

Is 'Love is Love' Really True?

This is a phrase that is frequently used these days, but is it really true? If two people 'love' each other, then what can ever be wrong about that? But what do people really mean when they say, 'love is love?' Is it just a soundbite - an empty, vacuous statement put out there to provide an excuse for sinful behaviour? The Bible is very clear about what constitutes sin and provides the moral limits to what humans should do. This isn't just a way to put the brakes on our fun, but to protect us from the dangers and consequences of sin.

Sometimes, we humans are like naughty children stomping our feet wanting to play in a dangerous place because that's where it is exciting. But a loving father would always stop us to protect us because usually he knows better what is good for us! Because love is also about correcting each other, placing limits and not tolerating sinful behaviour.

For example, if 'love is love' is ALWAYS true, that means we shouldn't protect children from paedophiles. Incest would be okay. Bestiality would be perfectly acceptable. Why not?? Any form of sexual immorality is fine! But perhaps we need to differentiate different *types* of love to understand this better.

In *The Four Loves*, C.S. Lewis explores four distinct types of love: affection, friendship, romantic love, and divine love ('agape'). He examines how each love can be both a reflection of God's goodness and a potential danger when misused.

1. Affection is the love often found in families and between people who have grown close over time. It is the most natural and instinctive of the four loves, seen in a parent's love for a child or the bond between old friends. It simply grows out of prolonged association. However, Lewis warns that this love can become possessive or smothering if not tempered by selflessness.

2. Friendship is the love between friends, based on shared values and interests. Lewis regards it as the least celebrated yet one of the most profound loves. It is intentional - friends choose each other based on common pursuits. Friendship involves standing side by side, looking at the same truth. Lewis warns, however, that friendship can become exclusive or even prideful if it turns into a clique that alienates others.

3. Romantic Love is the passionate love between a man and a woman. Lewis distinguishes it from mere sexual desire, describing it as a deep emotional and spiritual connection. True romantic love values the beloved as a person rather than just an object of pleasure. However, Lewis cautions that romantic love, if idolised, can become a consuming force that blinds people to their flaws or leads them to justify destructive behaviour. When rightly ordered, though, romantic love can reflect God's love and the beauty of His design for relationships.

4. Charity or Divine Love ('Agape') is the highest and most selfless form of love. It is unconditional, sacrificial, and reflects God's love for humanity. Unlike the other loves, which can be mixed with selfish motives, *Agape* seeks NOTHING in return. It is the love demonstrated by Jesus's sacrifice on the cross.

What is interesting to note is that sexual desire on its own isn't even a form of love! You may have feelings that you can't help. But what you CAN help is whether to ACT on those feelings. Sometimes the feelings can be overwhelming, but this is where God can help in resisting the sin.

God is pure love, but He is many other things besides. He is pure justice too, which means He expects every sin to be paid for or else we can never be in His presence - we will be eternally separated from Him when our bodies die. We are incapable of making this payment on our own. But the gospel (meaning 'good news') is that Jesus paid this debt for us. Jesus was the only one

that ever lived a perfect life and had no sinful nature. He is the only one that God would accept as a sacrifice to pay for the sins of mankind.

"For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". John 3:16

How can you have access to the greatest act of love ever known to man?

Repent for your sins from your heart and put your trust in Jesus. Believe that Jesus paid the ultimate price by being cruelly crucified, then rising from the dead three days later to conquer death. Belief in Jesus is the ONLY way to God and to achieve eternal life in the presence of God. THIS is THE truth. No other belief system makes this claim, as all others rely on our own good deeds for salvation, not the grace of God.

**"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me".
John 14:6**

Do you want to find out more? Here are some useful resources to begin your journey:

davidpawson.co.uk
derekprince.com
bibleproject.com
khouse.org

(produced by kingdomtracts.co.uk)