

**Love Fervently**

**1 Peter 1:22-23**

According to the passage above, what are the four descriptions of becoming a Christian, having your sins forgiven through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

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Reflect on these. If you are a believer, today give thanks for the forgiveness you have from God.

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What is the connection between salvation and the purpose of sincere, fervent love?

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The command here is, "fervently love one another from the heart." The Greek word translated "fervently," *ektenes*, is an interesting one. It is a medical word, used to describe muscles used in the ultimate degree (picture an Olympic weightlifter trying for a new personal best, or Tour-De-France cyclists racing each other up steep mountains). This is the effort with which we are to love those in our lives.

When do you love with this level of effort? What do you do? Excellent labor of fulfilling your calling, my friend.

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When do you fail to love with extreme intensity? What would loving fervently require? List the details. Will you now commit yourself to loving those in your life this way?

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"From the heart" is how we are to love. "Heart," *kardia*, is not a feeling but a choice of the will. Unlike modern romantica, in which a person "feels" love then shows it, in the Bible, love is an action first (i.e. 1 Corinthians 13). So "from the heart" doesn't mean "when I feel a peace about it," but rather, "as a decision of purpose- whether it's easy or not." Jesus exemplified this kind of love (Romans 5:8).

How does this apply to you? How can you love from the heart? What actions would follow if you so loved those in your life?

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As you face the impending struggle to implement these changes, remember who you are, Christian. Look back to those four phrases which describe your salvation. How do they relate to the task at hand? What hope do they give you for this job ahead of you?

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