



**“We love because he
first loved us.”**

(I John 4:19)

Reading I John 4:7-21

One of the major problems in relationships today is that many people are trying to give and receive something they've never truly experienced for themselves, namely unconditional love.

You need to receive this kind of love before you can give it!

God loved us so much that He was willing to take a huge love dare with each of us. He dared to love us before we ever demonstrated any form of love toward Him. He dared to love us first! He did that by sending us His Son, Jesus Christ! To understand the extent of God's love dare toward us—and to prepare us to take the love dare toward others—we need to grasp three foundational truths about unconditional love ...

- 1) *Love is designed to be a PERSONAL experience.*
- 2) *Love is designed to be a SHARED experience.*
- 3) *Love is designed to be an INCREASING experience.*

A 1 John 4:19 Challenge:

Wives: *Ask God to show you one way to share His love with your husband this week, and do it!*

Husbands: *Ask God to show you one way to share His love with your wife this week, and do it!*

Singles: *Ask God to show you one way to share His love with a family member, friend, or co-worker this week, and do it!*

For Further Consideration this Week:

Monday: **Meditate on Psalm 136:1-3.** Spend some time doing just what this passage says to do —“Give thanks to the Lord.” Why? Because “His love endures forever.” Thank God that there has *never* been a time that He hasn't loved you. Hard to believe? It's true!

Tuesday: **Read 1 John 4:20 again.** Ask God to reveal to you any person from whom you may have been withholding His love. Why not confess that situation to Him right now and take steps to correct it? Sound hard? It's impossible—unless you rely upon the Lord's strength and guidance to do so!

Wednesday: **Read Romans 8:35.** The obvious answer to Paul's rhetorical question about *who* or *what* can separate us from the love of Christ is “nothing”! Knowing this truth, why do we allow so many simple things to separate us from loving other people? Because they just aren't deserving? Are you any more deserving? The truth is that *none of us* deserves God's love. Pray for a stronger desire to love others around you—regardless of the circumstances.

Thursday: **Read 2 Corinthians 5:13-15.** What compelled Paul to share God's love and His “Good News” with others? Do you feel a similar drive? If not, make sure that you've first *received* His love through Christ. Then, ask God to help you see others through His eyes of love.

Friday: **Read 1 John 3:23.** As you read this verse, realize that a failure to love others is a failure to obey God's command! Pray for a stronger desire to be obedient to His word, knowing that God blesses the obedience of His people.

Saturday: **Meditate on 1 John 4:11-12.** God's love is made complete in us as we share His love with others. Remember that unconditional love must first be a *personal* experience, then it is to be *increasingly shared*. We were made to love God and to reflect His love for us by loving others. Pray that the Lord will give you a renewed desire to carry out your part of the biblical mandate “to love one another.”