

Series: Back to Basics
Title: Refined By Love
1 John 4:7-21

Introduction

God created us to become skilled in our ability to love. The theme of this passage is: God wills that we are perfected in love. Perfected means we are complete, fully developed, and mature in Christ.

1. If you are not becoming more skillful in sharing God's love, you are failing in the _____ of life.
2. The only interest God has in the resources on this planet is the _____ resource.
3. If I genuinely love and value the people God brings into my life, I am _____ in life!
4. Since God is the source of all true love, we must increase our _____ to receive God's love and give it away to others.
5. Being perfected in love _____ both sequentially and simultaneously.

I. God's Indwelling Love (4:9-15)

6. Before you can give God's love to others, you must be indwelled by God's love _____.
7. To be indwelled by God's love, you must first understand how much God _____ you.
8. Jesus paid the ultimate price by laying down his life to pay for our sins, even though he knew we were completely _____.

9. If you were the only human who ever needed saving, God _____ you so much that he would have sent Jesus to die just for you.
10. You may think, "This is too _____ to be true," but it is true.
11. You need to personally _____ with God that Jesus is indeed your Savior.
12. What matters is that you _____ reach out to God and tell Him you know that you need a Savior and that you accept Jesus as your Savior.
13. When you confess Jesus is your Savior, he sends his _____ to indwell you so you can experience his love.
14. People who receive Christ are _____ changed and excited about their new life as a Christian.

I. God's Continual Love (4:16-19)

15. We also need to draw _____ upon God's love.
16. Our understanding and appreciation of God's love for us should always be fresh and continually _____.
17. We grow in our knowledge of God's love by reflecting on what the _____ teach us about God's love.
18. As you read the scriptures, look for what it _____ about God's love.

19. When a passage _____ to you, say it back to God and tell him how much His love and wisdom have impacted you.
20. Learn to _____ on the love God has for you.
21. Your experience with God will expand, and your _____ in his love will increase.
22. When you choose to talk to God rather than _____ Him, you are learning to rely upon His love.
23. God does not love us based on our _____ but our relationship with Jesus Christ, His Son.
24. We can also learn to rely on God's love by choosing to let other believers love us rather than _____ ourselves or remaining aloof and self-sufficient.
25. Often we need to let another believer help us bear the _____ we carry.
26. Another meaningful way we learn to rely on God's love is by choosing to _____ God for his goodness and love.
27. Resentment and bitterness over life's situations will destroy your hope and _____.
28. Something we need to do on a _____ basis is to take ourselves in hand and name how God blessed us and personally thank him for these blessings.

Conclusion

29. God's love is revealed in a very practical way when we see the need in someone else's life and _____ to that need in some meaningful way.

30. You will never be able to _____ God.

When we trust God's love for us and learn to give His love to others, God's love refreshes our souls as it pours through us—and our capacity to receive and appreciate God's love grows.

Answers

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| 1. classroom | 12. personally | 23. performance |
| 2. human | 13. Spirit | 24. isolating |
| 3. succeeding | 14. dramatically | 25. burden |
| 4. capacity | 15. continually | 26. thank |
| 5. develops | 16. increasing | 27. future |
| 6. yourself | 17. scriptures | 28. regular |
| 7. loves | 18. teaches | 29. respond |
| 8. undeserving | 19. speaks | 30. out-give |
| 9. loves | 20. rely | |
| 10. good | 21. confidence | |
| 11. agree | 22. avoid | |

QUESTIONS FOR MEDITATION

1. So what kind of progress are you making in your ability to love? Would you say you are better at loving others than you were a year ago?
2. Do you remember when you asked Jesus to be your Savior? What events brought you to that place? How did you feel when you first accepted Jesus?
3. What would you say your complaining-to-thankfulness ratio has been lately?