequited, love received - these are the real events that make our lives and mark our memories. Without true love in our lives, whether it be a parent, a child, a lover, a friend, or a pet, we limp along surviving but never thriving. And it is not a coincidence that as the oft-quoted Bible verse declares, "God is love" (1 John 4:16). God is love, and He has created us to exist, to thrive, in His love.

But what does "God is love" really mean? Some conclude that the prevalence of suffering in this world precludes the existence of a loving God. That makes sense. If God is all-powerful and all-loving, why would He allow the terrible suffering that has darkened each one of our lives?

The Bible is a very long love letter that describes why. God's love is holistic and long-sighted. He doesn't give His beloved ice cream for breakfast because it will make them happy in the morning. When the humans He has created to thrive in His love reject Him - He loves them enough to let them experience the natural consequences of their choice. And the natural consequence of living outside God's love is suffering. That is not to say that the suffering in a person's life is a specific or proportionate consequence of their sin. Rather, because of our common rejection of the God who is love, we live in a world, in bodies and relationships,

that are broken and love deficient.

Yet God loves us still. He doesn't delight in the suffering we have brought upon ourselves. On the contrary, with a grieving and love-filled heart, God steps into our suffering. Jesus going to the cross is that moment in the movie where the heroic lover sacrifices himself to save their beloved - even after the beloved has denied him.

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." 1 John 4:10.

Have you accepted the strong, forgiving, self-sacrificing love of God? Have you acknowledged that you have not loved God but He has loved you? Have you read His love letter to you? Perhaps you could start by reading 1 John (a letter recorded towards the end of the Bible). Whatever love you are blessed to have in your life there is none stronger, deeper, or better than God's love for you.

Prayer:

Dear God, open my eyes and heart to the depths of your love. Help me to see that, though I haven't loved you, you have loved me. I receive the gift of Jesus's atoning sacrifice for my sins. Please fill me with your love. Amen.