

They Said “I Love You”... But God Warned You About Them

By Admin | Sermon | June 21, 2026

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The declaration of love is one of the most powerful and intoxicating sequences of words in the human language, possessing the unique ability to disarm our defenses and melt away our deepest insecurities. When someone looks you in the eye and whispers those three profound words, your natural human instinct is to immediately open the gates of your heart, lower your guard, and grant them access to the sacred spaces of your life. We live in a world that treats emotional attraction as an absolute authority, preaching that if a connection feels good and uses the vocabulary of affection, it must be inherently right, safe, and blessed by heaven. But the pages of Scripture present a far more vigilant, perspective-shattering truth: words are cheap, the human heart is deceptively complex, and some of the most destructive traps you will ever encounter come wrapped in the softest vocabulary of devotion. And before we dive in, if this message is already stirring something in you, hit the FOLLOW button and stay connected to God's Word daily, because learning to distinguish between an authentic, godly connection and a calculated counterfeit will preserve your soul, your calling, and your emotional sanity. The enemy does not always approach you as a roaring lion; sometimes he approaches as a smooth talker using the language of intimacy to breach your perimeter.

We often suffer under an intense, unscriptural guilt when we feel a sudden check in our spirit about someone who claims to love us, fearing that our hesitation is a sign of a lack of charity or a judgmental attitude. We tell ourselves to ignore the warning signs, override our discernment, and give the person "another chance" because to do otherwise feels un-Christian. But God never commanded you to turn your discernment off to make a toxic person comfortable. In the book of Proverbs and throughout the New Testament, God repeatedly warns us that the enemy's primary strategy for hijacking your destiny is to insert an ungodly influence into your inner circle under the guise of an emotional attachment. When God gives you a warning about someone who says "I love you," He isn't trying to rob you of happiness; He is actively shielding you from a relational shipwreck that will drain your spiritual oil and stall your purpose.

We are going to open the Word of God to look directly at the seven clear warning signs that show someone's profession of love is actually a trap that God is telling you to avoid. We are moving past the superficial romance of words and stepping into the surgical evaluation of spiritual fruit. You were not created to be a victim of emotional manipulation, nor were you called to give the keys of your sanctuary to anyone who knows how to quote a script. If you are currently feeling a tug-of-war between what someone is telling you and what the Holy Spirit is whispering to your soul, this is your moment to drop your sentimentality and pick up your spiritual authority. Let us clear away the

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emotional fog of your current relationships and look into the light of Scripture, where the sharp edge of truth dismantles the illusion of the counterfeit covenant.

Number 1: The Trap of the Deceitful Kiss

The first warning sign God gives us about a counterfeit profession of love is found in the sharp contrast between outward affection and inward intent. Proverbs 27:6 drops a monumentally important metric for our relationships: "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses." The enemy understands that human beings are deeply starved for validation, and he will use an excessive, overwhelming display of affection—what some call "love bombing"—to blind your discernment before you notice the flaws in their character. A person who showers you with endless compliments and premature declarations of devotion before they even know your character is often setting a trap for your compliance.

We see the ultimate historic manifestation of this trap in the Garden of Gethsemane. When Judas Iscariot led the mob to arrest Jesus, he didn't point a finger or shout an accusation. He approached the Savior, greeted Him warmly, and kissed Him (Matthew 26:49). The kiss was the signal for the executioners. Judas used the universal physical symbol of love and loyalty to execute the ultimate act of betrayal. If the Son of God was targeted with a deceitful kiss, you must realize that the people the enemy sends into your life will often use the exact same currency of affection to gain a foothold in your world.

Enabling a relationship simply because the person uses affectionate words is a failure of spiritual stewardship. You must learn to watch the feet, not just the lips. If someone tells you they love you, but their actions consistently bring chaos, compromise, and confusion into your life, their words are a smoke screen. In 1 John 3:18, the Holy Spirit commands us: "Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." If the actions do not match the speech, the covenant is a counterfeit. The multi-plied kisses are just a mechanism to keep you quiet while they dismantle your boundaries.

Practical victory in this area means requiring time and fruit before you grant access. Do not let your emotional hunger make you gullible. When someone enters your circle using extravagant words of love, step back into the throne room and say, "Lord, give me eyes to see past the performance. Let me observe their character when the spotlight is off, how they handle frustration, and how they treat those who can do nothing for them." True, godly love is patient, steady, and built over time through the soil of consistent honor—it doesn't need to wear a loud, performative mask to prove its existence.

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When you stop evaluating connections based on the emotional high of their words and start inspecting the solid grain of their character, the enemy's strategy of the deceitful kiss fails completely. You realize that a hard truth from a faithful friend who loves your soul is worth infinitely more than a thousand flatteries from a flatterer who only loves your utility. Stand firm on the Word, and let the Holy Spirit clear away the fluff of superficial validation.

Number 2: The Demand for Spiritual Compromise

The second major warning sign that someone's "love" is a trap is when their affection comes with an unwritten clause that requires you to lower your biblical standards. They say they love you, but they constantly invite you into spaces, habits, or conversations that grieve the Holy Spirit. If this message inspires you, don't forget to FOLLOW for more Bible insights every week. They make you feel like you are being too rigid, too religious, or too legalistic for holding your ground, using their "love" as a leverage to make you choose between their comfort and your obedience to God.

We see a devastating scriptural example of this in the life of King Solomon. He was a man of unmatched wisdom, chosen by God to build the Temple. Yet, 1 Kings 11:2 tells us that he intermarried with foreign nations whom the Lord had explicitly warned the Israelites about, stating, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." The text goes on to record a tragic phrase: "Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love." Solomon's human definition of "love" became the very rope that pulled him into idolatry. His foreign wives said they loved him, but their presence required him to tolerate their pagan altars, eventually tearing his kingdom apart.

When someone truly loves you with a godly love, they will protect your relationship with Jesus at all costs. They will sharpen your faith, respect your boundaries, and celebrate your commitment to purity and truth. If a relationship requires you to mute your conviction, compromise your financial integrity, or stay away from the community of believers to maintain the connection, that relationship is not a blessing—it is an altar of sacrifice where your destiny is being burned. Satan knows he cannot pull you out of God's hand, so he will send a person to entice you to walk out on your own through the door of emotional attachment.

To break the power of this compromise, you must re-establish the supremacy of your first love. In Revelation 2:4, Jesus warns the church of Ephesus because they had "forsaken their first love." Your primary allegiance belongs to the Savior. When someone says "I love you" but demands that you push Jesus off the throne of your daily choices, your response must be an uncompromised, immediate *No*. You do not negotiate your standard with a guest in your life; you enforce the rules

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of the Householder who bought you with His blood.

You will regret every boundary you drop for the sake of keeping a compromised connection. True love does not require you to blind your spirit or violate your conscience. When you choose the honor of God over the comfort of a toxic attachment, you are showing the spiritual realm that your faith is not a casual accessory, but a weighted anchor. Let the compromise go, and trust that the Father has a covenant community waiting for you that will love your destination as much as you do.

Number 3: The Currency of Control and Manipulation

The third warning sign that a profession of love is a counterfeit is when that love is weaponized as an instrument of control. The person uses their affection conditionally—withdrawing their attention, giving you the silent treatment, or projecting intense guilt whenever you make a decision that doesn't center around their preferences. They use the phrase "if you really loved me, you would..." to force you to drop your schedule, your family connections, or your personal rest to satisfy their bottomless appetite for attention. This is not the fruit of the Spirit; it is the manipulation of the flesh.

The Bible describes the true profile of godly love in 1 Corinthians 13:5, stating that love "is not proud, it is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs." Notice that true love is **not self-seeking**. It doesn't view the other person as a possession to be managed or a resource to be consumed. A controller tries to isolate you from your support systems—your church family, your mature advisors, and your actual friends—because they know that if you stay in the dark, you are easier to dominate. They want to be the sole author of your reality.

Think of Delilah and Samson. Delilah was sent by the rulers of the Philistines specifically to discover the secret of Samson's supernatural strength so they could overpower and blind him. She didn't approach him with a sword; she used the leverage of emotional manipulation. Day after day, she pressed him, saying, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you won't confide in me?" (Judas 16:15). She used his affection for her as a pry-bar to break his spiritual consecration. Samson mistook her nagging for intimacy, and it cost him his hair, his sight, and his life.

Stopping the enablement of a manipulator means refusing to play the game of their emotional currency. When someone tries to drive you with guilt, you must become absolute-ly un-guilty. If they say, "If you loved me, you would do this," your response must be, "I love you, but I serve God first, and I will not compromise my peace or my assignments to manage your anxiety." A healthy person will adjust to that limit; a controller will explode with anger or slide into intense self-pity.

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Their negative reaction is the loudest confirmation that the boundary was desperately needed.

Your life, your time, and your peace are precious resources entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit for the fulfillment of your kingdom purpose. Do not hand the management of those resources over to a human being who wants to play the role of God in your life. Break the gravity of their control by anchoring your self-worth solely in the finished work of Christ. When you are fully satisfied with His approval, you lose the frantic need to jump through the hoops of a manipulator's expectations.

Number 4: The Subtle Erosion of Your Spiritual Edge

The fourth warning sign that God gives us about an ungodly connection is a slow, almost imperceptible decline in your spiritual vibrancy after they enter your life. They don't openly fight your faith—they may even attend services with you and nod along with the messages—but their lifestyle, their conversation, and their priorities act as a slow leak to your spiritual reservoir. If this message inspires you, don't forget to FOLLOW for more Bible insights every week. Before you met them, you were on fire, consistent in prayer, and hungry for the Word; now, you find yourself lukewarm, distracted by worldliness, and casual about your secret place.

The Bible warns us about the power of subtle association in 1 Corinthians 15:33: "Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character." Notice that Paul prefaces this with "Do not be misled." He highlights that this corruption is deceptive—it doesn't happen overnight with a dramatic jump into wickedness; it happens through a slow, daily drift. It is the conversation that slowly shifts from the things of God to the gossip of the town. It is the weekend schedule that slowly replaces the gathering of the saints with casual entertainment and self-indulgence.

Consider the story of Lot pitching his tents near Sodom. He didn't start by moving into the center of the corrupt city; Genesis 13:12 records that he simply "pitched his tents near Sodom." He chose his location based on physical convenience and economic prosperity, despite the known wickedness of the environment. Over time, that proximity eroded his boundaries until he was sitting in the gateway of the city, fully integrated into a culture that eventually cost him his wife, his wealth, and his legacy. The drift began with an unhedged association.

When you are following Christ, your circle should sharpen your edge, not blunt it. If a relationship leaves you feeling spiritually heavy, dry, or indifferent to the things of God, that connection is a weight you need to drop. You cannot carry someone else's worldliness and expect your fire to stay hot. The enemy knows that if he can't pull you back into the world through a direct attack, he can simply insert a pleasant, lukewarm companion into your life to absorb your heat until your fire goes out.

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Perform an honest spiritual audit of your life today. Look at your prayer logs, your desire for the Word, and your enthusiasm for the Kingdom before this person arrived compared to right now. If your edge has been blunted, it is time to draw a strict boundary. You can love them, you can pray for them, but you do not allow them to dictate the atmospheric conditions of your soul. Reclaim your fire, get back into the secret place, and surround yourself with those who provoke you to love and good deeds.

Number 5: The Absence of Genuine Respect for Your Calling

The fifth indicator of an ungodly connection masquerading as love is an underlying contempt or indifference toward your specific kingdom assignment. They love the *idea* of you, or they love what you can do for them, but they have no respect for the voice of God in your life. When you share a dream, a word of direction from the Holy Spirit, or a desire to step out in faith, they meet your enthusiasm with a cold splash of cynicism, doubt, or subtle mockery. They want you to be safe, small, and predictable, keeping you locked in a box that fits their comfort zone.

The Bible shows us that your calling is a sacred trust that requires a protective boundary. In Galatians 1:15-16, Paul writes that when God, who set him apart from his mother's womb, was pleased to reveal His Son in him so that he might preach Him among the Gentiles, his immediate response was to "not consult any human being." Paul knew that human opinions are often polluted by fear, jealousy, or small perspective. If you allow someone who lacks spiritual vision to audit your divine assignment, they will always tell you to lower the standard or cancel the launch.

Think of King David returning to Jerusalem after bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to the center of the nation. He was so full of joy and reverence for God that he danced before the Lord with all his might, wearing a simple linen ephod. He didn't care about his royal dignity; he cared about God's glory. But when he entered his house, his wife Michal, the daughter of Saul, looked out the window and "despised him in her heart" (2 Samuel 6:16). She met his spiritual breakthrough with a sarcastic critique, mocking his lack of royal restraint. Michal loved the king on the throne, but she despised the worshiper before the Ark.

When someone scoffs at your devotion or minimizes the sacrifices you make for the Gospel, they are showing you that their spirit is not aligned with your destiny. If you stay tied to someone who despises your mantle, you will eventually start hiding your gifts to keep them comfortable. You will find yourself playing small so they don't feel insecure. But God did not purchase you with the blood of His Son so you could live as a captive to a small-minded critic. Your calling is too heavy to be negotiated with someone who doesn't see the Light.

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Stop trying to get spiritual confirmation from a fleshly source. If someone in your life does not honor your calling, move them to the outer courts of your environment. You do not need their validation to execute what the King has commanded you to do. Surround yourself with an "Aaron and Hur" support network—people who will lift your hands during the battle because they believe in the staff of God you are carrying. Your destiny is worth the boundary.

Number 6: The Pattern of Unchecked, Defiant Character Fruit

The sixth sign that God is warning you about a relationship is when the person's life is marked by a consistent pattern of unrepentant, toxic fruit, regardless of how often they apologize or use the vocabulary of regret. They say they love you, but they are consistently caught in lies, fits of rage, chronic gossip, or fits of jealousy. They treat these slip-ups as "mistakes" or "flaws," but the Bible classifies them as works of the flesh that must be addressed with radical confrontation, not passive tolerance.

If this message inspires you, don't forget to FOLLOW for more Bible insights every week. Jesus gave us the definitive rule for discernment in Matthew 7:20: "Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them." He didn't say recognize them by their promises, their potential, or their theology; recognize them by their **fruit**. If a tree consistently produces thorns, you are a fool to keep reaching into its branches expecting figs just because the tree tells you it wants to change. An apology without a matching change of direction is just a form of manipulation designed to keep you in the trap.

We see the danger of ignoring bad fruit in the warning of Proverbs 22:24-25: "Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn their ways and get yourself ensnared." God is revealing a spiritual law of contamination: whatever you tolerate in your inner circle, you will eventually internalize. If you stay in close intimacy with a chronic liar, you will start compromising your own honesty. If you stay tied to a person of rage, your own peace will be corroded. The fruit of their unyielded character will eventually become a snare for your soul.

To stop enabling this toxic cycle, you must look at the trajectory of their patterns, not just the emotion of their moments. True repentance is a structural change—a literal turning around of the mind and behavior (Acts 26:20). If someone says they love you but refuses to seek help, accountability, or real spiritual surgery for their toxic habits, they are asking you to be a garbage dump for their dysfunction. God never commanded you to destroy your own peace to provide an outlet for someone else's unrepentant flesh.

Hold the line on the fruit standard. If the relationship consistently produces the works of the flesh

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outlined in Galatians 5 instead of the quiet, peaceful fruit of righteousness, you must step back. This isn't being unmerciful; it's being biblical. You can forgive them for their past choices, but you do not trust them with your present environment until they have produced fruit in keeping with repentance. Protect the orchard of your soul.

Number 7: The Final Interception of the Sovereign Voice

The seventh and most definitive warning sign is the direct check of the Holy Spirit inside your own spirit. This is that quiet, persistent "nudge" of unease—a sense of hesitation or lack of peace that you cannot logically explain based on the surface-level facts of the relationship. The person looks perfect on paper, they say all the right things, and everyone around you thinks they are a blessing, but in your secret place, whenever you present that connection to God, you feel a heavy weight of restraint. The enemy wants you to write this off as overthinking or fear, but it is actually the protective voice of your Father.

The Bible reveals that the Holy Spirit is our Counselor and our ultimate Guide into all truth (John 16:13). He sees the end from the beginning, and He knows the secret plots of the heart that are currently hidden behind a pleasant smile. If He places a "stop sign" in your spirit, it is a legal alert from the control tower of heaven. In the book of Acts, when Paul and his companions tried to enter Bithynia to preach the Gospel, Luke records that "the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to" (Acts 16:7). If the Spirit can intercept a good thing like preaching the Word to protect a greater timeline, how much more will He intercept a relationship to protect your soul?

Many believers carry a deep, lifelong regret because they overrode that internal check to satisfy their flesh or to avoid the discomfort of a difficult conversation. They said "yes" to a covenant when the Spirit was shouting *No*, and they spent the next decade cleaning up the wreckage of a compromised life. Do not trust your emotions above the witness of the Holy Spirit. Emotions are volatile, easily manipulated by a smooth tongue and a chemistry click; but the Spirit of God is unchanging and unerring.

Think of the prophet Eli, who ignored the blatant wickedness of his sons Hophni and Phinehas because of his parental affection for them. He tolerated their corruption of the sanctuary, offering mild verbal rebukes instead of structural boundaries. Because he valued his emotional connection above his priestly consecration, God brought a devastating judgment upon his household, and the glory of God departed from Israel (1 Samuel 4). When you elevate an ungodly attachment above the explicit warning of the Spirit, you are inviting an exile of peace into your home.

Learn to rest in the authority of the internal nudge. If you lack peace, you stop the progression. You

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do not move forward into a deeper commitment, a shared business, or a joint life until the cloud of restraint lifts. Go to your secret place, lay the relationship completely on the altar, and say, "Lord, my heart is yours. If this person is a trap, expose the truth and give me the courage to walk away. I choose Your peace over their presence." When you honor the voice of the Shepherd, He will guide you past every hidden minefield of the enemy and lead you into the green pastures of authentic, blood-bought covenant community.

Conclusion

The phrase “I love you” is a magnificent gift when it flows from a heart that is fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, but it is a dangerous weapon when it is used as a tool of deception, control, or compromise by the kingdom of darkness. We have seen that God does not leave us defenseless against the traps of the flesh; He gives us the sharp discernment to identify the deceitful kiss, to reject the demand for spiritual compromise, to break the power of manipulation, and to notice the slow erosion of our spiritual edge.

When you combine this vigilance with a refusal to tolerate contempt for your calling, a firm requirement for genuine character fruit, and a total submission to the quiet check of the Holy Spirit, your relationship patterns are completely transformed. You are no longer an easy target for an emotional con-artist; you become a sentinel who guards the perimeter of your destiny with the wisdom of the Word. Have the courage to audit your table today. Look at the fruit, listen to the Spirit, and let the truth set you free from the guilt of saying *No* to what God has already rejected.

You are a child of the Living God, designed for connections that will build your faith, honor your mantle, and multiply your kingdom impact. Walk forward with your head held high, fully secure in your identity in Christ and completely trusting in your Father's protective engineering. Refuse to let the enemy buy your surrender with a cheap slogan or an affectionate mask. As you stand firmly on the boundaries of Scripture, you will find a new strength rising in your soul—an authority that clears the atmosphere of your home, secures the legacy of your children, and shines as a luminous beacon of victory to a world that desperately needs to see that true love is always anchored in the uncompromised Truth of the Living Word.

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