

We need to redefine our concept of Love with the biblical Presentation of Actual Reality

Man's concept of love is very subjective

His source for defining love: emotions
The media: television, radio, books, music
The dictionaries define love with terms such as: affection, deep affection, feeling, desire, emotion, warm affection

So according to the world's perspective, love is defined by the self-centered feelings and emotions of man.

The source of love and the object of love

Abiding in Christ = Love

1. Jesus initiates this NEW Commandment:
John 13:34-35 (NKJV)
34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

2. The subject is: Love
1 John 2:26-34 (NKJV)
26 And now, little children, do not let anyone deceive you in this, that when he appears, many may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming.
27 If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of him.
28 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know him.
29 Beloved, now we are sons of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.
30 And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure.
31 Whoever sins, let him sin so no longer. And sin is lawlessness.
32 And you know that he who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.
33 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.
34 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.
35 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him, and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.
36 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.
37 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.
38 Not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.
39 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.
40 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother who has seen the light, is in death.
41 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that the murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
17 But whenever two love each other, and love his brother in need, and share up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?
18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.
19 Believing that we love him that we are of the truth, and shall remain in him forever.
20 For four things condemn us, that be greater than our heart, and witness all things.
21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.
22 But whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.
23 And this is the love commandment that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandments.
24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

3. Love is not an abstract concept:
Human viewpoint: human viewpoint is independent from God
Love is not an independent absolute divorced from Scripture
As Christians the tendency is always to bring a predefined understanding into our study of Scripture.
So man makes the assumption that because of whatever experiences and education, because he's had certain feelings, emotions, and observations, he automatically knows what love is.
But the Bible makes it abundantly clear, that approach is categorically wrong.
We can only know what Love is by starting with divine revelation / the word of God
Divine viewpoint: A unified viewpoint of God, where God who is the creator of all things has the right also to tell us what reality is, he is the definer of reality, that as believers we are to be consistent with what God defines as reality, and not live independently from that reality.
That means our definition for whatever aspect of reality (such as Love) must be understood how they are revealed and defined, starting in Scripture, and not understand them through some abstract autonomous sense.
The Bible never speaks of love or righteousness or integrity in some abstract manner, as if it were some abstract concept. But Scripture always defines these concepts in relation to the character of God and in the person of Jesus Christ.
So we find in the Revelation of God to mankind through Scripture, the revelation of actual reality. So that the source and definition of these concepts are in God, they do not float out there in some intellectual realm for man to draw conclusions through their experiences, feelings, emotions and intuition.

4. Love is not an independent absolute divorced from anything that is concrete or specific
God defines reality
The Scriptures never defines love and righteousness apart from a concrete manifestation of that value in the person and work of Christ, and specifically at the cross.
Example :
1 John 3:16 John says we know love by this that He laid down His life for us
Love is defined ultimately by Jesus Christ on the cross.
1 John 3:16 (NKJV)
By this we know Love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
We can't say love is this and this, and then look at what Jesus did and say well Jesus is fulfilling all these rules and so he is demonstrating love.

Jesus Christ came to reveal what love is!
He did not come to live up to some external human viewpoint standard of love.
He came to reveal actual reality!
He came to reach away the illusion of the mirage of love, that we see in the desert of this Kosmos system of thinking.
1 John 3:13 (NKJV)
13 Do not love the world, or the things in the world.
If anyone loves the world, the Love of the Father is not in him.
But John is not talking about physical death, but rather, that our whole life should be service to other believers.
1 John 3:26-3:26 describes it as "abiding in him".
And "abiding in him" is that you are in service to your brothers in Christ, in the same manner Christ loved us.
It's a mental attitude of service to others, in particular to believers.
Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV)
1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.
2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may present what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

5. Suggested readings:
John 13:34-35 (NKJV)
34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
Any definition of love that does not start there, doesn't have its foundation in the actual reality. But it is just human viewpoint
John 15:1-17 (NKJV)
1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine dresser.
2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.
3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.
4 Abide in Me, and I will stay. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.
5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing.
6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered, and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.
7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.
8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.
9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you, abide in My love.
10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.
11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.
12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.
13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.
14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.
15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing, but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.
16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.
17 These things I command you, that you love one another.

Our example is not separate from communicating the gospel

6. 1 Corinthians 13:1-6 (BIV)
3 I'll give away all I have, and I'll deliver up my body to be burned, and have nothing, I gain nothing.
4 Love is patient and kind, love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;
5 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

Love