



Do you agree love hurts? Should it hurt? Is something wrong if it hurts? If we understand love as an unrelenting concern for another's well-being, love does open us up to grief and pain in this broken world. When we love, we feel our loved ones suffering with them. When we love we are vulnerable to being hurt by our loved one's words and actions. When we love we hurt.

The Bible says, **"God is love"** (1 John 4:8). Love is central to the character and nature of God. And God suffers in His love for us. Just a few sentences after saying, **"God is love"** the Bible says:

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.
(1 John 4:10)

Even though we haven't always loved God, He has always loved us. Jesus, God the Son, went to the cross willingly suffering for our good. He bore the pain and shame to pay for

our sins and bring us reconciliation with God. Loving us has hurt God yet he persists in His love.

Do you know God's love - God's unrelenting, self-sacrificing, unrequited, painful love for you? To know you are loved like this, despite your failings and weaknesses, changes everything. To know you are loved like this by the God of the universe gives you confidence and strength and purpose in this world like nothing else. Admit to God your lack of love for Him, accept the reconciliation with God Jesus' sacrificial love offers you, and know this love today.

Prayer:

Dear God,
I want to know your love. I admit I haven't loved you like you have loved me. I'm sorry. I trust Jesus' painful sacrifice shows your deep love for me and means I can be forgiven. I receive your love in Jesus name.
Amen.