

## Do we believe God?

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### 1) Do I believe God when he says that my life is nothing if I do not have love (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)?

A. If I do not lay down my life before serving, then I am serving for my own gratification and gain. I am neither serving God, nor my neighbor, nor my brothers and sisters in Christ.

B. If I do not first lay down my life, then ...

- I have nothing to say,
- I am nothing,
- And I gain nothing.

**God says ...**

### 2) Do I believe God when he tells me what love “looks like” in my life if I am loving as he directs me to love (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)?

- This text is informative: What my life will look like when I lay it down.
- This text is directive: What my life should look like when I lay it down.

### 3) Do I believe God when he speaks to my limited insight and perspective (1 Corinthians 13:8-13)?

- When I lay down my life, I am fully satisfied to be on a “need to know” basis with my God.

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### The Essential Element of Biblical Love: Laying down our lives for God’s greater good and God’s glory!

(John 3:16 ESV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

- An intentional decision to benefit another person and to honor God.
- A sacrificial act which may or may not be positively responded to.
- A compassionate, but not necessarily emotional, act.
- God so loved that he gave with the intent of giving life.

**God says ...**

(1 John 3:16 ESV) By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

- We identify love in this text from Christ’s sacrificial act of laying down his life for us.
- We are to do the same for fellow believers - lay down our lives.

(John 15:13-14 ESV) Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you.

- Again we see the priority of love.
- Again we see the element of laying down our lives.



**WHAT IS LOVE ...** Laying down our lives before God and the people around us in devoted participation in God’s character, plan and purpose as taught in God’s word.

#### Believing God’s teaching on love ...

- We embrace God’s plan.
- We embrace God’s method.
- We embrace God.

**God says ...**

#### Love is an emptying/filling process ...

- Laying down our lives is an emptying process. We empty ourselves of our will, our ambitions, our agendas, and God fills us with himself.

#### Living God’s love is a “pouring” process ...

- (Romans 5:5 ESV) And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.