

IS IT LOVE?

I recently read of a story about a man who was planning to make a move across country. He took all the money he had in the bank and cashed it into a certificate that was worth \$100,000. In essence he had a \$100,000 bill! He thought it would be a good idea to make a copy of it to keep, since not many people have ever seen such a certificate! So he took the bill to the photocopier store and made a copy.

On his way home, he realized he made a horrible mistake! He took the copy, but left the \$100,000 bill in the copier machine! He turned the car around and raced back to the store, but by then it was too late. Someone had taken his certificate!



This is a sad story because instead of having a bill worth \$100,000, he had a copy - a counterfeit - that said it was worth \$100,000 but in reality was worth nothing!

As you grow through adolescence, you will discover feelings for the opposite sex that you never had before. You may find yourself asking, "Is this love?"

Love is something created by God and is a good thing. But beware! Something called INFATUATION is looking to fool you into thinking it's REAL LOVE. But INFATUATION is like that copy of the \$100,000 bill. It's a counterfeit that is worth nothing in comparison to God's love.

Let's take a look at this wonderful thing called LOVE!



WHAT IS LOVE?

The Bible contains perhaps the greatest definition of LOVE ever recorded. Turn to **Corinthians 13:4-8** and write down the characteristics of TRUE LOVE.

LOVE is _____.

LOVE is _____.

LOVE does not _____.

LOVE does not _____.

LOVE is not _____.

LOVE is not _____.

LOVE is not _____.

LOVE is not _____.

LOVE keeps no record of _____.

LOVE does not delight in _____.

LOVE rejoices with _____.

LOVE ALWAYS _____, ALWAYS _____,

ALWAYS _____, ALWAYS _____.

LOVE NEVER _____!



Which of these characteristics do you like the best? Why?

How many of these characteristics are based on feelings? _____

You'll find that none of these characteristics are based on "feelings." No where does it say, "Love is a warm fuzzy." That's because love is based on ACTION, not FEELINGS. Love is not something that shows up and then disappears according to our emotions.

Let's look up a few more verses that explain God's love...

John 15:13 says the greatest love does this...

Look up **Romans 5:8**. How did God show His love for us?

Let's compare what we've learned about REAL LOVE to INFATUATION.

COUNTERFEIT LOVE

Read these stories and discuss the questions at the end.

Hi! I'm Kim! And I want to tell you about Tom! It all started innocently enough. My friends and I were hanging out at the mall on a Saturday over Christmas break when we decided to go to the Dairy Queen to grab a Blizzard. That's when I saw him! The guy working behind the counter was soooo cute. He was older than me, but he said "Hi" to me and smiled at me with the most adorable smile! I almost melted like an ice cream cone in the summer!

Anyway, every time I go to the mall now, I make sure to stop by the Dairy Queen to see Tom. I think I'm going to get up the nerve to talk to him this week. It's hard because I get so nervous! Anyway, I'm totally in love with Tom, and someday I hope we get married! That would be the greatest!

Do you think Kim is really in love with Tom? Why or Why not?

Now read about Mike...

Hi! I'm Mike. There is this girl named Ashley in my English class that is such a babe! All the guys think she's hot! I don't know much about her, but I like to look at her when she's in class. Sometimes I sit behind her in class so I can watch her instead of listening to the dumb teacher. I know what you're thinking! "Mike, ask the girl out!" But I can't. She'd never like a guy like me. If she said no, I'd feel like such an idiot!

Do you think Mike is really in love? Why or Why not?

Infatuation is thinking very highly of someone often without really knowing the person at all! These feelings, while normal in some sense, are much different than real love. These feelings usually last for a short time. Infatuation is SELF-CENTERED and TEMPORARY. Real love is OTHERS-CENTERED and ETERNAL.

CONCLUSION

Based on what you've learned this evening about REAL LOVE and INFATUATION, discuss these questions...

- What would you say is the biggest difference between REAL LOVE and INFATUATION?
- What are the dangers of mixing the two of them up?
- How can you show genuine love to your family this week? To your friends?

If you have time before you leave, share some prayer requests and pray for one another!