

Perhaps the most important motif of Ellen White's writings was the Biblical expression that "God is Love". This sentiment bookends her Conflict of the Ages series as the first and last words of her opus magnus (PP 33; GC 678). This "Great and Blessed Truth that God is love" (ST Nov 15, 1899) was more than illustrative, for she wrote emphatically that "God is love; God is, in Himself, in His essence, love" (TM 265) adding that "'God is love,' and in all His works, in all His dealings with mankind, His character is revealed" (Ms 21, 1900). She believed that "God is love, God is life" (RH Feb 26, 1895) and "God is love, and love is life" (COL 258) and saying that "Love is power" (RH May 11, 1886) and that "Love is the agency through which God works... It is the power by which he expels sin from the soul" (RH June 27, 1893). She speaks of "love which proceeds from God" (Ms 78, 1901) and plainly stated that "This love is the Spirit of God" (YI Dec 23, 1897) which pervades "heaven, where all is love and unity" (4T 223).

Ellen White wrote that love, at its core, is a principle, calling it the "heavenly principle of eternal love" (YI Dec 23, 1897) and saying that "The love of a holy God is an amazing principle" (RH June 17, 1890), "The love of God is something more than a mere negation; it is a positive and active principle, a living spring, ever flowing to bless others" (MB 58). To her, "True love is a high and holy principle" (PP 176), "a pure and holy principle" (2T 473), the "one comprehensive principle... This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power" (AA 551), "a living principle" (Lt 25a, 1895), "a living principle, a permanent power" (Lt 63, 1896), "the ruling principle" (SA 175), "an inwrought principle" (RH August 12, 1884), "a principle that emanates from God... the abiding principle" (Lt 26, 1894), "This pure and holy principle... Divine love has a powerful, purifying influence" (2T 169), "an active principle, a purifying agency" (RH April 30, 1895). She was clear that "True love is not merely a sentiment or an emotion" (AUCR June 1, 1900), "Pure and holy affection is not a feeling, but a principle" (MH 358), "Pure love is not an impulse, a spasmodic feeling, but a principle that is divine, a permanent power. We imbibe it fresh from the current of love that flows from the heart of God" (Lt 28, 1896) and that "The love of Christ is not a fitful feeling, but a living principle, which is to be made manifest as an abiding power in the heart" (AA 516).

Ellen White saw this as a principle that leads to action, saying, "Love must be the principle of action. Love is the underlying principle of God's government in heaven and earth" (COL 49), "Love should be revealed in action" (PP 144), "it is a principle manifest in works, in noble and unselfish deeds" (Lt 53, 1900), "an active, living, working principle" (Lt 7, 1900), "a strong, fixed principle, revealed in word and action" (Ms 138 1897), "Love is the great principle that actuates unfallen beings" (Lt 134, 1902), "All that we do should flow from a deep, abiding principle of love" (RH April 3, 1900), "It is a living principle, a principle that is manifest in action. True love, wherever it exists, will control the life. Thus it is with the love of God. "God is love;" and in all His works, in all His dealings with mankind, His character is revealed" (AUCR June 1, 1900). Writing more fully on the subject she stated, "When the heavenly principle of eternal love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, not merely because favors are received of them, but because love is the principle of action and modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and elevates and ennoble the affections. This love is not contracted so as merely to include 'me and mine,' but is as broad as the world and as high as heaven, and is in harmony with that of the angel workers" (4T 223).