

Assemblies – God Loves You – myfishbites.com

Intro

Some questions you may be thinking... What is God's love all about? Why would I care? Isn't God someone who hates people? Isn't he against what people do? Why are you on about God's love, I don't need that or care. I don't even know I believe in God anyway?

This assembly is from a Christian point of view. We're not telling you what to believe but what we believe. There's so much bad news in the world we want you to hear what we believe is some good news!

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First up, some facts

- The UK cosmetics market was worth £9,769.4 million in 2017, one of the top five largest markets in the EU.
- 82% of women believe the social media drives health and beauty trends.
- In 2015 the industry generated \$56.2 billion in the United States.

So we know that we spend a lot on cosmetics and health & beauty products. But even back into history, there were health & beauty products going on! The CTPA website has the following facts.

- In 400 BC, Greek Olympic athletes covered their bodies with a 'sunscreen' mixture of sand and oil to protect their skin from the sun!
- The Chinese Cho Dynasty (600 BC) used gum, egg whites, gelatine and beeswax to create nail varnish.
- The use of henna as a hair colorant was first recorded around 1400–1500 BC.
- Ancient Romans used a mixture of soil and water in their hair, rolled with textiles and baked it in the sun to create temporary waves.
- In 5000 BC the Egyptians made a bath powder from myrrh, the powdered ashes of ox hooves, powdered and burnt eggshells and pumice.
- Use of perfume dates back to the beginning of mankind; the first perfume bottles were found in the Mediterranean in 7000 BC.

Facts from: <http://www.ctpa.org.uk/content.aspx?pageid=295> and <https://www.franchisehelp.com/industry-reports/beauty-industry-analysis-2018-cost-trends/> (accessed 13 March 2019).

Love and beauty products?

But is love all about physical appearance and looking good? In some ways, yes!
But in other ways, no!

The truth is we usually want to look and feel the best we can. But God does too, in a good way!

What Is Love? (Optional, skip to next section if short on time)

Often we hear about the word love. But the word has taken on a meaning it was never supposed to have. When someone says love they may mean a romantic kind of love, or they may mean sex or people say that love means you just accept everyone doing whatever they want to do.

But love is much bigger and wider and deeper than any of those things. Love is about romantic love, it is about sex and it is about valuing and caring for people. But love is also about commitment, responsibility, keeping on going, seeing the best in others, being loyal.

Love is also about helping others to be their best, pointing out wrong things to help people get back on track and helping them avoid dangers for their own good. Love is a choice and love is not selfish – it's not about getting with some girl. It's about being self-less – this means putting the other person first and doing what's best for them.

Sometimes as with parents – this means stopping your children doing something because you love them. Love includes stopping a child put their hand in the fire or running into a road. Love doesn't say, 'let them do whatever they want.'



This is a picture of my dog who has since died. He was a mad dog and would run anywhere so the garden had to have a protective fence built so he couldn't get out and escape. The fence wasn't there to stop him enjoying life, the fence was there to protect him so he could enjoy life! Which he did! He also had a lead so he didn't run off and injure himself. We did this because we loved him. Sadly one day when he was old he escaped from his lead and ran into a car. You see, love can include saying no and protecting. The consequences of rejecting these boundaries can be bad.

Love includes discipline and includes providing a place of safety, protection, care, unconditional value. Love means saying 'no' at times. But then occasionally, love means letting people go and letting people learn from their own mistakes.

Love is about supporting people but about people having responsibility for their own actions. I know a parent who loved their son so much that when he committed a serious crime, they reported him to the police and told him. But then supported him everything that happened next. Love does not let people get away with anything and everything – love holds people accountable and even sets boundaries.

I know a couple who stayed together despite their son having killed himself. Another couple were broken when their daughter was murdered but they stayed together. I've seen a woman love her husband even as he gets more and more unwell with a serious condition.

This much deeper kind of love is what love really is. And God's kind of love is even deeper and more powerful than this. In fact God's love is so deep that he gives us free choice whether we believe in him or not. He loves us so much that he's always there, ready to help no matter what we've done but won't force himself. We just have to ask him and mean it.

God's Kind of Love

Note this picture is a royalty free image and the boy has not been harmed – it is Halloween makeup.



Imagine a boy's face all battered and bruised. There are blue marks and black marks, red marks around the place. His face has cuts on it. In other places there are loads of spots. There's mud and dark patches over the face and some grit from off the floor. Some of the makeup has run down the face.

Sometimes people think God does this to people. But it's not true. Where there is bad and evil, God wants to help make things better – to restore things and turn things around for good.

When we see this picture, in one kind of way this is how we often feel. We feel a bit of a mess. We worry about how we look, what clothes we have, what people will think of us. Sometimes we're not very happy or confident. We don't like how we look or some of our features. But God's kind of love doesn't see this – God's love sees the beautiful and amazing person you are and that you could be.

Or often people feel dirty or like life has left them battered and bruised. Maybe things have happened physically to injure your words have been spoken that have messed with your head.

God's kind of love comes along and treats the wounds. He clears up the mess. He treats the injury. Then he goes about restoring you, caring for you until you feel better. Where there have been lies and hateful or unkind words said to you, he puts new words inside of you so you start to feel better and your thoughts start to be positive and full of hope. Then he sends you out to help others feel the same way.

That is God's kind of love! The Bible says God wants to turn ashes into beauty and as a Christian, that's what I've seen him do and believe he always does. God loves you.