
WHAT IS BIBLICAL LOVE?

Emotions? Feelings? Actions?

By Jim Myers

On my journey of life I have been a minister and chaplain at a law enforcement center. The subject of what love means came up many times in both jobs. Some people gave their lives in the name of love, while some people beat or murder others whom they said they loved. Any minister that has been called to the home of someone that has been a victim of spousal abuse knows exactly what I mean. There have been many cases where a policeman almost begs a woman to file charges against a man that has beaten her severely, but she refuses and says she can't because he really loves her. What kind of love allows something like that?

Is love a feeling or an emotion – or is it an action? It depends on what standard one uses to measure love. Many people measure love by how they feel or what emotions are triggered. They love a person, an animal, a dessert, a picture, a car, etc. ó by how it makes them feel. If it makes them feel good, they love it. Spin doctors use this model to sell products or get someone to vote for whoever is paying them. Feelings & emotions are very subjective and easily manipulated by spin doctors or wife beaters.

There is another way to measure love and it is found in the Bible. It is the Hebrew meaning of love and that is the meaning that should be the standard by which love is measured by Christians and Jews. Don't forget that Jesus and his earliest followers were all Jews.

**Love in Hebrew is an action --
not an emotion or a feeling.**

Acts of love protect & preserve life.

Acts of love enhance the quality of life.

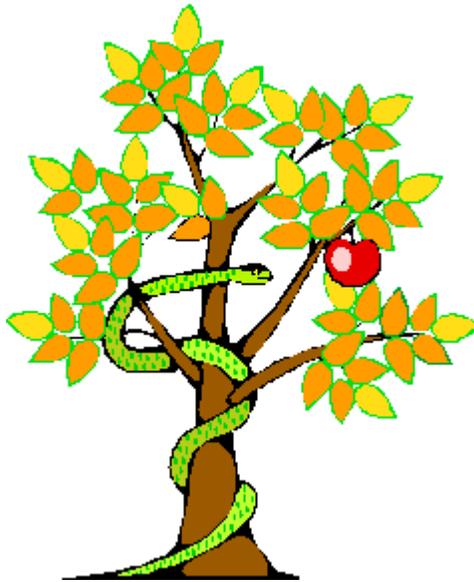
**Acts of love are beautiful & pleasing --
acts that can be seen.**



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Acts of love are acts of TOV. They are the acts described in the above graphic. TOV is a very important word in the Hebrew Bible. In the first account recorded in the Bible, the Creation Account, the word TOV appears seven times. It was used to measure the creative acts that God did. In English translations TOV is translated "good." *In the Genesis account Tov means doing acts that protect and preserve life; acts that enhance the quality of life and increase functionality.*

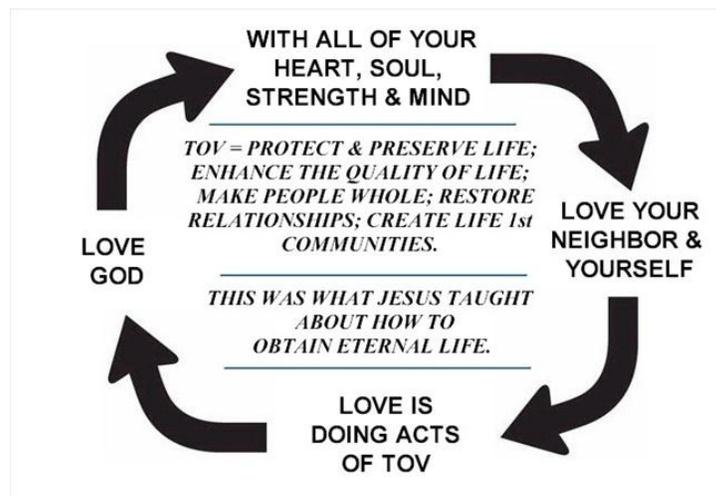
The word TOV also appears in the second account of the Bible. It is part of the name of that famous tree the serpent lured the humans to pick and eat its forbidden fruit.



The name of the tree is the **Tree of the Knowledge of TOV and RA**. It is the tree of the knowledge of acts that protect and preserve life, acts that enhance the quality of life. RA is the opposite of TOV and it is translated as "evil." If this is the case, then "evil" is defined as "acts that harm and destroy life, acts that decrease the quality of life."

In the Bible, the opposite of love isn't hate *ó the opposite of love is evil!* The man that beats his wife is committing an act of evil, not hate. No matter what may be going on between his ears, we can measure what he does by biblical love standard *ó and it isn't love.*

Doing acts of love was the foundation message and core value of Jesus and his movement..



Think about what this means in real life. Loving our spouse, children, neighbors and country takes on a very different meaning, when we measure them by the standard above. The bottom line is that the message of the wisdom of the biblical text is to make our highest and core value -

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When Jesus taught "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" he simply said "love others as you would have them love you." This is what it means to be the image of God in your generation - do what He would do. By doing love we can be co-creators and create a very different world!

Please share this message with others. It is very important and someone you know may desperately need to know it.

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"If not now when; if not you – who?"

Thank you!