

# *Amazing Love*



**GULF SHORES**

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Gulf Shores, AL

***BIBLE CLASS STUDY GUIDE***

***Prepared by Ray Reynolds***

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

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*This study guide was created by Ray Reynolds for use in Bible classes at the Gulf Shores Church of Christ (Gulf Shores, AL) and for a sermon series at the Evergreen Church of Christ (Evergreen, AL). The material presented in this class series will be gleaned from personal notes, the New King James Study Bible, Dr. Coy Roper, Dr. Steven Guy, Dr. Bill Bagents, Dr. Edgar Elliott, Chuck Swindoll, David Jeremiah, Mark Copeland, Allen Webster, and other sources.*

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

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### **LESSON #1 = Loving Authentically: Love With Genuineness**

Introduction: The Bible is full of love stories (i.e. Jacob/Rachel, Boaz/Ruth, Joseph/Mary, etc.), because the Bible is the "Book of Love." John introduces an extraordinary concept when he adds that "God *IS* Love" (**I John 4:8**). We need to consider how to love with an authentic and genuine love. We need to love like God (**John 3:16**). Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

**I. God's Love is Unreasonable**

*How could God love us when we have hurt Him so badly?*

**II. God's Love is Unreserved**

*Why doesn't God limit His love to the saints and the righteous?*

**III. God's Love is Unconventional**

*Why didn't God just save us without death as the penalty?*

**IV. God's Love is Unrestricted**

*How far would God go to save His children?*

**V. God's Love is Unrestrained**

*How badly did the people treat Jesus? What did God allow them to do to Jesus?*

**VI. God's Love is Unquenchable**

*Why doesn't God give up on humanity?*

**VII. God's Love is Unraveled**

*Why does God let us see the entire scheme of redemption?*

Conclusion: We understand what it means to be lost and know the joy of being found! This love story is THE GREATEST LOVE STORY EVER TOLD and you are the star! Each of us are playing an important role in this story. God wants to love us! Do you love like Him? Will you follow God with genuineness and authenticity? Let's pursue this amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #2 = Loving Biblically: Love Like God Desires**

Introduction: The words of Jesus are very clear: “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (**John 14:15**). This sentiment was echoed throughout the Old Testament, but it is made clearer in the New Testament. The disciples of Jesus taught this to the church with the same zeal and enthusiasm. In fact, the beloved disciple John said, “And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment” (**I John 3:23**). Faith is the first step (**Romans 10:17, Hebrews 11:1, 6**), but putting faith in action is essential. How can we love biblically? How can we love the way God desires? The answer is given by the apostle Paul in **I Corinthians 13**. Let’s study together...

#### Discussion:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>I. Without Love Miracles Are Nothing (vs.1-2)</b> | <b>XII. Love Does Not Rejoice In Iniquity (v.6)</b> |
| <b>II. Without Love Good Works Are Nothing (v.3)</b> | <b>XIII. Love Rejoices In The Truth (v.6)</b>       |
| <b>III. Love Suffers Long (v.4)</b>                  | <b>XIV. Love Bears All Things (v.7)</b>             |
| <b>IV. Love Is Kind (v.4)</b>                        | <b>XV. Love Believes All Things (v.7)</b>           |
| <b>V. Love Does Not Envy (v.4)</b>                   | <b>XVI. Love Hopes All Things (v.7)</b>             |
| <b>VI. Love Does Not Parade Itself (v.4)</b>         | <b>XVII. Love Endures All Things (v.7)</b>          |
| <b>VII. Love Is Not Puffed Up (v.4)</b>              | <b>XVIII. Love Will Not Fail (v.8)</b>              |
| <b>VIII. Love Does Not Behave Rudely (v.5)</b>       | <b>XIX. Love Is Perfect (vs.8-10)</b>               |
| <b>IX. Love Does Not Seek Its Own (v.5)</b>          | <b>XX. Love Will Make Us Mature (v.11)</b>          |
| <b>X. Love Is Not Provoked (v.5)</b>                 | <b>XXI. Love Give Us Knowledge (v.12)</b>           |
| <b>XI. Love Thinks No Evil (v.5)</b>                 | <b>XXII. Love Is The Greatest (v.13)</b>            |

*Why did Paul spend so much time on this one subject?*

*Why is this study necessary in the church today?*

*Which part of this list is hardest? Easiest?*

Conclusion: It’s hard to believe that miracles and good works are nothing without love, but that is exactly what Paul said. It is my prayer that we continue to study about Christian love. Our ministry will not be very effective in our community without true biblical love. Remember God loves you! Do you show Him love? How can you show Him love? Let’s pursue this amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #3 = Loving Emotionally: Love With All Your Heart**

**Introduction:** Jesus took an opportunity to share the heart of the law with a new direction. Some look at these words and consider it to be a simple statement of faith. Some look at it as two commands that summarize the Ten Commandments. When I read His words in **Mark 12:28-31**, I see different patterns for serving God. These patterns show our dedication to real discipleship and help us to conform to the image of Christ. Please consider how to follow God emotionally. Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### **I. Purify Your Heart**

**I Samuel 16:7**

**Matthew 5:8**

**James 4:8**

*How can you purify your heart?*

#### **II. Speak Your Heart**

**Proverbs 23:7**

**Matthew 12:34-35**

**Hebrews 4:12**

*How can you speak your heart?*

#### **III. Follow Your Heart**

**II Corinthians 9:7**

**Ephesians 6:5-6**

**II Timothy 2:22**

*How can you follow your heart?*

#### **IV. Confess Your Heart**

**Matthew 10:32-33**

**Romans 6:17-18**

**Romans 10:10**

*How can you confess your heart?*

#### **V. Keep Your Heart**

**Psalms 51:10-13**

**Proverbs 4:23**

**I Timothy 1:5**

*How can you keep your heart?*

**Conclusion:** Every part of our life should be impacted by our faith in God, our dedication to Jesus Christ, and our comfort in the Holy Spirit. Do you allow love to fill your life and motivate you to serve God? Do you follow God emotionally? Let's pursue amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

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### **LESSON #4 = Loving Spiritually: Love With All Your Soul**

**Introduction:** Jesus took an opportunity to share the heart of the law with a new direction. Some look at these words and consider it to be a simple statement of faith. Some look at it as two commands that summarize the Ten Commandments. When I read His words in **Mark 12:28-31**, I see different patterns for serving God. These patterns show our dedication to real discipleship and help us to conform to the image of Christ. Please consider how to follow God spiritually. Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### **I. Know Your Soul**

**Mark 8:36-37**

**Matthew 10:28**

**I Timothy 4:8**

*How can you know your soul?*

#### **II. Convert Your Soul**

**Psalms 19:7**

**James 1:21**

**Romans 12:1-2**

*How can you convert your soul?*

#### **III. Guide Your Soul**

**I Peter 1:22**

**I Peter 3:21**

**I John 3:3**

*How can you guide your soul?*

#### **IV. Complete Your Soul**

**I Corinthians 13:9**

**Colossians 2:10**

**II Timothy 3:16-17**

*How can you complete your soul?*

#### **V. Save Your Soul**

**I Peter 1:9**

**John 8:24**

**Matthew 10:32**

*How can you save your soul?*

**Conclusion:** Every part of our life should be impacted by our faith in God, our dedication to Jesus Christ, and our comfort in the Holy Spirit. Do you allow love to fill your life and motivate you to serve God? Do you follow God spiritually? Let's pursue amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #5 = Loving Mentally: Love With All Your Mind**

**Introduction:** Jesus took an opportunity to share the heart of the law with a new direction. Some look at these words and consider it to be a simple statement of faith. Some look at it as two commands that summarize the Ten Commandments. When I read His words in **Mark 12:28-31**, I see different patterns for serving God. These patterns show our dedication to real discipleship and help us to conform to the image of Christ. Please consider how to follow God mentally. Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### **I. Respect Your Mind**

**Romans 1:28**

**Romans 8:5-6**

**Colossians 1:21**

*How can you respect your mind?*

#### **II. Protect Your Mind**

**I Peter 5:7**

**Philippians 4:7**

**II Corinthians 10:4-5**

*How can you protect your mind?*

#### **III. Renew Your Mind**

**Romans 12:1-2**

**Ephesians 4:23**

**Philippians 2:5**

*How can you renew your mind?*

#### **IV. Focus Your Mind**

**Acts 17:11**

**I Corinthians 2:16**

**I Peter 1:13-16**

*How can you focus your mind?*

#### **V. Motivate Your Mind**

**Acts 20:19**

**I Peter 5:2**

**Romans 7:25**

*How can you motivate your mind?*

**Conclusion:** Every part of our life should be impacted by our faith in God, our dedication to Jesus Christ, and our comfort in the Holy Spirit. Do you allow love to fill your life and motivate you to serve God? Do you follow God mentally? Let's pursue amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #6 = Loving Physically: Love With All Your Strength**

**Introduction:** Jesus took an opportunity to share the heart of the law with a new direction. Some look at these words and consider it to be a simple statement of faith. Some look at it as two commands that summarize the Ten Commandments. When I read His words in **Mark 12:28-31**, I see different patterns for serving God. These patterns show our dedication to real discipleship and help us to conform to the image of Christ. Please consider how to follow God physically. Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### **I. Appreciate Your Strength**

**I Corinthians 6:13**

**I Corinthians 6:19-20**

**Galatians 5:16-18**

*How can you appreciate your strength?*

#### **II. Identify Your Strength**

**Romans 5:6**

**Romans 7:18-24**

**Romans 8:13**

*How can you identify your strength?*

#### **III. Build Your Strength**

**II Corinthians 4:10**

**Galatians 6:17**

**Philippians 1:20-21**

*How can you build your strength?*

#### **IV. Renew Your Strength**

**Romans 8:10**

**II Corinthians 5:17**

**Galatians 3:26-27**

*How can you renew your strength?*

#### **V. Reveal Your Strength**

**II Corinthians 12:9**

**Isaiah 40:31**

**Ephesians 6:10-20**

*How can you reveal your strength?*

**Conclusion:** Every part of our life should be impacted by our faith in God, our dedication to Jesus Christ, and our comfort in the Holy Spirit. Do you allow love to fill your life and motivate you to serve God? Do you serve the Lord physically? Let's pursue amazing love!



# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #7 = Loving Relationally: Love Your Neighbor**

Introduction: We are in a series considering the patterns on how to live our Christian lives with amazing love. We have noticed that God intends for us to follow Him emotionally (heart), spiritually (soul), mentally (mind), and physically (strength). However, now we need to notice that our heart, soul, mind, and strength need to motivate our bodies into action. Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### ***I. Meet Your Neighbor***

**Matthew 5:13**

**Matthew 5:14-16**

**Philippians 2:15**

*How should you meet and greet your neighbor?*

#### ***II. Help Your Neighbor***

**Matthew 10:42**

**Luke 10:25-37**

**Luke 11:5-13**

*How can you help your neighbor?*

#### ***III. Admire Your Neighbor***

**Matthew 5:43-48**

**Romans 13:9**

**I John 4:20**

*How can you have a healthy admiration for your neighbor?*

#### ***IV. Encourage Your Neighbor***

**Romans 15:2**

**Luke 12:1**

**I Corinthians 5:6-7**

*How can you encourage your neighbor?*

#### ***V. Teach Your Neighbor***

**Matthew 28:18-20**

**Mark 16:15-16**

**I Timothy 4:12**

*How can you teach your neighbor?*

Conclusion: Every part of our life should be impacted by our faith in God, our dedication to Jesus Christ, and our comfort in the Holy Spirit. Do you allow love to fill your life and motivate you to serve God? Do you serve the Lord relationally?

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #8 = Loving Personally: Love Yourself**

**Introduction:** We are in a series considering the patterns on how to live our Christian lives with amazing love (**Mark 12:28-31**). We have noticed that God intends for us to follow Him emotionally (heart), spiritually (soul), mentally (mind), physically (strength), and relationally (neighbor). We have to use our heart, soul, mind, and strength to motivate our bodies into action, personally. Let's study together...

#### **Discussion:**

#### ***I. Loving Yourself Means Self-Accountability***

**II Corinthians 5:10      Hebrews 9:27**

**Luke 17:3**

*How can you hold yourself accountable?*

#### ***II. Loving Yourself Means Self-Building***

**Genesis 1:26-27      Psalm 139:1-18**

**Psalm 8:3-5**

*How can you build yourself up?*

#### ***III. Loving Yourself Means Self-Control***

**II Timothy 1:6-7      Galatians 5:22-23**

**I Corinthians 10:13**

*How can you gain self-control?*

#### ***IV. Loving Yourself Means Self-Determination***

**Romans 14:11-12      Matthew 25:14-30**

**Ephesians 4:11-16**

*How can you become more determined?*

#### ***V. Loving Yourself Means Self-Esteem***

**John 3:16      Galatians 6:3-5**

**Romans 12:1-8**

*How can you build up self-esteem?*

**Conclusion:** Every part of our life should be impacted by our faith in God, our dedication to Jesus Christ, and our comfort in the Holy Spirit. Do you allow love to fill your life and motivate you to serve God? Do you serve God personally? Let's pursue amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

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### **LESSON #9 = Loving Socially: Love Your Enemies**

**Introduction:** We are studying the patterns on how to live our Christian lives with amazing love (**Mark 12:28-31**). We have noticed in this series that we must follow God emotionally (heart), spiritually (soul), mentally (mind), physically (strength), socially (neighbor) and personally (yourself). However, we need to go the extra mile! What about loving our enemies (**Matthew 5:43-48**)? How can we do that? Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### **I. Love Anyone Who Curses You**

**Matthew 5:9-12**

**Luke 6:28**

**Romans 12:14**

*How can you love someone who curses you?*

#### **II. Love Anyone Who Hates You**

**Matthew 5:13-16**

**Luke 6:27**

**John 15:18-19**

*How can you love someone who hates you?*

#### **III. Love Anyone Who Angers You**

**Matthew 5:21-24**

**Matthew 18:15-17**

**Galatians 6:1-2**

*How can you love someone who angers you?*

#### **IV. Love Anyone Who Uses You**

**Matthew 5:38-41**

**Galatians 6:10**

**Matthew 27:27-30**

*How can you love someone who uses you?*

#### **IV. Love Anyone Who Persecutes You**

**Matthew 5:43-48**

**Acts 8-9**

**I Timothy 1:13-16**

*How can you love someone who persecutes you?*

**Conclusion:** Every part of our life should be impacted by our faith in God, our dedication to Jesus Christ, and our comfort in the Holy Spirit. Do you allow love to fill your life and motivate you to serve God? Do you serve the Lord socially? Let's pursue amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #10 = Loving Sexually: Love In Your Marriage**

Introduction: We cannot talk about love without discussing sex. The Bible has a lot to say about sex. Sex was/is God's idea! Therefore, His Word is the best manual for a class on sexuality. The purpose of this lesson is to present the biblical Christian view of human sexuality which is reserved for married couples. What do we know about God's view of sex? Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### **I. God's Original Plan Included Sex**

We were created with equality (**Genesis 1:27, Galatians 3:28, I Peter 3:7**).

We were created with diversity (**Genesis 1:26-27, Psalm 33:20, 70:5, John 14:26**).

We were created for intimacy (**Genesis 1:24-25, 28, 2:18-25, Matthew 19:4-6**).

*How can we learn God's original plan for sex?*

#### **II. God's People Had Sex**

We were created for reproduction (**Genesis 1:28, 5:1-32, 9:7, 11:10-26, Matthew 1:1ff**).

We were created for reflection (**Genesis 1:26-27, 31, 2:18-25, 9:6, I Corinthians 11:7**).

We were created for relationships (**Genesis 2:23-24, Matthew 19:5-6, Ephesians 5:31**).

*Why do we need to pursue a godly approach to sexuality?*

#### **III. God's Purpose Was Responsible Sex**

Husbands are given specific commands (**I Corinthians 7:3-5, Ephesians 5:25-28, 33, Colossians 3:19, I Peter 3:7**).

Wives are given specific commands (**I Corinthians 7:3-5, Ephesians 5:24, Colossians 3:18, I Peter 3:1-2**).

Both are given specific commands not to separate (**Matthew 19:6, Mark 10:9, I Corinthians 7:29**), not to divorce (**Matthew 5:31-32, Mark 10:2-12, Luke 16:18, Romans 7:2-3**) and live in harmony with one another (**I Peter 3:8, Romans 12:16**).

*Why do you think people have perverted the image of sexuality?*

Conclusion: Christians should avoid all forms of sexual sin (**I Corinthians 6:19-20, Galatians 5:19-23, Ephesians 5:1-5, Colossians 3:5-6, I Thessalonians 4:3-7, Revelation 21:7-8**). God's plan is good. God loves sex! He created it, and each of us, with a wholesome purpose but we've found all kinds of ways to be evil (**Ecclesiastes 7:29**). Let God's Word teach you what you need to know about sex (**Hebrews 13:4, Song of Solomon**). Let's pursue amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

Bible Class Study Guide (by Ray Reynolds)

### **LESSON #11 = Loving Financially: Love In Benevolence**

Introduction: God loves us! He is so good to us! He is the Greatest Giver! Loving and giving is inherent in His character. Christians are called to be like God. Are there some things we can learn from God? How can we give like God? How can we love financially? Let's study together...

Discussion:

**I. God Thoughtfully Gives**

**Psalm 115:12**

**Malachi 3:10**

**I John 4:16**

*How can you give thoughtfully?*

**II. God Freely Gives**

**Hosea 14:4**

**Matthew 10:7-8**

**Romans 8:32**

*How can you give freely?*

**III. God Constantly Gives**

**Matthew 6:11**

**Luke 6:38**

**II Corinthians 9:10**

*How can you give constantly?*

**IV. God Compassionately Gives**

**Matthew 9:36-38**

**Acts 10:1-4**

**I Peter 3:8-9**

*How can you give compassionately?*

**V. God Sacrificially Gives**

**Mark 10:45**

**John 3:16-17**

**II Corinthians 9:15**

*How can you give sacrificially?*

**VI. God Willingly Gives**

**John 10:17-18**

**I Corinthians 9:16-18**

**II Corinthians 8:1-5**

*How can you give willingly?*

**VII. God Graciously Gives**

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

**Ephesians 3:6**

**Ephesians 4:7**

*How can you give graciously?*

Conclusion: **James 1:17** says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." Think about how God gives. What if we give like Him? What if we love to give like God? Do you serve the Lord financially? Let's pursue amazing love!

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## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

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### **LESSON #12 = Loving Interracially: Love Without Prejudice**

Introduction: The Lord told many parables. Some of them show examples of Christian love. In **Luke 10:25-37** Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan. What does this story mean to you? We need to be searching for those who are crying out and help them! How can we love interracially? Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

#### **I. Love Those Who Need A Friend**

**Psalm 102:3-7, Mark 15:36, Romans 12:15-16, I Corinthians 12:24-26**

*How can we love people who need a friend?*

#### **II. Love Those Who Need A Family**

**Luke 2:49, John 7:35, Matthew 12:46-50, Ephesians 2:19, Ephesians 1:5, Galatians 4:5, Romans 8:15, Romans 8:23, Romans 9:4**

*How can we love people who need a family?*

#### **III. Love Those Who Need Forgiveness**

**Luke 17:3-4, Matthew 18:35, Matthew 6:12, Luke 15:18-19, Luke 18:13, Galatians 6:1-2, Matthew 9:10-13**

*How can we love people who need forgiveness?*

#### **IV. Love Those Who Need A Future**

**Matthew 13:22, Luke 8:14, I Corinthians 13:13, II Corinthians 5:4, I John 3:16-18, Hebrews 12:12-13, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16**

*How can we love people who need a future?*

Conclusion: God loves you! Remember the story of the Good Samaritan in **Luke 10:25-37** when you encounter people in need. What separated the Good Samaritan from the others? **Ephesians 5:1-2** says, "You are God's children whom he loves, so try to be like him. Live a life of love just as Christ loved us and gave himself for us as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice to God." People are looking for someone to love them and accept them. What will you do about it? Are you ready to love all people? Let's pursue this amazing love!

# Amazing Love

## **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST (Gulf Shores, AL)**

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### **LESSON #13 = Loving Liberally: Love Until It Hurts**

Introduction: This will be our final lesson in this series. We have learned much about love. However, in order to love one another we need to learn how to interact with one another. If we want to pursue the biblical mandate to love one another, then we need to focus on things we can do to show our love to one another. Let's study together...

#### Discussion:

- I. Listen Without Interrupting (Proverbs 1:8)***
- II. Promise Without Forgetting (Proverbs 13:12)***
- III. Answer Without Arguing (Proverbs 17:1)***
- IV. Give Without Sparing (Proverbs 21:26)***
- V. Trust Without Wavering (I Corinthians 13:7)***
- VI. Share Without Pretending (Ephesians 4:15)***
- VII. Enjoy Without Complaining (Philippians 2:14)***
- VIII. Pray Without Ceasing (Colossians 1:9)***
- IX. Forgive Without Punishing (Colossians 3:13)***
- X. Speak Without Accusing (James 1:19)***

*What else can we learn about dealing with people?*

*Why should we learn more about showing Christian love?*

Conclusion: I want to close this series with some words from the apostle Paul: "*And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight*" (**Philippians 1:9**). What a great prayer! What a great message to the church! We need to allow our love to grow more and more! Do you love the Lord? Do you love His people? Let's pursue this amazing love!