

**Love that makes you go,
Hrrrrrrrrrrroooooooooowwww!!!!**

By David Gantt

Eros love is the love reserved for your future spouse. Don't waste it on temporary fixes.

Proverbs 30:18-19; Song of Songs (or Solomon) 8:6-7; Matthew 5:28; John 4:8 and 16, 13:35; Ephesians 5:22-33

Grab Their Attention

Like Christ Loves the Church (part 1)

As a little girl, I dreamed about my wedding—from the cake, to the dress, and even the man I would marry. When you're dreaming about how your special day will be, you never think about the trials that will come after that day.

Before I was born, my mother was diagnosed with a severe case of arthritis. Every day was a struggle for her. My father chose to love and serve her daily. Some days it was simply cooking her breakfast or helping her tie her shoes. Regardless of the task, my father loved my mother. Many years later, I saw my father serve my mother in a new way when my mother was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. My father spent his days loving, serving, and praying for her. I had never seen my father so exhausted both physically and spiritually, but he continued. This was his commitment to Christ as well as my mother.

Shortly after my husband and I married, we faced intimate trials no marriage should face. An activity that once brought us joy now brought pain and tears. Each time, I would cry myself to sleep. The pain, lack of intimacy, and the feeling that I was a failure as a wife drove a wedge between us.

These were difficult days that turned to years that neither of us were sure would ever end. My husband stood by me. He laid aside every hurt feeling and chose to love me where I was. He loved me through pain and tears. Today, he still loves me. People say that girls look for husbands who display the same kind of qualities as their fathers. Today more than ever, I am thankful I found a soulmate who loves like my father and who loves like Jesus.

Like Christ Loves the Church (part 2)

We had only been married for two short years the night she first felt it: a sharp stabbing pain that immediately overwhelmed all her other senses. The intensity would wane over the next several hours in waves of aches, grimaces, and tears. As a shy and skinny 20-year-old, I had promised to love this woman for better or worse, but I assumed the worst would come after decades of preparation. That's not what happened. The pain kept coming back. At night, with a baby just down the hall, we tried to connect in the same way that most married couples enjoy, but instead there was just the pain. That was the first few days of what would become a three-year intimacy drought. It crept into our bedroom and loomed over our marriage like a long evening shadow. The act designed to bring us closer together had been hijacked to now drive us apart. Weeks would pass and we'd try again hoping the situation had changed, but it hadn't. Soon, we just quit trying at all. Many nights we turned our backs to each other in bed facing opposite walls. I could hear her muffled cries as she tried to hide her pain, and I would silently cry into my pillow.

This was not how I had imagined marriage. The dishes and the diapers, the laundry and the lawn—all of the responsibilities piled up and pushed us further apart. There were no make-up moments after arguments. There were no Saturday mornings. There were no date nights. The battle left us physically and emotionally traumatized. I thought I loved her like Christ loves the Church, but I didn't really know what it meant to give myself up for her. I learned how little I actually knew about loving like Jesus. I thought seriously about quitting. Many nights, I would stay up late after she went to bed and cry out to God in prayer. I saw my repeated attempts to reconnect with her quickly dismissed day after day for reasons I couldn't understand.

That's when God opened my eyes, and I remember thinking, this is how Jesus feels about me. Every morning He was asking to connect with me, but I was too busy. Every night before bed, instead of spending time with Jesus, I was burning up my emotional currency wallowing around in self-pity. I could imagine Jesus' pain and heartbreak as I repeatedly rejected His most intimate invitations.

All this time, I had been holding onto my rights as a husband while claiming it was all about strengthening our marriage. If I was going to make it through this, I had to change.

Even when it felt one-sided, she needed me to lay aside my rights as her husband and love her unconditionally. So, every time I felt the sting of rejection I would remember how God felt when I rejected Him. In Ephesians, it says that a man who loves his wife loves himself. I learned that when I felt the most unloved, that's when I most needed to love my wife. That kind of maturity didn't simply come with the passing of time. It had to be cultivated through pain, sacrifice, and submission.

I'm still not great at loving her like Jesus does, but He has graciously fully restored our marriage and given us a tenacious bond. Because of our pain and our choice to love each other through it, we enjoy a level of intimacy some marriages will never experience.



2

CONNECT

Direct Them to God's Word

Who can give me an example or a location in the the New Testament where *eros* type of love is mentioned? Get this! No focus in really close...*Eros type of love is not mentioned in the New Testament.*

So you are probably sitting there going, then why are we even talking about it? Because it is important to establish that this type of love although the word is not used in the NT, it does not go unmentioned in the Bible. In the Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs, depending on the version of the Bible you use), There is a steamy depiction of a romantic love. I'm not going to read all of that being that there are a bunch of teenage minds in the room that may spiral out of control leaving us in utter chaos. In Song of Solomon 8 you see the idea of setting one as a seal on the heart or a seal on the arm. Setting one as a seal on ones hearts is a reference to saying that the loved shared hear is ONLY for each other, no one else. Talking about love being fiery one guy named F.F. Bruce wrote this "For love demands all and will have all. It's fiery flashes are not merely a blazing fire. IT's fire is no simply, to use our own words awfully hot; is awful, as carrying the divine imperative and sanctions. **Let no one trifle with this awesome elemental power.**

This love is to be something that carries with it a divine nature and is also considered an awesome elemental power. This is the reason you should not deal with love in a naive or negligent way. Love is something to be taken serious. It is a characteristic of who God is and it it also a fruit of His Spirit and when we deal lackadaisically with it then we are showing no respect for what love truly is. Love is meant to be intimate and worshipful so much that it points people to the source of all love, to the very one who is the definition of love. First John 4:8 says, "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God IS love." The same phrase that "God is love" is repeated again 8 verses later. God IS love and when we deal with love we should do so in a way that says we respect who God is and in a way that when we love others know who God is.

Bible Verse

Proverbs 30:18-19 (CSB)

¹⁸Three things are too wondrous for me; four I can't understand:

¹⁹the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship at sea, and the way of a man with a young woman.

Bible Verse

Song of Songs 8:6-7 (CSB)

⁶Set me as a seal on your heart, as a seal on your arm. For love is as strong as death; jealousy is as unrelenting as Sheol. Love's flames are fiery flames — an almighty flame!

⁷A huge torrent cannot extinguish love; rivers cannot sweep it away. If a man were to give all his wealth for love, it would be utterly scorned.

Bible Verse

²²Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord,

²³because the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of the body.

²⁴Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives are to submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her

²⁶to make her holy, cleansing her with the washing of water by the word.

²⁷He did this to present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and blameless.

²⁸In the same way, husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

²⁹For no one ever hates his own flesh but provides and cares for it, just as Christ does for the church,

³⁰since we are members of his body.

³¹For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.

³²This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church.

³³To sum up, each one of you is to love his wife as himself, and the wife is to respect her husband.

Bible Verse

1 John 4:8,16 (CSB)

⁸The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

¹⁶And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

3

CONSIDER

What Does This Mean Today?

First off let's establish that *Eros* love and lust are two totally different things.

Lust is the sinful sexual desire.

Eros love is a love of passion. It is an overmastering passion that seizes and absorbs itself into the mind. It is based on emotional investment and body chemistry. It is focused on self satisfaction, meaning what can that love do for me. *Eros* love is also considered conditional love. IF at a point the romantic/hrrrrroooooowwww love loses it's hrrrrroooooowww, the individual tends to lose interest in

The key to keeping an *eros* type love going is making sure that it is founded both in *agape* love and *phileo* love. No one wants to intentionally hurt their friends, therefore in a relationship that is *eros*, having that brotherly love keeps you close and considerate of the other person. The *agape* love comes into play with *eros* love in that when *eros* love is founded in the *agape* love, you sacrifice and put the other person first. you make sure that the object of your love in the relationship is not you but them. You do anything for them because they love you and that love makes you feel loved and accepted and

needed and valued and I could keep going. So that reciprocated love does something for you even though it is not about you. When *eros* love is founded in *agape* love it becomes a lot less conditional and more unconditional.

Too many people today treat love frivolously. I remember that as a young lad who fancied the ladies, I was “dating” someone I had a rule to wait at least one month before I said I loved the other person. But did I truly love that person? I might have cared deeply for them, but more than likely I loved the idea of being loved. It’s a yearning that all of us have. We all want and long to be loved.

This is just kind of a David inference on this idea, but what I think is that the reason we long so much to be loved is because:

1. When sin entered the world we broke up with God, that’s a basic visualization that you can understand, so that we could chase our own wants. This led to us not being able to feel God’s love in an intimate way, the way it was felt when creation happened and prior to the fall of man.
2. We don’t feel loved because we really don’t understand what that word means. How can you feel or understand something that you really don’t know?
3. We don’t feel loved because we put up soooooo many different walls between us and others that we don’t allow ourselves to be loved.

4

APPLY

Where God's Word Meets Our Everyday Life

To make sure that we are loving in a manner that allows others to see and know God's love through us we have to be intentional about approaching love in a correct way. We can't just go about it like its another hobby that eventually we grow tired of. We can't just bounce from one individual to another proclaiming our love for them only to rip their heart out of their chest and smash it on the ground and then stomp on it until it is finer than ground hamburger. How's that for a visualization?

We also have to put up guardrails in our lives so that we don't approach love like I just mentioned.

1. Remember that your *eros* love is and should be reserved for the person you spend the rest of your life with...till death do you part.
2. John 13:35 says that people will know that we are His by our love. Love in a way that tells people you belong to Jesus.
3. Don't put yourself in situations where there is temptation to give your *eros* love away to someone you're not going to spend the rest of your life with.
4. Remember that lust and love are different. Lust is a sin. The Bible says that if you look at another person in lust you have done it in your heart (Matthew 5:28).
5. Court a person, don't date. Dating has earned a bad wrap. I mentioned courting last year and how it is a process of getting to know one another with no strings attached.
Share Nolan's story.
6. Remember that when you get married you and your future spouse's heart is joined together as one. Don't give them a half that has been used and abused to the point it doesn't function properly. Because when you continue to abuse your heart a certain way you condition it to act/work differently.
7. When you get married give them every piece of your heart. Every time you interact with someone in a lustful or sexual way you give away a piece of your heart. Live in a way that when you get married you can be proud to give them each and every piece of your heart.

That is what will make the fires of love burn.



5

CALL

Respond to the Holy Spirit

* Take an inventory of the relationships you have had or are in?

1. Do they show others God's love for them?

2. Would you be proud to show them off to Jesus knowing all details would be revealed?

3. Are there things going on that shouldn't be?

4. How do you avoid getting in those situations?

* What kind of relationship do you want to have with your future spouse? Does the person you are currently dating or thinking about dating fit that description?

* Have you already given pieces of your heart away? If so, seek God's forgiveness and allow him to patch up the broken pieces.

* Remember that **ANYTHING** that makes your mind go to a place it should not be is lust and should not be involved in any relationship you have!

* An *eros* relationship should include in its foundation an *agape* and a *phileo* aspect so that the relationship can be as strong as possible.

Are you ready to go APE crazy in love? If not maybe you should rethink your approach to relationships.