**What Is Love?**
by Michelle Eigemann, LCSW

**“**And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them”. 1 John 4:16

What is love? Often we think of love as a feeling when it’s a choice. We choose to love, and we also choose not to love. Human love is often conditional and based on performance, while godly love is all-encompassing and is present even when performance is poor. It was love that drove Jesus to the cross. It was love that saved my soul and yours.

As I think back to August 22, 2010, there is one thing I remember more distinctly than anything else. There is one thing that caused my heart to surrender and my guard to fall, and that was love. Until I met Jesus, every single example of love in my life either came with a condition or pain. My experiences skewed my idea of love, and I wrestled with the idea that the God of the universe could love me. After all, I had deemed myself “unlovable.”

 I often tell my client’s that God wired our brains for connection, but trauma rewires our brains for protection. Therefore we throw up walls around our hearts, believing that we are protecting ourselves from hurt and pain. The problem with walls is that while it might keep the bad ones from getting in, it also keeps the good ones out. But Jesus crashed through those walls and poured so much love into me that others began to comment on my exuberant joy. To fully understand this significance, you need first to know that prior to August 22, 2010, I was a mean girl. I found fault in everyone and had no problem telling them. At work, I had a reputation for not being approachable. Yet, my coworkers were the first to say, “something is different about you.” My only response was, “it’s Jesus.”

The Apostle Peter instructs us to continue to love because love covers a multitude of sins (1Peter 4:8). One thing I know for sure is that God’s love covered all my sins with grace and mercy as I asked for forgiveness. God’s love saved my life, lifted my depression, and repositioned my future. God’s love-filled all my empty places and repaired all my wounds. It was love that drove Jesus to the cross, and it is love that drives us to follow Him.

God, you are love. We can fulfill the entire gospel in just one word…Love. Love God; love others. Thank you, Lord, that we can love you because you first loved us. We can love others because you fill us with an eternal outpouring of love. We will be known by our love.

**BIO** – Michelle wears an array of hats on any given day, but her favorite is Daughter of the King. She lives in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina, where she works as a Child and Family Therapist. She has been a single mother for 18 years and loves to watch God take your most difficult struggles and transform them into passionate purpose. Today Michelle has joyfully embraced her passion for speaking truth into the lives of others and assisting them in finding and living out their true identity in Christ. She believes we need to uncover the lies and labels, identify the root, and replace it with God's truth.