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Christian Perspectives: What?s love got to do with it anyway?

In 1983, Tina Turner stepped into a recording studio to lay down the tracks for what was to become her signature song. To this day, fans will not let Tina perform without hearing, ?What's Love Got to Do With It?? Song and singer have become synonymous. This song is raw and honest in its witness to the emotion and anguish of severed relationship and touches a chord with many. From the point of view of Christian love, though, both Cliff Richards the author and Tina Turner who gave it staying power, got it all wrong.

It is not the question, ?What's love got to do with it?? that should stick with us but the statement ?Love has everything to do with it.?

?What's love got to do with it? What's love but a second- hand emotion?? That's what we hear in the Tina Turner song. Perhaps they got it wrong again. There is emotion involved in caring, affection and the enjoyment of being in the company with someone we like. Physical attraction is another kind of drive that brings people together. But love is not an emotion at all. Let me share with you a phrase I first heard back in the early 1970's. Some things stick with you forever. This has stuck with me. Love is a decision. Love is not an emotion or a reaction or a nice feeling.

Love is a decision. We make the decision to do or say the loving thing in any given moment. We make the decision to let love be what governs all our decisions. Like many important decisions we have to make in life, the decision to love is not an easy one. More often than not we are programmed to react in a way that protects ourselves, or that helps us get our own way or sometimes just in the way that will be the least inconvenient to us. Breaking out of that natural pattern, we might even say the ?sin? of wanting to serve our own interests first is the lifelong job of a Christian who is truly trying to pattern his or her life on Christ.

Christ calls us to serve him through service to others. Love one another sounds simple but is actually difficult. Being faithful to this call demands attention to our behaviour. Old patterns of interaction have to be consciously set aside and a new way of being with others adopted. We have to learn to make loving decisions. It takes practise, determination and time to develop and mature to be able to decide to love day by day, minute by minute in all of life's situations. It is difficult but it can make all the difference in your life and in the lives of those with whom you interact every day.

What's love got to do with it?? Love has everything to do with it. We are called into the love of God and we are called to decide to love one another.

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