

1) I must be connected to the source of love. (7-15)

God is love but love is not God. The world has made love a god.

The world is filled with counterfeits for love. Describe the ways these five substitutes for biblical love have affected you. Have you settled for the substitutes and failed to show genuine love for others? How can these counterfeit loves become gods that will keep us from God?

- Sentiment
- Sensuality
- Sweetness
- Selectivity
- Service

Verse 7 indicates that those who experience genuine love have been born of God and are growing in their knowledge of God. Do you love God like a newborn baby has an innate love for the one who birthed him? What have you learned about God recently that has fueled your love for him?

The greatest demonstration of love is leaving your world and entering into the world of another to bring them to a better world. How did Jesus do this? How have you done this? Describe your world. Describe the world of someone you know that needs your love. Describe one way you will leave your world and enter into the world of another this week.

Abiding in the love of God means to remain persistently connected to the power of God's love through intentional pursuit of his presence. Are you abiding or avoiding God's presence? Why or why not?

Love never ignores sin. Do you love people enough to confront sin? This is tough. How can you speak the truth to someone with a heart full of love?

2) I can be perfected by the power of love. (16-18)

Fear cannot simultaneously abide where love is being experienced. Do you fear God's judgment? Do you fear God's judgment on America? What else do you fear? How does God's love provide security? Who do you know who lives in fear? (Children, parents, friends, etc.) How does God want you to expel the fears of others with your love?

Are you perfect? Are you willing to let God perfect you through those who love you? Why is it impossible to change, if you are not willing to let others love you?

3) I will be propelled by the command to love. (19-24)

Do you love God? How many people can honestly say you are characterized by love? How does this answer affect your answer to the first question?

Ask yourself these questions to test whether you are obeying God's command to love one another...¹

1. Do I offer to help before I am asked?
2. Am I thoughtful and considerate?
3. Am I concerned with doing little things for people?

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4. Do I have a pleasant tone in my voice?
 5. Do I lash out or rip another person apart with harsh, critical language?
 6. Am I sarcastic?
 7. Do I appreciate my parents, my family, and my friends?
 8. Do I say “thank you for being my friend,” and “I’m glad we’re in the same family”?
 9. Do I give an approving smile, a word of gratitude, a heartfelt expression of thanks to others?
 10. Am I quick to recognize, appreciate, and say thank you for all that someone does, even the little things"

Additional Scripture

- John 13:34-35
- Romans 12:10
- 1Thessalonians 4:9
- Hebrews 13:1
- 1Peter 1:22
- 1Corinthians 13

ⁱ David Jeremiah, *The Power of Love: Study Guide* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004), 24.