

## GOD'S STRONG LOVE

### TODAY'S READING

Perfect love drives out fear. - 1 John 4:18 (NIV)

Gerry climbed into the bed next to his dying wife and cradled her in his arms. Holding her weakened body he said, "Okay, Pastor, pray for us." I had never seen something so brave and yet so loving. I prayed that God would bless Louise with every possible healing, and I asked God to strengthen Gerry, whose love was bearing the full burden of Louise's suffering and helplessness. Louise died a few days later. But that did not end Gerry's burden of love. His children and grandchildren needed his hugs and smiles, and Gerry needed to care for himself. The greater our love, the greater our burden of care.

But God is love (1 John 4:16), and God's love is strong. It carries the heaviest of burdens: our sins, our sorrows, and all our cries for help. God's love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Cor. 13:7, NRSV).

When our burdens threaten to break us, we can pray for the strong love of God. We will see God's answers in many ways. Friends show up at just the right time. Our daily Bible readings open our eyes to the promises of God. An inner calm surprises us, and we sense the presence of our Savior. We are given a strength we know isn't ours but comes from God's strong love.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

Dear God, help us to rely on your love and to show that love to those around us. Amen.