The Greatest of These
A 13 lesson study of the Bible’s teaching on love

Michael Gifford
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Introduction

When it comes to a discussion of true love, the Bible is the standard. Therein we find love portrayed as the crown jewel in the diadem of saintly graces that all Christians are to wear (II Peter 1:4-7). Love was the motive for the Father sending the Son as the ransom for souls (John 3:16). It was love that led our Savior, Jesus Christ to temporarily leave heaven’s portals to come and redeem fallen man through His blood (John 15:13). The Bible itself is the product of love, for it comes from the One “who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (I Timothy 2:4).

The purpose of this book is to lead its readers into a study of love as it is defined and described in the Bible. As each of us considers this important topic from the standpoint of God’s verbally inspired Word, may we realize that the kind of love with which the Lord would have us fill our hearts and motivate our thoughts and actions is indeed “the greatest of these.”

Michael Gifford
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Chapter One
The Love of God For Man (Part 1)

Memory Work:
"We love him, because he first loved us." (I John 4:19)

Love Originated With God

Central to the message of God's love for man is a fact that comes from inspired statements in I John 4:10,19. Verse ten reads, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Verse 19 is recorded above as this lesson's memory work.

Love is not something that man invented. Furthermore, its presence continues to baffle the infidels of the world who are too "sophisticated" to accept the fact of God's existence. Their theory of evolution demands survival of the fittest but love gives way to helping those who are weak and infirm. Man as an evolved being would slaughter the crippled and leave the aged to die unaided, but man as a being created by Almighty Jehovah builds hospitals and convalescent homes, occupies himself in the helping professions of doctor and nurse and seeks to cheer the downtrodden and comfort the afflicted.

It is in man's nature to be good (Ecclesiastes 7:29). Indeed we do have in our world those who hurt and maim and neglect the needy and commit other crimes, but these actions can be explained by the presence of sin and not by the absence of the Divine Creator. The atheist questions, "If there is a God, why is there evil in the world?" Would that they would deign to answer a question in return: "If there is no God, how do you explain the presence of good?" The presence of evil can easily be explained by considering man's free will and his frequent abuse of same
in committing offenses (cf. Deuteronomy 30:15-20), but the atheist is strapped for an explanation of the presence of good.

Love not only originated with God, our God IS love (I John 4:8). He is love in its completeness, He is love inexhaustible, and as we mortals seek Godliness, we strive to grasp the magnitude of the love of God and find that He is love incomprehensible (Romans 11:33).

Before man there was the love of God. Before the fall of man there was the love of God. And now, though sin stains the soul of every accountable man and woman (Romans 3:23), there is still the love of God.

**God's Love Not Earned By Man**

That love originated with God and that He loves even the vilest of offenders are two rays that illuminate the truth that mankind does not earn God's love and favor. This statement, taken out of context, would likely cause many false teachers to squeal with delight as they try to convince the world that mankind can have no part in obtaining salvation and that anyone who teaches that we must do something in order to be saved is teaching the doctrine of salvation by human works.

When one obeys the Gospel of Jesus Christ and has his sins washed away by the blood of Christ, he is not earning God's love. Rather, he is evidencing the love that he has for God. Jesus, in John 14:23, said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." John echoes this in I John 5:3. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments."

Notice how the love of God for man and the love of man for God meet in God's commandments. Now, if we were to develop some unscriptural rituals in order to try to please God, we would indeed be guilty of trying to earn His love and salvation, but in that we follow the instructions
that have come from Him, we are merely taking advantage of one of the products of His love (His inspired Word) and demonstrating our love for Him in return by obeying Him.

**Characteristics of God's Love For Man**

The list of the characteristics of God's love for man could go on and on. F. M. Lehman, in "The Love of God," poetically suggested the depths of our Lord's love for us when he wrote:

> Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
> And were the skies of parchment made;  
> Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill,  
> And ev'ry man a scribe by trade;  
> To write the love of God above  
> Would drain the ocean dry;  
> Nor could the scroll contain the whole,  
> Tho' stretched from sky to sky.

For our study, we shall consider but three of the characteristics of our Lord's love.

The love of God is, first of all, **PEERLESS**. There are no rivals to the love of God. A search through the creeds of the foreign religions produces a composite picture of gods who are aloof and distant from their worshippers. Buddhism insists that God is an impersonal force. The Koran says of Allah, "God loveth not the unbelievers" and "Verily God misleadeth whom he will, and guideth whom he will." It is also taught in Islam that, while Allah is kind to man, he does nothing for man's salvation that costs him anything.

The reason that the gods of the world religions do not love like Jehovah is because these gods are the products of the minds of men. When man creates a god, he creates one
that is inferior in every way to Jehovah; inferior in power, inferior in knowledge, inferior in love. Hence, we may safely say without fear of successful contradiction that our God is peerless in the realm of love.

The fact of the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible is verified by its teaching of God's peerless love. Man-made gods reflect man's imperfect love. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." (Romans 5:7). Man's concept of love has him barely giving himself to save another and even then that sacrifice comes only after considerable contemplation. On top of this, the price is paid only for those who are deemed righteous or good. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8). Notice the vivid contrast between the hesitation of man in verse seven and the willingness of God in verse eight. Notice further that no qualifications are placed on the sacrifice made by the Lord. All may benefit from it, even the self-proclaimed chief of sinners (I Timothy 1:15). Truly, the love of God is peerless.

A second characteristic of God's love is that it is PURE. We may question the motives of men when they do good to us and sometimes we are right in so doing. Some time ago an article was printed that told of a couple who received a card in the mail. The card read, "A free full-course meal will be awaiting you at Luigi's Restaurant this Friday evening at 8:00." It was signed, "A friend." The couple was leery at first but checked with the restaurant and found that someone had indeed paid for a meal for them. Thinking that all was well, the two went to the restaurant and enjoyed their supper. When they returned home that evening they found that their house had been broken into and that many of their valuables had been
stolen. In the living room, on the stand where the television once sat, was this note: "Hope you had a good supper. (Signed) A friend."

We don't have to be doubtful regarding the motives where God's love is concerned. He wants us to be joyful (Philippians 4:4), to have the things we need to live (Matthew 6:33) and, most of all, He wants us to be in heaven (II Peter 3:9). God does not "set us up just to see us fall." He does not give us good to get our hopes up and then hurt us just so He can see us cry. Such is a trick done by man from time to time but never by the Almighty.

Because God's love is pure, we can trust Him explicitly, being assured that He will never do anything to harm us (James 1:13) and that, when we are in trouble, He will help us handle it (I Corinthians 10:13). Our hearts, our souls and our minds are safe with God. We can give ourselves to Him completely and rest in the bosom of His love because His love is pure.

A third characteristic of God's love is that it is PERSONAL. Consider the wonderful wording concerning our God as found in I Thessalonians 1:1. In the opening statement of that verse, Paul speaks of "God the Father." Our God is the Father of all creation. "...the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth." (Isaiah 51:13). Everything and everyone owes their existence to Him whose creative powers have brought us into this world.

Now notice the second segment of I Thessalonians 1:1. "Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father." God is the Father of all creation, but in a special sense, He is the Father of those who have obeyed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christians have been born into the family of God (John 3:3-5; Ephesians 3:15). The Lord has promised to the obedient that He "will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be
my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (II Corinthians 6:18). In like manner, Jesus is the Savior of all the world (I John 2:2), but Paul wrote that Jesus "loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20).

We are not just a number to our God. We are not just another of the billions of men and women who have walked this earth. Each of us is unique. It can be said of every last one of us that our God knows us so intimately that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matthew 10:30). The verses preceding and following this one speak to the fact that God knows everything that happens to us. He who even knows when the seemingly insignificant sparrow falls to the ground is aware of our every need and our every care.

Because the love of God is personal, we can carry "everything to God in prayer." We can cast all our cares upon Him, for He cares for us (I Peter 5:7). We can be confident that He hears us when we pray according to His will (I John 5:14). No matter how desperate the trouble, how deep the pain, how tall the stumbling block, how awesome the fear, our God is aware of it and, through His flawless love, He helps us overcome it.

**Conclusion**

As per the principles of evolution, if man were an evolved being, he not only could not create love but he would not. His interest would be solely in self-preservation. Furthermore, it is not even conceivable that Jehovah God is a product of man's imagination as some would have us think for the love of God as described in the Bible far exceeds man's concept of love. The characteristics of the foreign gods which men have created provide evidence of what God would be like if He was the product of man's imagination.
God is love. He is love without peer, love in purity and love that is personal. In the next chapter, we will go into detail concerning the many ways in which God has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate His love for man.

**Exercise Your Mind**

**TRUE OR FALSE**
1. T - F: Man invented the idea of love.
2. T - F: The gods that man creates are inferior in every way to Jehovah.
3. T - F: Man has never done anything nor ever will do anything to earn the love of God.
4. T - F: God is unconcerned about our personal needs and, even if He was concerned, He would be powerless to help.
5. T - F: It is inconsistent to talk about God's love and man's need to faithfully obey the Word of God.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE**
1. God: A) Loves us because we love Him; B) Loved us first; C) Loves only those who have been predestined to eternal life.
2. The theory of evolution teaches: A) Survival of the fittest; B) Love comes from God; C) The Bible is correct in its explanation of man's origin.
3. Man is born: A) In sin; B) Full of evil thoughts and intentions; C) Pure and sinless.
4. It is impossible for man to: A) Earn God's love; B) Be saved; C) Understand the Bible.
5. The gods of the world religions such as Buddhism and Islam: A) Are the same as Jehovah but with different names; B) Have as much power as the God of the
Bible; C) Are inferior to God in every way.

FILL IN THE BLANKS
1. "Herein is ________________, not that we loved ____________, but that He loved ____________, and sent His ____________ to be the ____________________ for our sins."
2. "If a ____________ love ________________, he will ____________ my ________________.
3. For this is the ________________ of ________________, that ________________ keep his ________________.
4. "For ________________ for a ________________ man will one ____________; yet peradventure for a ________________ some would even ________________ to die."
5. "But ________________ commendeth his ________________ toward ____________, in that, while we were yet ____________, ________________ died for us."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
1. Define and discuss the term, "propitiation" in I John 4:10.

2. How is the presence of evil and suffering in the world used by atheists to try to disprove God's existence?
3. How does the presence of good prove God's existence?
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

4. Respond to this statement: "Those who insist that we need to obey God's commands to be saved are guilty of trying to earn their salvation." ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

5. In what sense can God's Word, the Bible, be considered a product of the love of God? ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

6. What would it be like to serve a god whom you believed to be distant and unconcerned about his followers? ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

7. How does the Bible's discussion of the love of God verify that it is Divinely inspired? ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

8. When we experience problems, is it fair for us to blame God for the trouble? Explain your answer. ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
9. What keeps some Christians from taking "everything to God in prayer"?

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

10. List some more of the blessings we enjoy as a result of God's love.

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

11. Discuss this saying: "If you are not close to God, who moved?"

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

12. What benefits do we get from knowing that God is always with us?

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

13. Describe the kinds of gods man has created.

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

14. List any additional characteristics of God's love that stand out in your mind.

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
15. Can one fully understand love without the Bible? Explain your answer. __________________________
_________________________________________
_________________________________________
_________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
(Note: For this section, you will find a good concordance and a Nave's Topical Bible helpful.)

Where is the following Bible verse located?

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love." __________________________
Chapter Two
The Love of God For Man (Part 2)

Memory Work:
"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

The Love of God For Man as Demonstrated in Jesus
The faithful child of God need hear but one name and immediately his mind is flooded with an ocean of thoughts of how God shows His love for man. The name is, "Jesus."

There is a name I love to hear,
I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in mine ear,
The sweetest name on earth.
O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
Because he first loved me.

Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus, blessed Jesus.

The wonderful text of this lesson's memory verse shows the relationship between Jesus and the love of the Father. Although the verse teaches salvation by faith (though not faith only), the real emphasis of these words of Jesus is on the love of God. God SO loved the world. The "so" is there in order that we might understand that this is no ordinary love which our God has for us. It transcends all
earthly loves. It is the highest of the high. God SO loved the world. How much did He love us? He gave His only begotten Son. He gave the best of heaven. He spared nothing, considered no cost too great, in order that we might have eternal life.

There are so many blessings that come through the Christ who came in love and by love. Ephesians 1:3 declares that all spiritual blessings today are in Christ. As we consider but a few of these, keep in mind that each one is a demonstration of the love of God for they come through Jesus and Jesus was sent because God so loved us.

Through Jesus, a soul can enjoy forgiveness of sins. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). On earth we have to deal with unforgiving men and women. The Bible even says, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city." (Proverbs 18:19). Some whom we offend are determined to hold it against us no matter how much we may beg for their forgiveness.

We offend our fellow man, yet the magnitude of these offenses pales in comparison to those that we commit against our God. Our sins have erected a towering wall of separation between us and Him (Isaiah 59:1,2). None of us is righteous, no not one (Romans 3:10) and we are all deserving of eternal banishment from the throne of God.

But God loves us. He SO loves us. His arms of love are spread wide and He pleads for us to humble ourselves before Him and obey Him so that He can take away our soul damning sins. Were it not for this love, there would be no forgiveness. Jesus would have come the first time as Judge. Instead, He came the first time to save (John 12:47), reserving the final judgment for His second coming (John 12:48).
Through Jesus, we can go to our Father in prayer. "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing; Verily, verily, I say unto you, WHATSOEVER ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." (John 16:23). We frequently experience the rebuffs of our fellow men who care nothing for our concerns and needs. Many a man and woman are simply "too busy," "too important," too lazy, too unloving to listen to the pleas of their brethren in humanity.

If ever someone had a right to refuse to hear another, would that someone not be God? Yet, because of His magnificent love, He has opened up the avenue of prayer through Jesus so that we who are in Christ can cast our cares upon Him (I Peter 5:7) and "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16). Revelation 5:8 says that the prayers of God's saints are to Him as golden vials full of odors (incense). James states that God gives "liberally and upbraideth not." (James 1:5). In short, not only does God show His love to us by giving the avenue of prayer, but He continues to show it when we pray. He enjoys hearing our prayers and He answers them without begrudging us a single blessing that He deems necessary for our welfare.

Through Jesus, we can have peace. "And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7). The world is searching for inner peace. People want to be able to pillow their heads in blissful rest at night. They want to be able to wake up and face the day with the knowledge that, whatever may befall them, they have security. They want peace; but that peace comes only in God through Christ and it comes because of the Lord's love for us.

Through Jesus, we can have heaven. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh
unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6). On earth we have to deal with clubs and organizations that are exclusive. They bar the door to some because of their race or gender or national origin. On the other hand, the gates of heaven are open wide. Everyone is invited in. Only those who obey the Lord in life shall enter (Revelation 21:27; 22:14), but if one does not enter, it will not be the fault of the Father. His love opens the gates to all. One's personal refusal to obey the Lord is what will keep him from finding heaven in eternity.

The love of God for man is most clearly seen in Jesus, in what He did for us and the blessings that are now available through Him. This, however, is not the end of the demonstrations of God's love for men.

The Love of God For Man as Demonstrated In His Daily Care

Demonstrations of God's love for mankind are within the sight of every person's eyes, within the sound of every person's ears, within the reach of every person's touch. Clothing, food, shelter; these form the core of the daily provisions that God, in love, has promised to bestow upon His creation.

David wrote, "I have been young; and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed." (Psalm 37:25,26). Jesus stated, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33).

The nineteenth through thirty-fourth verses of Matthew 6 form a marvelous segment of thought concerning God's daily care for His people. In these verses, Jesus urges that we get our minds and hearts off worldly things and focus them on the spiritual.
The central thought of this section of Sacred Scripture is that God will provide our material needs. We should not be concerned about laying up earthly treasures for ourselves (verses 19-21). God will give us the earthly things that we need. Let us concentrate on spiritual treasures. 

We should not be trying to serve both God and material possessions (verse 24). God will provide the things that we need to live. Let us hold to Him.

We should not waste our precious energy worrying about what we don't have (verses 25-34). The God who feeds the birds of the air and beautifies the plants of the earth will give us what we need. Let us make the seeking of His kingdom the top priority in our lives.

In Matthew 7:7-11 we have a reaffirmation of the fact that our God is ready and willing to give us what we need.

Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son shall ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Notice the comparison between the heavenly Father and earthly fathers. Who among those of us who are fathers are not touched when our children ask for something to eat or a new pair of shoes or a particular toy? At times we find it necessary to restrain ourselves lest we spoil our children through granting their every request.
Why are we so willing to give our youngsters the things they need? It is because we love them. Jesus said, "If you sinners love your children that much, then you can imagine how much greater is the love of the perfect and Divine God." Our heavenly Father demonstrates His love for us by providing our daily needs.

**The Love of God For Man as Demonstrated In His Chastening**

The Lord is not the originator of evil, neither does He tempt any man with evil (James 1:13). He does, however, permit trials to come upon us to prove us and make us stronger. He did this for Abraham (Genesis 22:1). He did this for Job. He did this for Jesus while Jesus was upon the earth in the flesh (Hebrews 5:8).

The Lord knows that great strength is necessary to overcome Satan. He knows that the pull of the world is strong. He understands that one must have self-discipline in order to remain faithful and that this self-discipline is developed through strong faith.

Perhaps few of us ever consider the benefits of the trials we face. James exhorted, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (James 1:2,3). Patience, as you may recall, is one of those Christian graces listed in I Peter 5:7. Of these Peter wrote, "For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "for if ye do these things ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:9,10-11). Patience, therefore, is a necessary quality in which one must grow if he wishes to find heaven. The trying of our faith, the
chastening we endure, builds this patience within us.

Paul echoes these words of James in Romans 5:3,4, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope."

In Hebrews 12:5-11, Paul devotes some attention to the relationship between love and chastening. As you read this, again notice the comparison between our heavenly Father and earthly fathers.

Why do we fathers discipline our children? Why do we not give them every last thing for which they ask? Isn't it because we love them? Isn't it because we want the best for them and realize that some things they want will be harmful to them?

Why do we fathers say "no" to our young child who reaches his hand toward a hot burner or a sharp object? Why do we correct a child's bad manners or rude talk or disobedience? Again, isn't it because we love them? Isn't it because we are trying to train them in the right way to go?

Hebrews 12:6 reminds us, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Our Lord wants the best for us. Most of all, He wants to reward us with eternal life. We need to learn to obey Him and discipline ourselves so that we may have this eternal life. Without God's chastening, we are Fatherless (Hebrews 12:8). And while it is not pleasant at the moment that we are enduring it, "afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11).

The Psalmist wrote, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word" and "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." (Psalm 119:67,71).

In the hour of trial, may we thank God, for we are being
taught to recognize our own weaknesses and the greatness of our Lord. We are learning to trust Him. May our hearts be opened that we may realize the purpose of chastening and the love that is behind it.

**Conclusion**

The love of God for man is demonstrated in so many ways that a lifetime of meditation could not enumerate the half of them. We Christians need to spend time counting our blessings, naming them one by one. Only by doing this will we have a heightened appreciation of the greatness and majesty of our beloved Father on high.

Through Jesus, through daily care, through chastening, our Lord shows us that He loves us. How abundant are His blessings. How tender is His care. What depth of meaning is in and what a flood of happy thoughts is released by that simplest of simple statements, "God is love." (I John 4:8).

**Exercise Your Mind**

**TRUE OR FALSE**
1. **T - F:** God makes forgiveness of sins available today ONLY through the blood of Jesus Christ.
2. **T - F:** We have earned and are therefore deserving of God's forgiveness.
3. **T - F:** The only true peace is found in God through Christ.
4. **T - F:** The Lord is stingy with His blessings and gives them only after much hesitation.
5. **T - F:** God wants to save every one of us.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE**
1. The primary emphasis of John 3:16 is: **A)** Salvation comes through believing (faith) only; **B)** The love of
the Lord exceeds all human love; C) God's love is no greater than anyone else's.

2. Those who lose their souls in eternity: A) Will have only themselves to blame; B) Will be right in blaming God; C) Will be right in blaming family and friends.

3. Provision for our daily needs: A) Is something about which we should worry and fuss; B) Is something we should seek first and foremost in our lives; C) Is something we should ask God for and trust Him to take care of.

4. The chastening of God comes: A) Because our Lord loves us; B) Because Satan is more powerful than God; C) Because God wants to destroy us.

5. The purpose of this chastening is: A) To break us and cause us to lose our souls; B) To allow God a way to vent His anger; C) To strengthen us.

**FILL IN THE BLANKS**

1. "Neither is there ______________________ in any other; for there is none other ______________ under ________________ given among men, whereby we must be ___________________."  

2. "______________________ saith unto him, I am the _________, the __________, and the _______________; no man cometh to the __________, but by __________________."  

3. "I have been ____________________, and now am ___________________; yet have I not seen the ______________________ forsaken, nor his seed begging _____________________. He is ever ________________, and lendeth; and his seed is _________________."  

4. "My ______________________, count it all ______________________ when ye fall into divers"
this, that the trying of your worketh patience."

5. "For whom the Lord heareth, and scourgeth every whom he receiveth."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the meaning of the name, "Jesus"? __________

2. All spiritual blessings are in Christ. How does one get into Christ? (see Galatians 3:27) _______________

3. Why do we sometimes find it difficult to forgive those who offend us? _______________

4. Read and discuss Matthew 18:23-35. Why does the Lord want us to be forgiving? How does He feel about those who are unwilling to forgive? _______________

5. Has God made it easy or difficult for us to come to Him in prayer? Why do we sometimes find it difficult to pray? _______________
6. To what (whom) do some people turn in their search for peace? ___________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

7. Why won't everyone be in heaven? Whose fault will it be if we lose our souls? ______________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

8. List some of the material blessings we enjoy. ______
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

9. Why should we trust God to provide our daily physical needs? _________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

10. Read Matthew 6:19,20. What happens to our material possessions? Why should we seek heavenly treasures first and foremost? ________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

11. Should a Christian worry? Explain your answer. ____
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
12. Why don't we give our children everything for which they ask? Why does God not give us everything for which we ask? __________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

13. Does the fact that God does not say "yes" to every one of our prayers mean that He doesn't love us? Explain your answer. ___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________


___________________________________________

___________________________________________

15. Why should we be joyful when we fall into divers temptations? Is this an easy attitude to have in the face of trial? How can we cultivate this outlook on trials and temptations? _________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee." ________________________________
Chapter Three
The Love of Man For God

Memory Work:
"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23)

Saying, "I Love God" is Not Enough
I once heard of a young lady, just days away from her sixteenth birthday, who received a phone call. On the other end of the line a male voice asked her for a date the night before her birthday. She consented.

The evening was wonderful. As they reached the restaurant her date ran over to her side of the car and opened the door. He preceded her to the door of the restaurant and opened it for her too. At their table he helped her off with her coat and then held her seat for her. Later, when the two went to a movie, the young lady's date again held doors for her, helped her with her coat and in all ways acted the part of a gentleman.

Finally, as the evening was drawing to a close, the young lady and her date sat on the sofa in her living room. Gently placing his arm around her he softly said, "Honey, your mom and I told you that when you turned 16 years old we would let you date. You're going to have a hundred boys tell you that they love you, but until they treat you like your daddy did tonight, don't believe a word of it."

The wise father in the preceding story understood that human relationships are built, not on empty words, but on heartfelt demonstrations. While the value of spoken words of love must never be minimized, most of us realize that "I love you" carries its greatest weight and reaches the zenith
of its meaning when the actions of the one expressing this love are consistent with the words.

In I John 3:18 the beloved apostle wrote, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." We will expound on this passage in the next chapter but we introduce it now for it is a necessity concerning love in general, whether we're talking about love for man or love for God.

We have already learned in the two previous chapters that God's love for man goes beyond the Divine utterance, "I love you." Our Lord demonstrates His affection for us. Imagine the frustration and even aggravation of reading that God loves us and then discovering that He is distant from us and unconcerned about our welfare. Thanks be unto our Father that this is not the way He is. He has shown us His love, continues to show us His love and He is ever near us (Acts 17:27).

Many a man and woman throughout time have feigned love for God. Jesus applied a prophecy of Isaiah to the scribes and Pharisees of His day when He said, "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." (Mark 7:6). Still today, legion is the number of individuals who with empty words profess to love God while the number of those who truly love Him is relatively small.

### Man's Love For God is Seen In His Faithfulness to God

Ladies, if your husband said to you, "I love you" and then proceeded to abuse you and cheat on you, would you believe him? Fathers, if your children said, "I love you" but never did what you said and, in fact, rebelled against your will, would you believe them? The faithfulness of a
husband to his wife, of children to their parents' instructions bespeak love. In the same manner, man's faithfulness to God demonstrates his love for the Lord.

The Bible teaches in Romans 10:17 that our faith comes from God's Word. We would not know about God and His will for us if it were not for the Bible. This being the case, when we speak of faithfulness, we speak of adhering to God's Word.

Many today choose to develop their own methods of showing God their love. They insist that those who preach strict adherence to the Bible are narrow minded and legalistic. Again we use the father-child relationship as an illustration. If Dad says do one thing and the child says, "I think I'll do this instead," will Dad be pleased? What if the child, when confronted with his change in Dad's instructions, says, "But Dad, I wanted to show you in my own way that I love you"? Will Dad believe him? Won't Dad say, "I still expected you to do what I told you to do"?

Although we will be making two more points concerning how man shows his love for God, the whole of the matter rests in one's faithfulness to the will of the heavenly Father. Simply stated, the man or woman who either changes God's will or else completely neglects God's will does not love God. Regardless of their motives, regardless of their glowing words concerning their love for God, the individuals who choose to disobey the Lord's will just do not love Him.

The memory verse in this lesson bears out the relationship between faithfulness to and love for God. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23). In John 14:15 Jesus stated, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The fourteenth verse of the next chapter
records Jesus saying, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

How often we sing, "O, how I love Jesus: and "I love the Lord" and "I'll be a friend to Jesus." But is there substance in our words? Many want the Lord without faithfulness, God without the Bible. But God's Word is our guide. Therein we learn how to live and how to have life eternal (II Timothy 3:15-17). The philosophy of the many is similar to saying, "I'll have peace and order without law" or "I'll have the security and provisions that my parents provide me without their rules." In ever increasing numbers, men and women are seeking the blessings without the personal effort, peace without law, home without restrictions, God without personal obedience.

The only way that you and I can know God's will is through the Bible. This Bible is His Word. The New Testament is the covenant of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:15). How could we even begin to overemphasize the importance of Jesus' statement, "If a man love me, he will keep my words"? Yet where is man turning today in his attempt to prove his love for God? He is consulting the words of men, creed books, philosophy and theology books. He is going every way but the right way. He is saying, "I love God" but he is teaching and practicing things that God has not authorized in His revealed will. No man is a fence-rider. He is serving either Satan or God. If he is doing God's will, he is serving God. If he is not doing God's will (as has been revealed in the Bible), he is serving Satan. How many there are whose words say, "I love God" but whose actions say, "I am a servant of Satan." This ought not to be!

In the fifteenth chapter of the Old Testament book of I Samuel we read of one event which led to God's rejection of Saul, king of Israel. Saul had been given specific
instructions to completely destroy the nation of the Amalekites. "Utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." (I Samuel 15:3). Rather than obey God's will, Saul chose to keep back the best of the animals as well as spare the life of the Amalekite king. When Saul was confronted by the great prophet, Samuel, he answered that the motive behind what happened was that they might have something to offer God in sacrifice. To this Samuel replied, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry…" (I Samuel 15:22,23).

Saul in essence said, "The people and I love God and we wanted to prove our love for Him by giving Him a sacrifice." The trouble was that the sacrifice was Saul's invention for proving his love. Samuel's response brings home the point that if Saul really wanted to show faithfulness and love to God, he would have done what the Lord instructed. "The Lord would rather have you doing what He wants than doing what you think He wants," was Samuel's message.

Man shows his love for God through faithfulness. Faith comes through God's Word. We can only know the will of God by studying the Bible. Hence, man shows his love for God by adhering to the teachings of the Bible. Doing anything else, either deleting from or adding to God's Word, a person finds himself in a hopeless spiritual condition. He "hath not God" (II John 9) and he who does not do the Father's will can only expect to hear these words from the Lord's mouth in the judgment: "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:23).
The man who says, "I love God" and yet refuses to be faithful to His Word is only deceiving himself.

**Man's Love For God is Seen In His Communication With God**

Does a husband who purposely stays away from home as much as he can really love his wife? Does a wife who never listens to her husband really love him? One of the six most significant problems that lead to divorce is a breakdown of communication. Where there is little or none there is a rocky marriage. A strong marriage, though built by other significant factors as well, is one where husband and wife want to spend as much time together as possible, talking and enjoying one another's company. The reason for this is that they love each other.

There are two channels of communication between man and God. Man speaks to God through prayer (Philippians 4:6). God speaks to man through the Word (Hebrews 1:2). God has shown His love in giving us His Word which is perfect and complete, everything we need to know pertaining to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). He continues to show us His love by welcoming and listening to our prayers (Psalm 34:15; Matthew 7:7-8).

When the flame of love burns brightly within the human heart, a person feels that he/she can never get enough time to pray or enough hearing of God's Word. The Psalmist wrote, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm 42:1,2). When man's love for God is but a flickering blue light in his heart, it takes a considerable amount of arm twisting and exhorting by elders, preachers, teachers, family and friends to get him to his knees and into the Book.
Each of us can sound the frequency and devotion of our prayers and get a fairly accurate measure of the depth of our love for God. Do you only engage in prayer at worship services and before meals? Are your prayers brief and thoughtless, little more than ritualistic repetition of learned phrases? Are you only opening your Bible to answer the questions in a class book for Sunday morning Bible classes? Someone has said that there are three stages of Bible study: The cod liver oil stage (you don't like it but you take it because you know it's good for you); the shredded wheat stage (dry, but nourishing); the peaches and cream stage (nutritious, satisfying and filling and you can't wait to get more). In which of these stages do you find yourself?

The individual who loves God will flee to His throne and delve into His Word to find strength, comfort, courage and greater Christlikeness. His willingness to communicate with God is a sign of his love.

**Man's Love For God is seen**
**In His Love For His Fellow Man**

We will have more to say about this in the next chapter. At this point, suffice it to say that there is a grand correlation between man's love (or lack of same) for his fellow man and his love (or lack of same) for God. It is summed up in John's words in I John 4:20: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" The individual who loves God will love and serve those about him. The individual who hates and harms his fellow man does not love God.

**Conclusion**

Many a man and woman say that they love God. Jesus
said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matthew 7:16). Love for God is seen. It is seen in one's faithfulness, one's communication with God and one's love for his fellow man.

More important than judging whether or not another person loves God, each of us needs to look within and ask ourselves the vital question, "Do I love God?" The wellbeing of those around us should be of great concern and we should ever be willing to teach the way of truth to those whose words of love are inconsistent with their acts of disobedience, but may we never forget the need to examine our own selves (II Corinthians 13:5). "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36).

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say unto thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Matthew 7:3-5).

Let each of us ask ourselves, "Do I love God? Does it show in my life?" May the fires of love for God swell to a raging blaze within our hearts so that we may be a powerful force for good in this world and then have eternal life on the other side of the veil.

Exercise Your Mind

TRUE OR FALSE
1. T - F: True love, both for God and man, is not just spoken but is shown.
2. T - F: Being saved by God's grace means that man does not have to do anything to be saved.
3. T - F: We show our love for God by our faithfulness to His Word.
4. T - F: The man or woman who loves God spends as little time as possible in prayer and Bible study.
5. T - F: It is impossible to hate our fellow man and still love God.

MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. If a man loves the Lord, he will: A) Keep the Lord's commandments; B) Follow God in the way he thinks best; C) Pay no attention to the Bible.
2. Since faith comes by hearing the Word of God, we should seek to build our faith through study of: A) Philosophies of men; B) Creed books; C) The Bible.
3. The person who says he loves God but who lives an unfaithful life is actually: A) A servant of Satan; B) A great model for others to follow; C) A great asset to the local church.
4. Prayer and Bible study should be engaged in: A) Only during public worship periods; B) Daily; C) Just when we are in trouble and having problems.
5. The individual who loves God will: A) Live as he pleases without regard to God's will; B) Be selfish and self-centered; C) Love and serve his fellow man.

FILL IN THE BLANKS
1. "My little __________________________, let us not ________________ in __________, neither in ________________, but in _______________ and in ________________.
2. "Well hath __________________ prophesied of you __________________, as it is written, This people ________________ me with their ________________, but their ________________ is far from me."
3. "________________ answered and said unto him, If a man ____________ me, he will ____________ my ________________________; and the __________ will love him, and we will ______________ unto him, and make our ______________ with him."

4. "Ye are my _______________, if ye ____________ whatsoever I ________________ you."

5. As the hart ____________ after the water ________________, so panteth my ____________ after thee, O ______________. My soul ________________ for God, for the ________________; when shall I come and ________________ before God?"

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why would we have difficulty believing a person who says he/she loves us but then does not show love to us?

2. Is it reasonable to think that a person can truly love God yet refuse to show love to Him? Explain your answer.
3. Hypocrisy was a problem in religion when Jesus was on earth in the flesh. Is it still a problem today? If so, what can we do to stop it? ___________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________

4. Read and discuss the first part of Romans 12:9, "Let love be without dissimulation." ________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

5. Is faithfully obeying the commands of the Lord as found in the Bible the same as trying to earn salvation? Explain your answer. ___________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

6. How does one increase his/her faithfulness? ________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

7. "In ever increasing numbers, men and women are seeking the blessings without the personal effort; peace without law, home without restrictions, God without personal obedience." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? ___________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
8. King Saul felt that he was doing right. Are feelings an adequate standard for determining right and wrong? Explain your answer. ____________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

9. Will all people who say they love God be saved in eternity? Explain your answer. _______________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

10. If you knew a couple who rarely spent time together and rarely spoke to one another, would you conclude that their marriage is strong or in trouble? Explain your answer. _________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

11. How can we increase our desire to pray more? ______

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

12. How can we increase our desire to study God's Word more? _________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________
13. Is just having the desire to pray and study more good enough? Explain your answer. ________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________

14. Why do we sometimes find it so difficult to make time for prayer and Bible study? ________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________

15. List a few of the benefits that come through prayer and Bible study. ________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." ________________________________
Chapter Four
Our Love For Mankind

Memory Work:
"And this commandment we have from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." (I John 4:21)

Our Motivating Force
"Why should I love my fellow man? After all, many times he hurts me and some even hate me. Some have gossiped and spread rumors about me and some who I truly felt were my friends have stabbed me in the back time and time again. Some of them are different than me. They are different colors. They talk differently. They act differently. Why should I love them?"

The answer to the question at hand is given by Divine inspiration. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." (I John 4:11). Why should we love our fellow man? The answer is because God loves us.

Any reader who has forgotten the extent of God's love for us should go back now and review the first two chapters of this book. Reread all about God's love and then remember that He loves us in spite of our many imperfections and in spite of the fact that we often violate His will.

Remembering the depth of God's love for you, think about those around you; neighbors, family, friends, business associates. Maybe some of them are a bit different. Maybe some have hurt you. But are you perfect? Have they hurt you more than you hurt God when you disobey Him? The answer to both of these questions is no, yet God still loves you.

What then is the motivating force behind our love for our fellow man? It is the knowledge that Jehovah God
loves us unconditionally. This wonderful knowledge motivates us to show mercy because God has shown us mercy, to forgive because God has forgiven, to love because God loves and to be merciful, forgiving and loving to every man and woman without qualification.

How desperately do we need to let the blessings of God parade through our minds time and time again. As we see them march by we rejoice in God's love and goodness toward us. Then, without disruption, we need to fill our thoughts with the people around us. We know the love of God, but do they know it? Let's tell them if they don't. We have been hurt by some of them, but are we greater than God? Do we have a right to hold grudges when He Himself treats both the good **AND** the evil with fairness (Matthew 6:45) and readily forgives those who seek His forgiveness (II Peter 3:9)? Remember, Jesus said, "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans also? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 6:46-48).

Anyone who wants to grow in love for their fellow man need only go to the Word and meditate upon the love that God demonstrates toward us. All the imperfections of others, all the hurt they can do to us become of minimal significance in the light of God's love for us. Like God's love for us, our love for our fellow man does not excuse sin. Our love does, however, look at the lives of others in the light of our own flaws and does not demand perfection.

**Showing Our Love**

Not trying to belabor the point, attention is again brought to the fact that true love can be seen. God's love for us is seen in Jesus and the multitude of blessings that we
have through Him. Our love for God is to be seen in our faithful obedience to His Word. It follows then that our love for mankind should be seen as well.

In the second chapter of his epistle, James gives an illustration of the relationship between faith and works (obedience to Divine commands). It is an illustration that also paints a graphic picture of the fact that true love acts on behalf of another. "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James 2:15-16).

Suppose Jesus had come to earth saying to all, "Be saved from your sins" and then ascended back to heaven without ever going near the cross. How many of us would now be saved from our sins? How many would have the hope of eternal life?

We often think to ourselves, "My neighbor sure needs to hear the Gospel" or "Those people around the corner sure don't have much to eat." How many of these thoughts die in our minds without ever directing our feet to go to these needy ones, without ever moving our lips to tell them what they should hear, without ever prompting our hands to give them what they must have? "Lovely thoughts our lives may ease, but others', only loving deeds."

Showing our love to others is not limited to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, nor is it limited to warm words and compliments. True love on occasion demonstrates itself in rebuking.

Some in the religious world seem to have forgotten the meaning of the word "rebuke." They think that love means never saying anything "negative." According to this view, we should not correct others and love means allowing them to live their way and teach their way even if their lives and
teachings are in opposition to God's Word.

If love means never rebuking error, then Jesus did not know the meaning of the word. Feel the heat of His words to wicked moneychangers in the temple as He cried, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." (Matthew 21:13). Hear the anger in His voice as He rebuked the scribes and Pharisees saying, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 28:13ff). Read the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus, the One who was perfect in love, and then honestly admit that love DOES include rebuking.

Granted, there are those who have swung to the other side of this pendulum and who constantly rebuke and never commend or speak warm words. As well, let's not forget that it is possible to speak the truth, to rebuke error and condemn sin, and do it in an unloving manner. As in all things, there must be a balance.

It is, however, possible to correct in love. This we must do for there are many who will never see their error and will lose their souls otherwise. Jude wrote, "And of some have compassion, making a difference; And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 22,23). Some men and women are so near the edge of utter destruction that only a sharp speaking of the truth will save them (Titus 1:13). Consider Nathan's forthright words to David in II Samuel 12:7ff on the occasion of the king's sins of adultery and murder. Others need only a mild rebuke, as did those two differing sisters in the church at Philippi (Philippians 4:2).

God's truth must be taught at all times. It cannot, must not, be compromised. Often this truth offends. It hurts feelings. It caused Jesus to be crucified and many of the Old Testament prophets and first century Christians to be killed. Still, it must be taught and taught in love.
Some will respond to it and turn back to God. We ourselves should conduct a self-examination to be sure that we are not guilty of that which we oppose (Romans 2:21-22). If we love one another, we will do all things in love (I Corinthians 16:14), including rebuking error (II Timothy 4:2).

**A Grand Impression**

An old adage states, "No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care." What a grand impression we Christians make upon the world when we show our love.

Chapter ten will have more to say about one Christian's love for another so we just briefly mention here a key verse to be discussed in that place. Jesus said in John 14:35, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if he have love one to another." According to Jesus, if the world looks on Christians and sees that we have a deep and abiding love for one another, they will know who we are. We belong to Christ. We are His and He is ours. The impressionable souls in the world will beat a path to our door to find out how they can be a part of this loving family.

The world is so very full of evil and sorrow. It has not come from God. It has come from man who has abused his God-given freedom of choice. Some of the earth's human inhabitants see nothing but gloom and doom in their lives. This world is a miserable place for them. They don't know what real love is because they have never seen it.

Jesus said that Christians are the light of the world. We are like a city set on a hill (Matthew 5:14). We reflect Christ in our lives. We shine forth hope and joy. We shine forth the love of our Lord and Savior. This is such a tremendous contrast to the world. Christian, hold up your
lamp of love for your fellow man. Even now you may be able to impress a lost and wandering soul and lead him or her to salvation.

**Conclusion**

We would not know love were it not for God. Our love for others did not evolve any more than the human race evolved. Love for humanity is not found in atheism. It is not discovered in any of the heathen religions that have existed and now exist in this world. Love is from God, hence, the love of God for us is the motivating force behind our love for one another. If we will meditate carefully upon the meaning of God's love for us, we will develop a deeper love for our fellow man.

Love is not always kind and gentle words and warm compliments. We rebuke our children when they get out of line. Do we do this because we hate them or is it because we love them so dearly? Certainly it's because we love them. In all of our relationships with mankind, we must do all things in love, whether it be helping a needy person with physical provision, leading a lost soul to Christ or steering an errant man or woman back to God.

**Exercise Your Mind**

**TRUE OR FALSE**

1. T - F: We should love others regardless of how they may treat us.
2. T - F: Remembering God's love for us will help us love our fellow man.
3. T - F: God loves only those who love Him.
4. T - F: One can have love without ever showing it.
5. T - F: Love means never correcting and never saying anything that might be construed as negative.
MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. God loves us: A) In spite of our many imperfections; B) Only when we do good; C) More when we do good than He does when we do bad.
2. Each of us is: A) Perfect; B) Innocent of hurting others; C) Sinful and often hurtful of those around us.
3. Loving only those who love us: A) Is all that is expected of us; B) Is like the publicans and in opposition to God's will; C) Will build up the church and help our influence on the lost.
4. Knowing of someone's need and not providing it: A) Is being Christ-like; B) Is merciless and ungodly; C) Will feed the hungry and reach the lost with the Gospel.
5. The world knows we are Christians: A) By our love for one another; B) Because we wear signs saying that we are; C) Because they find out by accident.

FILL IN THE BLANKS
1. "______________, if God so ______________ us, we ______________ also to love one ________________." 
2. "If ye, ______________ them which ______________ you, what ______________ have ye? Do not even the ______________ the ______________? And if ye ______________ your ________________ only, what do ye more than ______________? Do not even the publicans also? Be ye therefore ______________ even as your ________________ which is in ______________ is perfect." 
3. "If a ______________ or ______________ be ________________, and destitute of daily ______________, and one of you say unto them, ______________ in ______________,"
be ye _________________ and ______________; notwithstanding ye give them not those ______________ which are ______________ to the ________________; what doth it ______________ you?"

4. "And of some have _________________, making a _________________; And others _________________ with _________________, pulling them out of the _________________; _________________ even the _________________ spotted by the flesh."

5. "By this shall _________________ men know that ye are my _________________, if he have _________________ one to _________________."  

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why does it seem so easy to find all of the faults in others while overlooking our own? _______________{
   _________________
   _________________
   _________________

2. List some of the ways God has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate His love for man._________
   _________________
   _________________
   _________________

3. What will become of us if we do not show love, mercy and forgiveness to our fellow man? ___________
   _________________
   _________________
   _________________
4. Explain Romans 12:19-21. ______________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

5. An old adage is, "Those who deserve our love the least need it the most." What does this mean? __________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________

6. How will God's Word help us grow in love for others?
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

7. What are some of the reactions we have when we see a poor person such as a homeless man or woman? _____
____________________________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________

8. How can we best help the physically needy? ________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

9. How can we best help the spiritually needy (those still outside of Christ and Christians who have fallen away)? _______________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
10. Is it easy or difficult to correct someone who is in error? Explain your answer. _____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

11. Why should we rebuke a person who is in error? _____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

12. Is it possible to have the wrong motive in correcting a person? Name some wrong motives. What should our motive be? _____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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13. Is it possible to have an improper attitude when we are correcting a person? What should our attitude be? _____________________________________________

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14. Discuss the popular idea that since none of us is perfect, we don't have the right to correct anyone else. _____________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
15. In what ways can we demonstrate love so that the world will see Christ in us? 
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___________________________________________
___________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."
Chapter Five
I Corinthians 13:4-7 (Part 1)

Memory Work:
"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in
tongue; but in deed and in truth." (I John 3:18)

Introduction to This Section
In I Corinthians chapters 12-14, Paul is dealing with,
among other things, the strife and unrest that was in the
church at Corinth. These brethren were arguing over the
most important of the spiritual gifts and were demeaning
those whose gifts they considered to be insignificant.
Paul's inspired message to them in chapter 12 is that the
church is the body of Christ and, being a body, every
member is necessary and one is not more important than
another. Because of this, they should be working together
and caring for one another rather than bickering over who
is the most valuable Christian. In chapter 14, Paul stresses
that their thoughts should be on what edifies and glorifies
rather than on who has what spiritual gift.

Sandwiched between these two chapters is the great
love chapter of the Bible. Chapter 12 closes with Paul
saying, "and yet I show unto you a more excellent way." (I
Corinthians 12:31). Chapter 14 begins, "Follow after
charity." (I Corinthians 14:1). The love ("charity" in the
King James Version) that he discussed in depth in chapter
13 is a more excellent way than the way of fighting that
they had been pursuing. They were to seek love above
what they had defined as primary spiritual gifts. The reason
for this, according to I Corinthians 13:8-13, is because love
would live on long after the miraculous gifts of the Holy
Spirit had ceased to be given.

Now, more than 1900 years later, the spiritual gifts are
items of the past, having faded away in the first century as Paul said they would at the close of I Corinthians 13. We now have God's written Word in its completeness. We no longer need these miraculous gifts to confirm the Word as they did then. But we still need love. And on into eternity, when hope and faith have vanished in sight, love will live on as those in heaven bask in the warm rays of the love of God that made their eternal reward possible.

The necessity of love as the motive for our Christian deeds is clearly seen in the first three verses of I Corinthians 13. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." (I Corinthians 13:1-3).

The service we offer God should not merely be a husk. We should instead present to Him the full grain, our whole hearts filled with love for Him. The balance of this chapter and the next two present a discussion of the characteristics of this love.

"Charity Suffereth Long"

Most of us are familiar with and frequently use the word, "micro." We talk about microchips, microfilm, microchemistry, microwaves. Micro means, "extremely little."

The opposite of micro is macro which means, "extremely large or long." Macro is a Greek word and it is the word that forms the first part of "makrothumea," translated "suffereth long" in I Corinthians 13:4.
Although the word "patience" might immediately come to mind when thinking about longsuffering, "makrothumea" goes beyond just that. It means not hastily retaliating for evil done. It is the opposite of rash anger. It is self-restraint in the face of provocation. In other words, when the person who possesses love with this quality is offended, he/she does not seek revenge.

He who suffers long understands the weakness of others and looks at them through glasses that reveal his own weaknesses as well. He does not walk around with the proverbial chip on his shoulder, just waiting for someone to knock it off with the wrong word or the wrong action.

Most of us have probably known individuals who are like tea kettles on the brink of blowing off steam. One wise person suggested that the reason it is so easy for some to blow their top is because their top is so light.

Love means not being a steam blower. Love counts to ten. Love that suffers long is "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19) and is this way because the one who has this love realizes that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." (James 1:20).

When we think of this aspect of love, let's think about it as the lack of desire to have revenge against those who hurt us. We leave the vengeance to God and instead return love for their hatred. We overcome their evil with good (Romans 12:19-21).

"And is Kind"

This characteristic has to do with our consideration of others. In Ephesians 4:32 Paul gave instruction to, "Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

This kindness and consideration manifests itself in a variety of practical ways. It opens a door for someone. It
takes food to a bereaved family. It helps a sick person by staying with him or running some errands for him. It allows the person with one item in line behind you at the store to go ahead of you with your basketful of items. We could go on listing ways in which kind love shows itself but the thoughtful reader should have the idea by now.

Acts of kindness are so simple and yet so rarely performed. Many get caught up in themselves to the point that they don't think of others. They don't think of how a small act of kindness might help someone else or make their day a little brighter.

The marvelous Golden Rule would go a long way toward helping us develop this kindness if only we would commit it to memory and hide it in our hearts. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." (Matthew 7:12).

"Charity Envieth Not"

This would perhaps be better translated, "is not jealous." The word translated here has to do with desiring to have the same as another has.

The word "covetousness" comes to mind as we think on this point. If you have a new car and I go out and buy one just like it, that is not necessarily being envious or jealous of your new possession. Perhaps I am in the market for an automobile and have been so impressed by yours that I decide it's just what I need. But if I can't afford that car or if I don't need that car and am only buying it so that you won't have something better than I have, then I am guilty of being envious.

Envy has gotten a multitude of people into great trouble through the centuries. By it, king Ahab stole the vineyard of Naboth and eventually was punished for so
doing (I Kings 21). Cain was envious of the fact that God accepted Abel's offering and rejected his (Genesis 4:1ff). And why did the Jewish hierarchy deliver Jesus up to be crucified? Even Gentile Pilate could see through these men. "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him." (Matthew 27:18). No wonder Solomon said that envy is "the rottenness of the bones." (Proverbs 14:30).

Love drives away envy. Rather than being sad and critical over the success of others, those who have this kind of love are glad and thankful when someone else does well. When one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it (I Corinthians 12:26).

This kind of love does not keep a scoreboard of what everyone has. Those who love like this are thankful for what they have and happy for what others possess.

"Charity Vaunteth Not Itself, is Not Puffed Up"

Both terms, "vaunteth" and "puffed up" have to do with pride, self-importance. Those who possess this characteristic in their love are not braggarts. They are not individuals who are always trying to get other people to notice and praise them.

The story is told about a mother whale teaching her baby whale some rules for safety. "Just remember, son," she says. "Every time you go to the top to blow, there's a good chance you'll get harpooned." We too must be careful about spouting off about ourselves.

Proverbs 27:2 instructs, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger and not thine own lips." The truth is, if you are doing a good job, someone will notice. We don't have to blow our own horns. People recognize our efforts and even if they don't, our God goes and He rewards every good deed done in His name (Hebrews 6:10).
We need not be like those hypocrites mentioned in the sixth chapter of Matthew. Everything they did, they did for the purpose of getting the praise of men. They gave alms, prayed and fasted for only this purpose. They would blow a trumpet or stand on a street corner and, in effect, say, "Everybody look my way. I'm about to give this poor beggar here some money. And be sure to watch the street corner at the hour of prayer because I will be there praying and you don’t want to miss that." The haunting refrain after Jesus discusses each of their hypocritical acts is, "They have their reward." The praise of men feels great, but would you like for that to be your final reward? Would you not rather be unconcerned about the praises of men, do things to the glory of God and have HIS reward that He will give in eternity?

Love is not prideful, does not seek the glory of men. What this also means is that those who have this love do not consider themselves above others. The Pharisees of Jesus' day looked down their noses and sniffed in contempt at those who did not follow their ways. They lumped everyone who did not follow their traditions into one category and called them sinners. Even the disciples of Jesus got caught up in thinking that they were better than others. "Send your children away from the Master," they told the people (Matthew 19:13). But Jesus opened His arms to these children as well as to all who would come to Him with childlike humility.

Having this trait of love means that we are men and women who are more interested in serving than being served. We are unselfish. We are humble.

How carefully ought we to think of the lesson Jesus taught in Luke 18 in a parable of two men praying. "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed
thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 18:10-14).

According to verse nine, Jesus told this parable because there were some in his midst who thought themselves righteous and despised everyone else. Let us be careful that we're not like this Pharisee who, in essence, told God how fortunate He was to have him for a servant. Remember, it was the humble man, not the puffed up and vaunted one, who was justified.

Conclusion
Since love is so basic to the Christian life, it would be a good idea to commit these characteristics of love to memory and meditate upon the meaning of each of them. Begin or end each day thinking about how you can demonstrate these traits during the upcoming day. Give diligence to develop every one of them in your life.

Without this love, our service to God is hollow. We might accomplish great feats and these deeds would be of tremendous benefit to others, but to us they would have no meaning. They would profit us nothing.

Exercise Your Mind

TRUE OR FALSE
1. T - F: In the first century church, there were some
spiritual gifts that were more important than others.

2. T – F: In the church today, there are some Christians who are more important than others.

3. T – F: While spiritual gifts have passed away, love continues to live on.

4. T – F: If not motivated by love, our acts of service to God profit us nothing.

5. T – F: These characteristics of love should be memorized and meditated upon.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. "Suffereth long" means: A) Barely able to tolerate; B) Lack of desire for revenge; C) Has much physical pain.

2. Kindness is a trait: A) That is easy to find today; B) That takes little or no effort to develop; C) That is the result of following the Golden Rule.

3. Envy: A) Is destructive; B) Has brought about much good in our world; C) Is rarely seen in our world today.

4. Those who are prideful: A) Will find themselves being cast down in the day of judgment; B) Are good examples of what Christians should be; C) Have a right to be prideful because they are so good.

5. The number of accountable men and women who are righteous and yet not Christians is: A) One; B) 144,000; C) None.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. "__________________ after __________________." 

2. "And though I bestow ________ my goods to ________ the _______, and though I ________ my body to be ________, and have not
3. "For the __________________ of ______________ worketh not the ______________ of _______________ 

4. "Be ye __________________ one to another, ________________ one another even as God for ______________ sake hath __________________ you."

5. "Let another man ______________ thee, and not ______________ own _______________; a ______________, and not thine own _______________.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the "more excellent way" of I Corinthians 12:31. Why is it more excellent? _______________

2. What does it mean to "Follow after charity"? ______

3. In what sense is love greater than faith and hope? ____

4. Love is the proper motive for our service to God. What are some improper motives and how can we correct them? ______________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

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Contradictions: Reasoning Against False Science

Dr. William Lane Craig, Ravi Zacharias, and the Real World of Science

Dr. William Lane Craig and Dr. Ravi Zacharias have been involved in many debates on the reality of the Bible and the existence of God. Their many public appearances have been exhilarating...
5. How can the attribute of longsuffering help the church? the home? our relationships with those in the world?

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

6. What is some of the harm done by the quick temper?

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

7. How does good overcome evil? __________________

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

8. Name some other acts of kindness that we can show to others. _____________________________________

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

9. Is it easier to show kindness to some than to others? Why or why not? To whom should we show kindness?

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

10. The Jews who delivered Jesus to be crucified envied Him. Why?__________________________

___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

63
11. What should be our response when others are successful? What about when they succeed at something and we fail at the same thing? __________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

12. Why doesn't it really make any difference if others have more than you or I? ___________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

13. Why do some brag about themselves? _____________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

14. How should we respond to the "puffed up" person? ___
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

15. Is all pride sinful? Explain your answer. __________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"Let all your things be done with charity." ___________
Chapter Six
I Corinthians 13:4-7 (Part 2)

Memory Work:
"And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it." (II John 6)

"Doth Not Behave Itself Unseemly"
As we continue our look at the Biblical qualities of love, we note this one that begins verse five of the great love chapter. This phrase is actually only two words in the Greek text; "ouk" meaning "not" and "aschemoneo" meaning "to act in an unbecoming manner."

When we see a lady wearing a nice dress or a hair style that looks particularly attractive on her, we compliment her by saying, "That is very becoming to you." By this we mean that it enhances her looks. It brings out the best of her physical beauty.

Love that behaves itself in a seemly manner is that which is becoming to the life of a faithful Christian. This kind of love highlights the best of the Christian graces within us. The Lord we serve is most clearly seen in us when we love this way.

In short, the Christian who has this love acts like a Christian is supposed to act; like Christ. "Christian" means, "one who belongs to Christ." When we love as the Bible says to love, we conduct ourselves in a manner becoming to this worthy name by which we are called (James 2:7). People are able to look at us and say, "There goes a Christian." They see in our actions and hear in our words things that are consistent with what the Bible teaches about how Jesus wants His people to live.
Can people look at and listen to you and tell that you belong to Christ without you having to wear a sign on your back announcing, "I am a Christian"? They can if you have love for you will "shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15). Your words and deeds will be becoming to the lovely name of Christ that you wear.

"Seeketh Not Her Own"

There are many marvelous stories about people who have given their lives so that others may be saved. Some might remember the plane wreck in Washington, D.C. where the craft crashed into the river. Many people were saved because of one man who eventually perished in the icy water. Every time the lifeline was thrown his way he took it and gave it to someone else.

There's a story of a little boy who was told by his doctor that he could save his sister's life by giving her some of his blood. It seems that she was suffering from the same deadly disease from which he had recovered two years before and the only blood that would avail her was that from someone of the same blood type who had recovered from the disease. The boy hesitated a moment when asked and then, with trembling lip, said, "Sure, I'll give my blood for my sister." As the boy laid on the table next to his sister, the blood flowing from his body to hers, he looked toward the doctor and asked, "Doctor, when will I die?" It was only then the doctor realized that the boy thought that giving his blood for his sister meant giving his life.

Of course, the ultimate example of giving is that of Jesus giving His life for the salvation of our souls. In Philippians 2:3-5 Paul instructed, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of
others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

Love that seeketh not her own is seen in a person who has the best interests of others at heart and who is willing to sacrifice something of himself, if not his very self, for those about him. In other words, this love is not self-centered but other-centered. Those who have it do not think in terms of what something might cost them. They think in terms of how something might help another.

This was the love that Jesus had. He came to earth to do His Father's will (Hebrews 10:9). His Father's will for Him was to give His life for the sins of mankind. Jesus had a mind set on carrying out the Father’s plan. He thought not of the cost to Himself, but of the benefits man would reap because of His sacrifice. We are to have the same mind, willingly giving of ourselves for the benefit of others.

"Is Not Easily Provoked"

Have you ever had the proverbial "one of those days"? Everything seems to go wrong. Your car breaks down. You are late for work. The boss throws an unreal workload at you or customers fuss at you all day long. When the day is through you are seeing red. You are burning inside. You come home and your spouse asks, "How was your day, honey?" You roar, "What did you mean by that?" and go stomping off, slamming every door through which you pass.

Every one of us has what we call a breaking point. We get pushed so far and then we get angry, sometimes very angry. Anger in and of itself is not wrong. Jesus Himself got angry at people who violated God's Word (Matthew 21:12) and people who were hypocritical (Matthew 23:13-33). Anger that leads to sinful actions such as foul language, physical abuse, etc. is what is wrong.
To push some over the ledge of anger doesn't take much effort at all. Their gauge is set on anger. They have an angry outlook on life. The slightest provocation elicits a strong and harsh response from them.

It is this quickness of temper, this swiftness to be offended that is forbidden in the phrase, "is not easily provoked." This love does not carry a chip on its shoulder. (Someone wrote that a chip on the shoulder is usually a piece off the block above it.)

Just how quick are you to fight? How easily are you offended? How ready are you to lash out at people and tell them just what you think of them?

We all need to look inside ourselves and examine the way we look at others. Do we assume that everyone is out to get us or do we assume the best about others, believing them to be innocent and sincere until they might prove otherwise? There is a major difference in these two views of our fellow man. The first will have us always on the defensive and easily provoked. The second will cause us to think first and measure our actions carefully.

We might get angry. In fact, there are times when we should get angry. If, however, we have love, we will not be the kind of people always looking for a fight. We will not be quick to retaliate for wrongs done to us. History tells of the frustration the Roman soldiers felt when persecuting faithful Christians. The soldiers tortured them, hoping they would run or fight but the Christians were not easily provoked. Their patient response made a great impression on many a person. It will do the same today.

"Thinketh No Evil"

This phrase could have one of either two meanings or even both. Love thinks no evil in the sense that it does not harbor sin within the heart. In Mark 7:23 Jesus indicated
that evil begins from within. The heart is the seat of the emotions, the launching pad for actions. We are urged to purify our hearts in James 4:8.

There is no room in our hearts for both love and evil. A poet wrote, "Two natures beat within my breast. The one I love, the one I hate. The one I feed will dominate."

Pure love drives away evil imaginations. It cleanses the heart for its motives are righteous and good. This is why we must feed love. We want it to dominate our lives, to overcome evil. We must feed it with the precious Word of God, with prayer, with Christian fellowship and with acts of service to our Lord.

Another possible meaning of the phrase, "thinketh no evil" has to do with how we look upon others. We think no evil of others in that we do not try to assume their motives for them. We think no evil of others in that we do not hold grudges against anyone. We think no evil of others in that we are not envious or jealous of another's good fortune. We think no evil of others in that we only want the best for those around us.

It is conceivable that both of these meanings lie behind this inspired description of love. Either one or both together go beneath the surface to show that true love comes straight from the heart. Love is not some superficial feeling demonstrated in ritualistic actions. Love comes from within. It is genuine. It is deep. The actions of one who has this love are not forced. They flow naturally and gracefully from a heart abounding with love.

"We are not always what we think we are, but what we think, we are." Love keeps the heart pure in thought, which results in pure actions.

"Rejoiceth Not In Iniquity"
Although some might treat as one the phrase, "rejoiceth
not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth," I have chosen not to. The reason for this is that these are two very distinctive qualities of love. There are many people who do not like certain sins, but neither do they care much for truth. We will treat the matter of rejoicing in the truth at the beginning of the next chapter.

Some years ago a popular movie showed some men hauling a truckload of beer across the country. Hauling beer was bad enough but it was beer that was illegal in the state to which they were taking it. What's more, these men constantly and with great joy violated the law. Their speech was vulgar and their actions were just as bad. The strange thing about all of this is that these were the heroes of the movie. The police were the bad guys. This is certainly not the only movie of its kind but it serves as an appropriate illustration of people rejoicing in iniquity.

Love does not rejoice in iniquity. Those who have this love are not proud of their sins. They would not look at ill-gotten gain and smile in satisfaction. They would not jump for joy over an adulterous encounter. In the first place, they would not go looking to get themselves involved in these sins, but if they slipped into these or any sins, they would realize their error and repent.

Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4). He is speaking of those who mourn over their sins, whose hearts are broken over their iniquities and whose mournfulness leads them to repentance. Their comfort comes in God's forgiveness.

When David realized his sins of adultery and murder, he penned Psalm 51. There is nothing but heartache and genuine repentance throughout that Psalm. Others might have gone out and bragged about their adulterous liaison, but not king David. He wept and mourned over his sins. David loved God.
Those who have this love do not rejoice in the iniquities of others either. They do not like to see sin win out. They do not hope a person will give in to sin. Their hope and prayer is that he or she will get out of it.

There is nothing good about sin. It separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1,2). It damns the soul (Revelation 21:8). It is a ticket to eternal hell. How can there be any joy in something like that?

**Conclusion**

If you haven't already done so, now is a marvelous time to measure the level of your love. The standard for this measurement is the Word of God. Which of these areas from I Corinthians 13 is a strong point for you? To which of them do you need to give a concentrated effort for improvement?

No lesson book in all the world, no matter how well written, will avail you if you do not make personal application. The same can be said for the Bible. If we want to grow in love (and this we must do - I Thessalonians 4:9,10), we must apply God's Word to our lives. Many have read the Bible but never applied it and been obedient to it. May no one reading these words be guilty of this grievous error.

**Exercise Your Mind**

**TRUE OR FALSE**

1. T - F: Christians should at all times and in all places conduct themselves in a manner befitting the One whose name they wear.
2. T - F: We are to think of ourselves first, then consider others.
3. T - F: It is never right to get angry.
4. T - F: Those who love do not harbor sin within their hearts.
5. T - F: There is nothing at all good about sin.

MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. A Christian is: A) One who belongs to Christ; B) Expected to be no different than anyone else; C) Never looked up to as an example.
2. To shine as lights in the world means: A) To wear a sign announcing that you are a Christian; B) To live in such a way that those in darkness see Christ in you; C) To partake of the sins of the world.
3. Love: A) Is merely a feeling; B) Must come from the heart; C) Has nothing to do with our inward selves.
4. They that mourn are blessed because: A) They are sorry for their sins; B) They are sorry that someone else caught them in their sins; C) Their sorrow for sin leads to repentance.
5. Applying the Bible to our lives means: A) Obeying it; B) Finding the passages that we like and doing what they say only; C) Only obeying those passages that the preacher says are important.

FILL IN THE BLANKS
1. "_________________ as ___________________ in the world."
2. "Let nothing be done through ______________ or ______________; but in ______________ of mind let each esteem ______________ better than themselves. Look not every man on his ______________ things, but every man also on the things of ______________. Let this ______________ be in you which was also in __________________."
3. "________________ are they that ___________; for they shall be _________________."

4. "Behold, the Lord's ______________ is not _______________ that is cannot _______________; neither his _______________ heavy, that it cannot _______________; But your _______________ have _______________ between _______________ and your _______________, and your _______________ have hid his _______________ from you, that he will not hear."

5. "But as touching ________________ love ye need not that I ___________ unto you: for ye yourselves are _______________ of _______________ to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the _______________ which are in all Macedonia: but we _______________ you, brethren, that ye _______________ more and more."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is it important that we have a love that reflects Christ in our lives? ____________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________

2. Who benefits when we have this kind of love? _______
____________________________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________

3. In what ways can we show that we are Christians? ____
____________________________________________
____________________________________________
____________________________________________
4. What are some of the things we sometimes do that are not consistent with our claim to be Christians? _______  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  

5. Paul said that we are to look "every man on the things of others." Does this mean that we are to be busybodies who pay more attention to other people's business than to our own? Explain your answer. ________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  

6. What do we allow to keep us from being willing to help others? ____________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  

7. What if Jesus had thought of the cost of His sacrifice more than of the needs of our souls? ____________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  

8. Why do people have quick tempers? ________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________  
   ____________________________________________________________________________
9. How can we develop the love that is not easily provoked? ______________________________
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________

10. Why is it good for us to think the best of others? _____
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________

11. In what ways does having a vengeful mind affect us?
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________

12. Why is it necessary for love to be more than just a superficial feeling? ______________________________
______________________________
______________________________

13. Are there some today who rejoice in iniquity? In what ways do they show this attitude? _________________
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________

14. Discuss Psalm 51, keeping in mind the events that led to its writing. ______________________________
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________
15. What are the results of a life of sin? Of a life lived for God? ________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." ______________________________________
Chapter Seven
I Corinthians 13:4-7 (Part 3)

Memory Work:
"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if he have love one to another." (John 13:34,35).

"But Rejoiceth In the Truth"
It is not enough to hate sin, to not rejoice in iniquity. We must hate it. If we truly love we will take no joy in sin, but we must go beyond this. We must rejoice in the truth. A person who does not rejoice in iniquity is against sin of all kinds, but a person who also rejoices in truth not only dislikes these deeds but stands against them, upholding the torch of truth in an attempt to lead those involved in sin out of their dark existence.

The drunkard in the gutter is the focal point of our disgust. We take no joy in seeing him wallow in the mire of his evil actions. But do we merely sniff at him in contempt or do we try to direct him to the path of righteousness? Does our lack of joy over sin translate into joy over obedience to the truth, a joy that comes when we deliver the truth to the wayfaring soul?

We look at an adulterer and shudder at the tragic decision(s) he has made to break his marriage vows. We have no joy or pleasure in what he has done, but what will we do for him? Will we have so much joy in seeing the truth spread that we go to this adulterer, point out his error to him and urge him to change his ways?

To rejoice in the truth is to do more than just want the evil to stop. It is to want the truth to be taught and practiced.
Pilate inquired of Jesus, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). His is a question that has been reborn in the wondering minds of each succeeding generation. What is truth?

Truth, unconquerable and pure, ultimate in nature, is that which is from God. In the shadow of the cross Jesus tenderly uttered in prayer to His Father, "Thy word is truth." (John 17:17). It is by this Word that all men are to live (Matthew 4:4). It is by this Word that all men are to be judged (John 12:48).

To rejoice in truth is to take joy in obeying and seeing others obey God's Word. Having the kind of love that rejoices in the truth means avoiding sin **AND** doing righteousness. It means mourning over the sins of others **AND** taking them the truth to lead them out of sin.

Love means doing right, wanting others to do right and taking pleasure in seeing truth prevail. There is no joy on earth quite like the joy of obeying and seeing others obey the truth.

"Beareth All Things"

The word "beareth" carries with it the idea of covering something. No, love does not cover up sin. Love does, however, cover up the faults in others to the extent that we look at others' faults in the light of our own. Again, this does not lead to an excusing of sin but it does cause one to be less critical and less demanding of others.

Peter wrote, "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." (I Peter 4:8). Centuries earlier, Solomon had written similar words (Proverbs 10:12). In that passage, the wise king contrasted the fact that love covers sins with the fact that hatred stirs up strife. The person who hates looks for faults in others and seeks opportunity to criticize and malign. In contrast, the one who loves seeks to understand
others in the context of their imperfections as well as his own.

Many of us are much too demanding of others while at the same time we are far too lenient with ourselves. We expect our co-workers to sacrifice for the good of the company but we will not sacrifice ourselves. We demand that our fellow Christians be examples of righteous living but we set significantly lower standards for ourselves. We insist that our spouses and children give freely of their time to us but we are stingy when it comes to giving of our time to them.

In having the love that bears all things, we come to understand that we must treat others as we ourselves wish to be treated (Matthew 7:12). Sin is not excused, but criticism is minimized and unreal demands are eliminated for we become men and women who check for beams in our own eyes before concentrating our attention on the motes in the eyes of others (Matthew 7:3-5).

"Believeth All Things"

This doesn't mean that those who love are naïve. Some do indeed swallow hook, line and sinker everything that is told to them, but this is not a quality of love.

A few years ago a man called me on the phone and wanted to talk about a religious doctrine that he had been taught. It was a false doctrine and I took him to the Scriptures to show him it was false. His remark after I presented the truth to him was, "I can't believe that anyone would tell me anything that is wrong." It's sad to think that there are deceivers in the world but to close our eyes to reality is to put our souls in great danger.

Love considers one innocent until he might prove himself guilty. Those with this love believe the best about others. It seems that the older we get the more skeptical we

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become. At times we should be skeptical but not all the time. We should assume the honesty and integrity of all and reserve judgment until after the person has spoken. Without this assumption, we will not have the love described in the Bible. Without this love, we will have a terribly sour outlook on life, thinking that everyone is out to get us. Believe all things unless you know them to be false or until you learn they are.

"Hopeth All Things"

Hope is a precious commodity, the possession of which lightens life's loads. It is a lifeline in a sea of troubles. Those who have hope view each new day as a treasure chest of opportunities for good. They see life, not as a dreary march to the grave but as a joyous walk toward heaven. They have this hope through Christ (Colossians 1:27).

Love has hope for all things; hope for one's own life, hope for the lives of others. While many of us have our own personal hopes and dreams, what hopes do we have for others? If a friend tells us of a better job he is hoping to get, do we hope with him? Do we share in the hopes of others? This is what love hoping all things is about.

As was said in an earlier chapter, love wants the best for others. Love has the hope that lost friends and family will come to Christ. Love has the hope that fellow Christians will grow and become more faithful. Love has the hope that peace will prevail and that the world will turn to the Lord. As we also said earlier, love is not real love until it demonstrates itself. Hoping for all of these things will not bring them about. The love that hopes for the good WORKS to bring about the good.
"Endureth All Things"

Love is patient. When Jesus' cheek was pressed with Judas' kiss of hypocrisy, He endured. Even though He could have called 12 legions of angels to His side, He endured (Matthew 26:49-54). When He was slapped in the face, spit upon, blindfolded, mocked and whipped, He endured. When He suffered disgrace by Pilate's side before a thronging Jewish audience, He endured. When hanging in shame on the cross, stripped of practically all of His clothing, He endured. "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." (I Peter 2:22,23).

Do you want to know what it means to endure all things? The meaning can be summed up in one noble name: Jesus Christ. Consider His suffering and His patience and you will have a clearer understanding of how love endures all things.

Conclusion

There is no more fitting conclusion to this three chapter section than the opening statement of I Corinthians 13:8. "Charity never faileth."

Prior to the creation of this world there was love for there was God and God is love (I John 4:8). In the beginning there was love. Throughout the ages of the patriarchs, the law of Moses and now, the Christian dispensation, there is love. At the end of all of this there will be love and on into heaven in eternity there will be love.

Love never fails. It is as eternal as God for God is love. There are things that are temporary. Paul mentions prophecies and tongues and special knowledge as three of these temporary items. They were to vanish away and
indeed they have, but love continues. Hope will pass away as will faith, but love shall go on.

Love never fails in that it is eternal, but love also never fails in the sense that a person can't go wrong if he loves. He will do all things in love. He will faithfully obey God's Word because of his love. He will teach the truth in love, rebuke in love, encourage in love. If his motive is love for God and love for his fellow man, he has the purest of intentions.

Love never fails. May each of us examine ourselves frequently and may the never-failing love of God as so beautifully described in I Corinthians 13 overflow our hearts.

Exercise Your Mind

TRUE OR FALSE
1. T - F: Those who rejoice in the truth attempt to guide the lost out of their sins.
2. T - F: God's Word is truth.
3. T - F: Love bearing all things means that love covers up and refuses to admit sins.
4. T - F: Those who have love believe without question everything that is told to them.
5. T - F: Jesus is the prime example of love that endures all things.

MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. Love is: A) Simply rejoicing not in iniquity; B) Simply rejoicing in truth; C) Both rejoicing not in iniquity AND rejoicing in truth.
2. Those who have love that bears all things: A) Recognize their own imperfections and the imperfections of others; B) Overlook the need to
recognize and repent of sin; C) Feel that they have no right to speak out against any wrong.

3. Those who have the love that hopes all things: A) Do nothing but sit around and hope all day long; B) Work to bring about good; C) Are naïve and unrealistic.

4. When Jesus suffered the persecution of those who hated Him: A) He called on the angels of heaven to deliver Him; B) He patiently endured; C) He cursed the Father.

5. Love is: A) Eternal; B) Temporary; C) Of little value.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. "_________________ them through they ________________; thy __________________ is truth."

2. "And _____________ all things have fervent __________________ among ________________; for charity shall _____________ the multitude of sins."

3. "________________ stirreth up ________________; but ______________ covereth all ______________."

4. "Who did no ______________, neither was __________ found in his ________________; Who, when he was ______________, reviled not again; when he ______________, he ______________ not, but committed ________________ to him that ___________ righteously."

5. "Charity never ______________, but whether there be __________, they shall __________; whether there be ______________, they shall ______________; whether there be ____________________, it shall ________________ away."
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is it important that we rejoice in truth as well as rejoice not in iniquity? _________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________

2. Why doesn't everyone accept the fact that God's Word is truth? ________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

3. What joys are associated with faithfully obeying God's Word? _________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

4. What joys are associated with seeing others obey God's Word? _______________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

5. What would cause a person to be more demanding of others than he is of himself? ________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
6. Discuss Matthew 7:3-5. ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

7. What causes a person to become a skeptic? __________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

8. What are some of the ways in which hope benefits our lives? __________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

9. Why should we share in the hopes of others? __________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

10. Why is just hoping for good to be done not sufficient? __________
    ____________________________________________
    ____________________________________________
    ____________________________________________

11. How was Jesus able to endure all the suffering to which He was subjected? __________
    ____________________________________________
    ____________________________________________
    ____________________________________________

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12. How can we develop greater patience? ____________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

13. How do we know that love is eternal? ____________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

14. Why are faith and hope not as great as love? ________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

15. Why is it necessary for us to be sure that we have the
   motive of love behind all we do? _________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and
more in knowledge and in all judgment." ______________
Chapter Eight
Family Love

Memory Work:
"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning; that we should love one another." (I John 3:11).

The Loving Family
Bookstores throughout the world have entire sections of books devoted to the subject of the home. The thrust of the vast majority of these books is how to have a happy and successful family, but no family book is worth its salt if it does not emphasize the importance of faithfulness to God in the home. Godliness is the rock solid foundation upon which strong homes are built. From this foundation rise the valuable family traits of patience, wisdom, righteousness and a host of others, including love.

A happy home is a reflection of the joys of heaven. It is a place where peace, security, comfort and pleasure are found. Its influence continues throughout life as fond thoughts of home warm the hearts of even the aged man and woman. Just say the word "home" and a flurry of marvelous memories will cascade into one's mind.

Love Between Husband and Wife
When speaking of love between family members, this one naturally heads the list. Without love between husband and wife, love for children, while perhaps sincere, will not carry its fullest weight. It has been said that one of the greatest gifts a father can give his children is the gift of loving their mother. This goes for the mother's love for the father as well.

In Ephesians 5:22-33 the apostle Paul gives a succinct yet powerful description of the ideal marriage. It is one in
which love, respect and mutual admiration abound.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

The love that the husband is to have for his wife rises above a mere physical attraction to her. His is to be an unreserved love, a sacrificial love, a love given not because she is so deserving of it, but given because he is her husband. In short, his love is to be for her as Christ's love is for the church. The love of Christ is unreserved and sacrificial. Jesus gave Himself to purchase the church, not because mankind was so deserving, but because He is God the Son.

In the passage under consideration there is nothing said about the love of the wife for the husband. It is implied
however, as her submission to her husband is an act of love even as the submission of the church to Christ is an act of love (John 14:15). That wives are to learn to love their husbands is seen in Titus 2:4 where the older women are instructed to teach the younger women this love.

One of the greatest tragedies in marriage today is that too many couples give up too quickly. They don't give love a chance to grow. When the first argument comes a week, a month or a couple of months after the marriage ceremony, they begin wondering if perhaps they made a mistake. They think that love should be free of troubles; but the storms of life, be they big or small, touch all aspects of our lives, including our marriages. True love weathers these storms and rises up from them even stronger than before.

The love between husband and wife that the Lord wants us to have is a growing love. In light of this, may every spouse put forth the effort to make love grow in his/her own life and have the patience to allow it to develop more fully in the life of his/her spouse. This love is vital to the success of the home. If we consider faithfulness to God as the foundation for the home, then we must consider the love between husband and wife to be the next layer.

**Love From Parents to Children**

What a blessing it is to have children. Psalm 127:3-5 reads, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them…"

The rearing of children rewards parents with hours of joy and pride, with a bit of heartache thrown in on occasion. Child rearing is not a game though. The decision to bring a little life into the world is not one that should be made haphazardly. Being a parent is a responsibility, a
MAJOR responsibility.

From the January 1985 edition of "Pulpit Helps" (published by AMG International, Chattanooga, TN 37422) comes this sobering verse:

I took a piece of plastic clay  
And idly molded it one day.  
And as my fingers pressed it still,  
It moved and yielded to my will.  
I came again when days were passed,  
The piece of clay was hard at last.  
The shape I gave it still it bore.  
And I could change it nevermore.

I took a piece of living clay,  
And gently formed it, day by day.  
I molded it with a power and art  
A young child's soft and yielding heart.  
I came again when years were gone.  
He was a man I looked upon.  
He still that early impress bore  
And I could change him nevermore.

There are many Bible verses that give instruction to parents on how to rear their children. At the core of them all lies one familiar to those with even a surface knowledge of the Bible. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6).

The love parents have for their children has many faces. It is attendance at a school function in which they are involved. It is playing with them in the back yard, taking them to the zoo or on a picnic. It is the gentle nursing of their scrapes and bruises. It is the cuddling embrace when bad dreams have interrupted sleep.
Let every parent mark this down. Of all that you can do for your child, you will never, ever do anything more important than to heed the inspired instruction of Proverbs 22:6. You say you've heard that before? Hear it again. The most important thing you can do for your child is to train him or her up in the way of the Lord. Remind yourself of this vital fact as many times as it takes to make you set this verse at the forefront of your philosophy of rearing children.

Do you love your child enough to want him to be faithful to God when he grows up and ultimately go to heaven? This is the way he SHOULD go. But how can you get him to go that way? It comes by training, guiding, correcting, leading.

The key word behind the ideal love of parents for children is "train." Train them up in the way they should go. Give them your time and a listening ear. Discipline them. Teach them to love God. Parents who love their offspring will do these things and whatever else it takes to lead them in the pathway of righteousness. What's more, parental actions will be tempered with much self-examination, study and prayer.

With our every word and deed we parents are molding the hearts, the minds, the very lives of our sons and daughters. In the face of such a monumental task, how can we afford to give our little ones anything but love?

**Love From Children to Parents**

One of the most basic commands of the Law of Moses was, " Honour thy father and they mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12). The Lord gave just ten commandments to Moses as the two communed on Mt. Sinai and this was one of them.
The Old Testament informs us of a strict punishment that was levied against children who disobeyed parents (Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 27:16). Proverbs 20:20 declares, "Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness." When Jesus came, He lived under the old law and, speaking of Jesus’ relationship to His parents, Luke wrote, "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them." (Luke 12:51).

The love that Jewish children were to have for their parents is a lesson for each of us today as well (Romans 15:4). What's more, the New Testament echoes the sentiment of the Old. Children are to love, respect and obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20).

It seems that we children go through stages in our view of our parents. When we are tiny we see them as our protectors and providers, people who seldom, if ever, do anything wrong. As we head toward our teenage years we tend to see them as rule makers. Advancing through our teen years we begin to see them as despots who are out of touch and who only get in the way of our doing what we want to do.

Next we reach our adult years and along with this time of life comes our marriage and our own children. Then it seems as if we almost completely reacquaint ourselves with those two people with whom we lived for several years. We begin seeing them as advisors, even confidants, even friends with whom we can laugh and cry and who we can enjoy being near. What a transition. What brings about this change? The answer is, our maturity. With that maturity comes a deeper love.

If you and I only knew the half of what our parents did for us, what they gave, what they sacrificed just for us, surely our appreciation and love for them would be much
greater. Sadly, many of us only see this in retrospect. We gain appreciation for Dad and Mom much later than we should. Sometimes it's too late and all we can do is lay flowers on their graves and wish they were back with us so that we could tell them how much we love them.

With each passing generation the existence of the extended family fades further into oblivion. Many miles separate families where just a few generations ago one could find great-grandparents, grandparents, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren within a short driving distance of one another. Perhaps there are several advantages behind the changes that have occurred, but one of the biggest disadvantages is the ease with which children can forget their parents.

Children are to love and honor their parents all the days of their lives, regardless of the distance between them. As Jesus thought of His mother even up to His dying breath (John 19:25-27), may we children love Dad and Mom for as long as we live.

**Conclusion**

Love is the golden chain that binds the hearts of a family together and that gives that family its strength. Sad to say, there are numerous homes where real love is unknown. Divorce, child abuse and neglect of elderly parents are issues that are all too common in our society.

Even though relatively little space has been given to family love, one need only consult the rest of this book to learn more about it. While the other chapters do not specify family love as their theme as this one does, still their discussion of love in general is of value even in the home. One of the greatest mistakes we can make is to take the scriptures that tell us how to relate to our fellow man and make them apply only to our dealings with friends and
co-workers and fellow Christians. The instructions to love are no less applicable in the home than they are in the neighborhood, the workplace or the church.

The happy home is a haven. It provides a respite from the cares and toils of life in the world. For it to become all this to you, you must develop and never cease developing love.

Exercise Your Mind

TRUE OR FALSE
1. T - F: The most valuable books on the family are those that emphasize the importance of faithfulness to God in the home.
2. T - F: It matters little that parents love each other, just as long as they love the children.
3. T - F: The husband is to love the wife as Christ loved the church.
4. T - F: The rearing of children actually demands very little of our time and effort.
5. T - F: The Bible teaches children to have great love and respect for their parents.

MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. Godliness: A) Is sometimes helpful to have in the home; B) Is really of very little value in the home; C) Is the rock solid foundation upon which strong homes are built.
2. The wife is to submit to her husband: A) Because she is his servant; B) Because she loves him and the Lord; C) Because she is afraid of what he will do to her if she does not.
3. One of the greatest tragedies in marriage today is that: A) Too many couples give up too quickly; B) There is
not any help available for making a marriage stronger; C) The Lord expects too much of a husband and wife.

4. The love parents have for their children: A) Shows itself in many ways; B) Has little impact on the development of the children; C) Is to be shown only when the parents are in the mood to show it.

5. Jesus: A) Rebelled against Joseph and Mary; B) Complained about their methods of child rearing; C) Was subject to His parents.

**FILL IN THE BLANKS**

1. "Husbands, ________________ your ________________, even as ___________ also loved the _______________ and gave himself for it."

2. "Lo, _________________ are an _______________ of the Lord; and the _______________ of the _______________ is his reward. As _________________ are in the hand of a _______________ man; so are children of the _______________. _________________ is the man that hath his _______________ full of them…"

3. "_______________ up a _______________ in the way he should ___________; and when he is ______________, he will not ______________ from it."

4. "Honour thy _______________ and thy _______________; that thy days may be _______________ upon the _______________ which the _______________ of thy _______________ giveth thee."

5. "And he ________________ down with _______________ and came to _______________ and was _______________ unto them."
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is it so important that faithfulness to God be emphasized as the foundation for the home? 
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

2. List some of the blessings that result from a happy home. ______________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

3. Why is the love between husband and wife such a vital matter in the success of a home? ______________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

4. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. What are some of the ways in which Jesus showed (shows) His love for the church? __________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________

5. Why do some couples give up on their marriage so quickly? ______________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
   _____________________________________________
6. What are some of the possible reasons behind the incredibly high divorce rate in our country?


7. What are some of the joys associated with having children?


8. What age should our children be for us to begin training them in the way they should go? Explain your answer.


9. What should be our greatest desire for our children? Explain your answer.


10. Why must parents frequently examine their own lives?


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11. Explain the promise given to those who honor father and mother. "That thy days may be long upon the land which they Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12).

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

12. Are children bound to obey their parents, even when they (the children) are grown and have a family of their own?

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

13. In the chapter, various stages of our view of our parents are mentioned. Are these accurate? How have you viewed your parents in different stages of your life? __

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

14. What are some Bible passages that, although not specifically speaking of family love, will help us develop family love if we apply them at home? (Example: Matthew 7:12). ______________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

15. When may we cease working to develop love in the family? ________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________
"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the sustenance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned."
Chapter Nine
Love In the Body of Christ

Memory Work:
"These things I command you, that ye love one another." (John 15:17).

Emphasized by Jesus
In his Gospel account, the apostle John gives us many details of the final days and hours before Jesus was delivered over to those who hated Him. The thirteenth chapter of John begins with this statement: "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." (John 13:1).

This verse begins a lengthy description of some very personal interaction between Jesus and His disciples just prior to His crucifixion. In this discussion Jesus touches on a wide variety of subjects. He tells them of the mansion awaiting them (John 14:1-4). He promises them that the Comforter will come (John 14:16-17,26). He warns them of persecution (John 15:18-20; 16:1-3). In John 15:1ff He reestabishes His headship of the church and the need for faithfulness through the imagery of the vine (Jesus) and the branches (Christians). Beautifully woven throughout this section is the great command to the disciples to love one another.

The section begins with an affirmation of Jesus' love. We are then given an example of His love, an example of service and the words of Jesus to the effect that His disciples are to imitate His attitude of service and themselves be servants one to another.

Now we notice some memorable statements
concerning the love that is to exist in the body of Christ. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34,35). "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." (John 15:9). "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12). "These things I command you, that ye love one another." (John 15:17).

**Remembered by John**

Decades after the events recorded in the aforementioned chapters of John’s Gospel account, this beloved apostle, an eyewitness and an "earwitness" of Jesus' deeds and words, recalled and repeated by Divine inspiration the Lord's exhortations to brotherly love. The first epistle of John could well be styled, "The Letter of Love." In it we find the word "love" some 45 times, 27 times in the fourth chapter alone. The great emphasis in this epistle is upon brotherly love. For the sake of brevity, just a few of John's inspired statements will be quoted here. Each reader is encouraged to read I John in its entirety as well as Romans 12:10, I Thessalonians 4:9-10, I Peter 1:22 and other verses that deal with love in the body of Christ.

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." (I John 2:9,10).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (I John 3:16).

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen,
how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20).

**Benefits of Brotherly Love**

The meanings of the scriptures given thus far are so clear that they need no explanation. We Christians are commanded to love one another as Jesus loves us.

The ways in which we can demonstrate this love for one another also needs little comment for we have spoken in earlier chapters of how one shows love. Apply these principles to Christian relationships and you will be obeying the great command to "love the brotherhood." (I Peter 2:17).

Instead of devoting more space to these matters, we will turn our attention to just a few of the many benefits that come when we as Christians practice brotherly love. The first of these benefits is **UNITY**.

If any one word is capable of prompting thoughts of peace and security and joy, it is the word "unity." King David devoted an entire Psalm to the subject.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psalm 133).

Jesus prayed for unity (John 17:21). Paul encouraged unity (Ephesians 4:3). He rebuked the Corinthian church for their internal dissension and exhorted them to "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (I Corinthians 1:10).

Where there is love for brethren there is unity. This unity has its own set of rewards for where there is unity
within the body of Christ there is increased cooperation and more work. Where there is increased cooperation and more work there is a greater influence upon the world with more souls being won to Christ.

Please permit an aside here. The unity that is pleasing to God is that which is founded upon His Word, the Bible, the New Testament in particular. Many want to agree to disagree. They overlook glaring doctrinal differences just for the sake of trying to get along. They maintain that this will lead to a more powerful impact on the world. Rather than this, however, it merely leads to greater confusion. Nothing has brought a worse blight upon the name of Christianity, nothing has done more to drive people away from the truth, than denominationalism. Many want to maintain their man-made doctrinal stances and still have unity with those who hold completely opposite views. It simply cannot be done though for true unity is in God's Word (John 17:17, 20-21).

We do not truly love mankind if we allow them to continue in error without any mention of it. We do not truly love our brethren if we permit their error to continue and associate with them freely as if nothing was wrong.

Love promotes unity, but let us never mistake compromise for love nor judge the level of unity we have by the amount of peace we have. Unity, no matter how friendly and peaceful we may be with one another, is not unity unless it is founded upon God's Word.

Not only does love lead to unity, another benefit it provides is UNDERSTANDING. When we love our brethren we grow in understanding of them. We understand that they are not perfect, even as we are not perfect. We understand that we are at different levels of maturity in the faith. We understand that we each have problems and backgrounds that make certain temptations
particularly difficult for us. Understanding this, we don't expect perfection of any of our brethren. We rebuke sin, but we also devote a great deal of time to encouragement.

A third benefit of brotherly love is that of an attitude of **HELPFULNESS**. If we love each other we will want to help each other. We will want to help each other be stronger. We will want to help each other overcome the devil. We will want to help each other go to heaven.

In Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12 the church is portrayed as a body. We are fused together into one by the blood of Christ. As the individual parts of our physical bodies often assist each other, so are we in the spiritual body to do the same for one another.

Romans 12:15 instructs us to "Rejoice with them that do rejoice; and weep with them that weep." In I Corinthians 12:26 we are told, "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."

From these two verses we learn that love leads us to help one another in times of trouble and in times of joy. Love causes us to develop a closeness with one another, a sensitivity to the needs and the hurts of one another. We become aware of the fact that none of us lives unto himself or herself. We begin looking on the things of others (Philippians 2:4) and lifting up the fallen and congratulating those who do well.

Through love, we also help those among us who have fallen into sin. Galatians 6:1 exhorts, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." If we love our brethren we will have a great desire for them to go to heaven. When we see them fall by the wayside we will have the compassion to go and warn them and encourage them so that they might see their
error, repent and get back on the straight and narrow path.

**Conclusion**

Certainly much more could be said about the benefits that come from love within the body of Christ. No better statement could be given in summary than that made by Jesus and mentioned earlier in this chapter. Why should we have love in the body of Christ? "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:35).

**Exercise Your Mind**

**TRUE OR FALSE**

1. T - F: Jesus taught His disciples love both by His words and His actions.
2. T - F: Love is a distinguishing characteristic among Christians that tells the world who we are.
3. T - F: The word "love" is barely mentioned in the book of I John.
4. T - F: True unity is that which is founded upon God's Word.
5. T - F: When a brother falls into sin, the best thing for us to do is to leave him alone.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE**

1. Before He was betrayed, Jesus: A) Spent most of the time by Himself; B) Spent much time chastising and rebuking those near to Him; C) Spent much time with those closest to Him encouraging and comforting them.
2. Jesus loved His disciples: A) Unto the end; B) Until they forsook Him in the Garden of Gethsemane; C) Only because they loved Him.
3. The apostle John: A) Was the only New Testament writer to have anything to say about brotherly love; B) Devoted much space to the subject of brotherly love; C) Did not know anything about brotherly love.

4. Understanding our brethren means: A) Demanding perfection of them; B) Overlooking and excuseing their sins; C) Realizing that neither they nor we are perfect.

5. All men shall know that we are Christ's disciples: A) Because of our love one for another; B) Because we wear signs telling people who we are; C) Because our names are in the church record books.

**FILL IN THE BLANKS**

1. "Now before the ____________ of the ______________, when ____________ knew that his ____________ was come that he should ____________ out of this ____________ unto the ____________, having ____________ his own which were in the ____________, he ____________ them unto the end."

2. "As the ____________ hath ____________ me, so have I ____________ you; ____________ ye in my love."

3. "If a man say, I love ____________, and ____________ his ____________, he is a ____________; for he that ____________ not his brother whom he hath ____________, how can he ____________ God whom he hath ____________ seen?"

4. "Behold, how ____________ and how ____________ it is for ____________ to dwell in ____________."

5. "By this shall ____________ men ____________ that ye are my ____________, if ye have ____________ one to another."
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the meaning of the statement in John 13:1, "he loveth them unto the end"? ______________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

2. Why did Jesus spend so much time talking to just His disciples prior to His death? _________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

3. Discuss the lesson Jesus was trying to teach in His washing of the disciples' feet. _________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

4. Why did Jesus put such an emphasis on love within His church? _________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

5. What does the love of Jesus teach us about the love of the Father? ______________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
6. Discuss I John 3:16. ___________________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________

7. Why is it not possible for us to love God and hate our brethren? ___________________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________

8. How does love promote unity? _________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________

9. Besides those mentioned in the chapter, what are some other benefits of unity? _________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________
  _______________________________________

10. Read Jesus' prayer in John 17. Why did He pray for the unity of His disciples? _________________
    ______________________________________
    ______________________________________
    ______________________________________

11. Why is devotion to truth more important than unity? __
    ______________________________________
    ______________________________________
    ______________________________________
12. Why is it unloving to permit those in error to continue in sin without ever speaking to them about it? 

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

13. What is meant by the statement, "we are at different levels of maturity in the faith"? 

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________


___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

15. Why is the world impressed when we Christians love one another? 

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." 

___________________________________________
Chapter Ten
Love For Our Enemies

Memory Work:
"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." (I John 3:13).

Enemies On Every Hand
It's sad to say, but everyone has someone who dislikes or even hates them. Certainly we are not trying to make people hate us, but still, some do have contempt for us. Maybe they don't like the way we look. Perhaps it is our personality in general that they dislike. It could be that some hate us because we have more money or better jobs than they do. Whatever the cause, the old maxim rings true: "You can't please all the people all the time."

Some count themselves our enemies because of a stand we take for truth. Many do not like to be taught God's Word because it contradicts their lives. Rather than humbling themselves before God, they choose instead to lash out at us and attempt to injure us with hatred. Remember Steven? (Acts 7).

Hatred is so prevalent because its instigator wields such widespread influence in our world. Satan is our adversary (I Peter 5:8). He is opposed to us. He is our enemy. In fact, there is not one individual in all of the world, young or old, to whom Satan is not opposed when it comes to their doing good. He hates the good and loves the evil. He is a murderer and the father of lies (John 8:44). As long as this world stands there will be hatred of that which is good and Satan will be behind it.

The Supreme Challenge
Jesus uttered these words in the Sermon on the Mount:
"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.

"For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans also? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:43-48).

Can you think of someone who hates you? What is the reason for their feelings? If it is for a sin that you have committed and that has harmed them then you need to repent of this and ask both God's forgiveness and theirs (Matthew 5:23-24). But what if they hate you because you taught them the Gospel of Christ in love and they didn't like hearing the truth? What if they hate you because they are jealous of you?

What should be our response to those who hate us? The worldly man and the worldly woman respond to hatred with hatred. It's sort of like fighting fire with fire only the problem is that their fires of hate lead them to the fires of hell. Vengeance belongs to God (Romans 12:19). We are to repay evil with good (Romans 12:20-21).

The distinctiveness of the love that we are to have is seen in that it is to be given unreservedly to every person on earth, regardless of whether or not they are deserving of it. Many in Jesus' day insisted that one need only go far enough with his love to cover his neighbor, the person who loved him in return. Jesus takes us beyond this. We are to
love our enemies.

How do we love our enemies? Jesus provides the answer. When they curse us, do not curse them in return but bless them. When they act in a hateful manner toward us, we should do them good. What's more, we should pray for them. If we can sincerely pray for a person who hates and abuses us, we will find it impossible to harbor hatred within our hearts for him. For what should we pray? Among other things, pray that he will cease hating, pray that we will be able to influence him for good, pray that God will give him time to repent and obey, pray that we will not join in his hatred.

Think again about that person who hates you. How have you responded to him? Have you done good to him in return for the evil he has done to you? Have you prayed for him?

The importance of treating our enemies in a loving manner really hits home in what Jesus then says. The Christian who loves those who love him is no better than the person of the world. That's all the world knows of love. "I'll love you but only if you love me." For a child of God to love in this manner is to remain on the level of those in the world. It is to fall way short of the higher plane to which we are called by our Lord.

In Matthew 5:20 Jesus instructed that our righteousness is to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. In these verses at the end of chapter five He tells us that our love is to exceed that of the people of the world. In the case of our righteousness, if it does not exceed that hypocritical show of righteousness that characterized the Pharisees, we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. In the case of our love, if it is not greater than the love of the people in the world, we cannot grow on unto fullness in the Lord.
The Supreme Example

Nowhere in all of the world, not in all the history books, not in all of the lives of those now living, can we find a more superb example of loving those who hate us than the example of Jesus Christ. When He gave the command to love our enemies, He gave instruction that He Himself obeyed. Time and time again throughout the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we see Jesus meeting the blasphemies and threats and utter hatred of others with Divine love.

In no greater setting do we see the supreme example of Jesus in this area than in the events leading up to His crucifixion. When Judas Iscariot led the band of soldiers to Jesus he mockingly said to the Lord, "Hail, Master" and then proceeded to kiss Him. Although the aid of 12 legions of angels was Jesus' for the asking, He refused it and responded to Judas' hypocrisy with the gentle words, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" (Matthew 26:47-53).

Later that night Jesus suffered through the spitting upon His face, the mockery of being blindfolded and urged to prophesy who hit Him, the pain of a scourging and the shame of being dressed in a mock robe and crown. Through all of this, the 12 legions of angels were still mounted with weapons of destruction in hand, but Jesus would not retaliate for He knew that these very people who were abusing Him needed Him to suffer and die for their sins. His love ruled over any idea of vengeance that Satan might have been trying to place in His mind.

Finally, before His last breath was taken upon the cross of Calvary, Jesus looked at the crowd beneath His feet. He saw gambling, heard mocking and witnessed the ugliest scene ever to disgrace earth's boundaries. In spite of all of this, Jesus uttered the sweetest prayer that ever came from human lips. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what
they do." (Luke 23:34). What else but love could elicit this kind of response from One suffering for crimes for which He was not even one bit guilty?

Jesus faced tremendous opposition. He taught the truth and many in error did not want to hear it. He was light and the world was darkness (John 1:5). In spite of the hatred of so many, Jesus still loved them.

In John 15:18 Jesus told His disciples, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." In verse 20 he stated, "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

As the worldly-minded hated Jesus for His stand for the truth, so will they also hate those of us who teach what He taught. The challenge to us is to love others regardless of how they treat us. Jesus showed the way. It is up to us to follow His steps (I Peter 2:21-22).

The Future of God's Enemies

We do want to insert a word or two in this chapter about the future of those who hate God and who just hate in general. One day they shall receive recompense for their hatred. It will be fair and it will be according to their evil deeds. As they hated, so shall they be in hell eternally with the king of hatred.

One of the motivating factors for not returning hatred is the knowledge that God will recompense those who hate us Christians. This does not mean that we sit around holding a grudge against our enemies, saying in our minds, "One day you are going to get yours and I can't wait until that happens." This attitude is contrary to Jesus' instructions in Matthew 5 which we studied earlier.

Knowing that one day the scales will be balanced is a
comforting thought to a Christian. We long for the day when we can be separated from troubles and evil. God will not allow those who hate us into heaven. Revelation 21:27 says of heaven, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

The enemies of God shall find Him quite without mercy on their behalf in the day of judgment. The cry that since God is love He will never punish sin is nothing more than a wishful thought of the rebels. The truth is that judgment is coming and those who show their hatred of God by persecuting His people and rebelling against His Word shall find themselves receiving a just and fit punishment for their evil (Matthew 13:37-42).

The Bible clearly teaches that God is love (I John 4:8) and that He is patient (II Peter 3:9). But God is also just (Deuteronomy 32:4). He will repay evil with punishment. Let no man think that he can be an enemy of God and enjoy the blessings of God's love in eternity. While he is on earth he benefits from God's blessings of sun and rain and the like, but heed these words: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of his flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Galatians 6:6-7).

**Conclusion**

The depth of our love is tested by the way in which we treat those who hate us. Jesus gave us the instruction to rise above the world's idea of love. His life defined true love.

It is difficult to love someone who hates us, but it has been said that those who deserve our love the least need it the most. When we are struggling with the need to love
those who hate us, may we remember Jesus' words and life. Because of His love for even those who hated Him, He spoke the truth. Because of His love, He rebuked those who were teaching error. Because of His love, He gave His life, even for those who hated Him.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die, but God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:6-8).

Exercise Your Mind

TRUE OR FALSE
1. T - F: It is possible for a person to please everybody in every situation.
2. T - F: We ought to be striving to please God and not men.
3. T - F: Hatred is so prevalent because of the widespread influence of Satan.
4. T - F: The only way to stop someone from hating us is to hate them in return.
5. T - F: As Christians, our love must exceed the love of those in the world.

MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. God's Word: A) Is loved by every person on earth; B) Is sometimes met by opposition of those who hate it; C) Should be compromised in order to please others.
2. Our love is to be given to our fellow man: A) Unreservedly; B) Only after they have earned it; C) Cautiously and only after much thought.

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3. To love, do good toward and pray for our enemies: A) Is easy to do; B) Was something that only Jesus was capable of doing and therefore is not expected of Christians; C) Is a great challenge that must be met if we want to be like Jesus.

4. When Jesus was hanging on the cross: A) He prayed for the forgiveness of those who were hurting Him; B) He called 12 legions of angels to deliver Him; C) He harbored vengeance in His heart, hoping that every person there would be killed.

5. In the day of judgment: A) God will save everyone, regardless of how they lived; B) Punishment will be meted out to those who disobeyed God; C) The wicked will be able to persuade God to change His mind and save them.

FILL IN THE BLANKS
1. "But I say unto you, __________ your __________, bless them that __________ you, do __________ to them that __________ you, and __________ for them which __________ you, use you, and __________ you;"

2. "For if ye __________ them which love __________, what __________ have ye? do not even the __________ the same?"

3. "Father, __________ them; for they know __________ what they ______."

4. "If the __________ __________ you, he __________ that it __________ me before it __________ you."

5. "Be not __________; __________ is not __________; for whatsoever a man __________, that shall he also __________."
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are some other reasons why people hate others?
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

2. Why do some hate hearing God's Word? _____________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

3. How do we show love for God and His Word? _______
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

4. Why does Satan hate good? What will he try to do to
   keep us from doing good? ______________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

5. How can we overcome Satan's temptations to hate
   those who hate us? ____________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

6. Discuss Romans 12:19-21. ______________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
7. Why must a Christian's love exceed the love typical of those in the world? ____________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

8. What was the cause for the hatred that many had for Jesus? How did they show their hatred? ____________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

9. Discuss I Peter 2:23-24. ________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

10. Why didn't Jesus call for the angels to save Him from suffering and dying? __________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

11. Discuss John 15:18-20. ________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

12. Does the fact that God punishes sin mean that He is not perfect in love? Explain your answer. _____________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
13. Why is it a comfort to the faithful Christian to know that he/she will be separated from evil and sin in heaven? __________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

14. Discuss Galatians 6:6-7. ________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

15. What are some ways in which we can show love for our enemies? ___________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." ____________________________
Chapter Eleven
Forbidden Loves

Memory Work:
"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Revelation 12:11).

Forbidden Loves?
The idea of any type of love that is unacceptable is foreign to many. They cannot fathom love as anything other than good and right. In fact, they might even be repulsed by the mere suggestion that there are kinds of loves that are destructive.

Contrary to widespread belief, there are loves that destroy internally, externally and eternally. We want to empty ourselves of these types of loves and be filled with that love to which so much attention has been given in this book. Following is a discussion of some types of love from which we must free ourselves.

Love of the World
When we speak of loving the world, we are not referring to the love that we are to have for our fellow man. The love of the world is the desire to have everything the world offers. It is servitude to the passions and pleasures of earth. It is being willing to sell one's soul in order to have the rewards that this world has to give.

The Bible makes it so very clear that each of us must make a choice between loving and serving God and loving and serving the world. In Matthew 6:24 Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The
word "mammon" is an Aramaic term meaning "riches, treasures." Hence, we see Jesus pitting the things that belong to eternity against the things that belong to this earth. We cannot love both.

John takes up this subject in I John 2:15-17, giving the command to not love the world and then providing the reason why we should avoid this type of love.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Again we see the glaring contrast between love for the world and love for God. The book of James adds, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4).

John defines the love of the world. Basically it is wanting the pleasures of life to the extent that this desire chokes out any love for God. It is wanting the earthly reward and forgetting about the heavenly reward.

Why should we not seek pleasures and rewards of earth? After all, there is so much to have here. Think of the wealth and fame and power we could have if only we invested every fiber of our being in a search for the rewards of this life. Countless other men and women have given their lives in a quest for earth's joys. Why shouldn't we?

The answer to this question is given by John in verse 17: "the world passeth away." The phrase is better translated, "IS PASSING away." That means that at the moment this epistle was being written, the world was in the midst of growing older and coming to its everlasting close.
That being the case over 1900 years ago, it is still the case today. The earth is wearing down (Hebrews 1:10-11), heading for destruction which the Lord will bring to it in the last great day (II Peter 3:10-12).

What does this mean? It means that every earthly pleasure for which man can work will be dissolved. Every worldly treasure that one can collect for himself will be destroyed. They have no permanency whatsoever. They, along with the rest of the world, are passing away and will one day be worth nothing at all. However, "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Do you see the importance of eschewing the things of the world in favor of the rewards of eternity? Do you see the absolute necessity of refusing to love the world?

The love of the world is a forbidden love because it is the complete opposite of love for God. If we want to have the rewards of heaven, we are forbidden to love the world, for the things of the world stand in our way and will be of no value to us in eternity.

**Love of Money**

This subject could have been discussed under the previous heading, for to love money is most certainly to love the world. However, since the Bible singles out this particular forbidden love, it is worthy of separate consideration.

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul sounded a solemn warning against the love of money: "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (I Timothy 6:9-10).
Time and time again Paul's words have been misquoted to say, "Money is the root of all evil." This simply is not true. Money can accomplish many needed tasks such as relieving the afflicted (Acts 11:27-30) and providing for the spreading of the Gospel (Philippians 4:14-16).

Money is not inherently evil. Jesus even used it (Matthew 17:24-27). It is the love of it, the consuming desire to have more and more of it that is destructive. This is covetousness. Jesus said concerning this, "Take heed; and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15). He then proceeded to tell a parable of a covetous rich man who discovered that while his money was of value on earth, it was worth nothing in eternity. His love for it became his downfall.

What's so strange about a love for money is that those who have this love seem obsessed with having more. A neighbor gets a better car so the lover of money has to get one even better. A friend's wife has a new piece of jewelry so the lover of money must have something better. On and on it goes. There used to be a bumper sticker that read, "In the game of life, the one who dies with the most toys wins." How sad it is that many live by this philosophy. Sadder still is the fact that they can never seem to get enough. It's like the covetous man who was asked, "How much money is enough?" To this he replied, "It's always one dollar more than I have." Saddest of all is the fact that the love of money seduces people from the faith, pierces them through with many sorrows and ultimately drowns them in destruction and perdition.

Writing by Divine inspiration, the apostle Paul gave the wisest of instruction in regard to handling money. "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." (I Timothy 6:8). "Charge them that are rich in this world, that
they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in
the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;
That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to
distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for
themselves a good foundation against the time to come,
that they may lay hold on eternal life." (I Timothy
6:17-19).

Love of money is a forbidden love. It leads one to
worship the "almighty" dollar rather than the Almighty
God.

**Love of the Praises of Men**

This love is forbidden because it seeks to please men
rather than God. We find an example of this type of love in
some of the chief Jewish rulers in the first century. John
12:43-44 says of them, "Nevertheless among the chief
rulers also many believed on him; but because of the
Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put
out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men
more than the praise of God." These rulers were so
concerned about being honored by their fellow Jews that
they would not stand up for Jesus.

As with the other forbidden loves, we cannot hold this
love for praises of men and still have a love for God. The
one chokes out the other. When we want men to honor and
glorify us and are willing to pay any price to receive their
accolades, we readily sacrifice God's truth and our
principles. Love for God is thus destroyed. These two
loves cannot co-exist in a person's life.

In Matthew 6:1-18 Jesus contrasts proper actions with
the actions of the hypocrites of that time. He talks about
almsgiving and prayer and fasting. He gave instruction to
do those things to be seen and heard of God, not of men.

There is a haunting refrain in these words of Jesus in
Matthew 6. When He speaks of the hypocrites who gave and prayed and fasted just so that they could hear men praise them, He says, "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."

Without question, the encouraging and complimentary words we receive from men are very uplifting, but can you imagine having these compliments and words of praise as your only reward? When you stand before the Lord in judgment you hear Him say, "You have already had all the reward you are going to get. You will miss out on eternal rest and peace. You will not be permitted to gather around my throne with the saints. You wanted the praises of men. That's what you got."

How can we begin to compare the worth of the praises of men to the glories of heaven? Yet if we love these praises, they are all we are ever going to receive. Heaven will be out of the question for us.

How earnestly must we strive to imitate the apostle Paul who wrote in I Thessalonians 2:4, "even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." In Galatians 1:10 he said, "for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

Loving God means loving His truth and loving His truth means standing up for it, regardless of how unpopular that stand may be. This brings unending reward. Loving the praises of men means compromising whatever needs to be compromised for the sake of making people happy. Oddly enough, one never seems able to please everyone so to strive to do so is an exercise in futility and, to top it all off, it causes one to lose his soul.

Inordinate Love For Self

Some love for oneself is necessary. Jesus said in Matthew 22:39 that we are to love our neighbors as
ourselves. In Ephesians 5:28,29 Paul gave instruction to husbands to love their wives as their own bodies. "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." This type of love causes one to love his soul and to have respect for his physical body.

In contrast to this is an inordinate self-love. This has one putting his will ahead of everyone else's, including God's. The offspring of this forbidden love are vanity and pride, two highly destructive traits (Proverbs 16:18).

Jesus made it clear that in order for one to be His disciple, he must be willing to put all earthly ties in a distant second place behind the bond with Him. In fact, in Luke 14:26, as He was discussing the need for a person to put Him above father, mother, wife, brothers and sisters, He added that one must hate his own life also or he cannot be a disciple of Christ. "To hate" there means to "love less." As we are to love Christ above all earthly relationships, so are we also to love Him and His will above our very selves. This means that we are to be willing to confess Him under any circumstances, even under the threat of death (Matthew 10:32,33), as many of the first century Christians did.

Inordinate self-love is the exact opposite of self-denial. The one who denies self and adheres to the Lord's will shall find the Lord confessing his name before the Father. The one who loves self and refuses to surrender himself to the Lord will find Jesus denying him before the Father.

**Conclusion**

The loves mentioned in this chapter are forbidden because they are destructive. They stand opposed to love for God, the love that leads to salvation.

There is no fence straddling when it comes to the
subject of love. Either we love God and demonstrate that love by our obedience to His Word or else we have these forbidden loves, each one demonstrated in its own unique way and each way in violation of God's will, ultimately leading to eternal punishment in hell.

**Exercise Your Mind**

**TRUE OR FALSE**
1. T - F: Every type of love is good and right and pleasing to God.
2. T - F: To say that we should not love the world is to say that we should not love our fellow man.
3. T - F: Money is the root of all evil.
4. T - F: We must please God rather than men.
5. T - F: To be Jesus' disciple, a person must put the Lord's will above his own.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE**
1. The Bible shows that love is: A) Always destructive; B) Sometimes destructive; C) Always good and right.
2. Love of the world is defined as: A) Loving the souls of men; B) Loving nature and all the rest of God's creation; C) Wanting the pleasures of life to the extent that this desire chokes out any love for God.
3. The world and everything in it: A) Is passing away; B) Is eternal; C) Offers rewards greater than the rewards of heaven.
4. Those who have a love for money: A) Never seem to be able to get enough; B) Are very benevolent; C) Can faithfully serve God and have this love both at the same time.
5. Those who strive to receive the praises of men: A) Enjoy the greatest of rewards; B) Will find out in Judgment that they have already had their reward; C) Are tremendous examples of Christians and should be imitated.

FILL IN THE BLANKS
1. "No man can serve two ________________; for either he will ______________ the and ______________ the other; or else he will ______________ to the one and ______________ the other. Ye cannot serve ______________ and ______________." 
2. "Ye ______________ and ______________, know ye not that the ________________ of the ______________ is ________________ with God?" whosoever ________________ will be a ________________ of the ________________ is the ________________ of God." 
3. "But they that will be ________________ fall into ________________ and a snare; and into many ________________ and hurtful ________________, which ________________ men in ________________ and ________________. For the love of ________________ is the root of all ________________; which while some ________________ after, they have ________________ from the ________________, and ________________ themselves through with many ________________." 
4. "Take __________; and beware of ________________; for a man's ________________ consisteth not in the ________________ of the ________________ which he possesseth." 
5. "And having ________________ and ________________ let us be therewith ________________."
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Name some forbidden loves that are not mentioned in the chapter. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. Is wanting some things such as a nice house, good clothes, etc. wrong in and of itself? Explain your answer. ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. Why is it impossible to love and serve both God and worldly pleasure? ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

4. Why are the rewards of heaven of greater value than the rewards of earth? ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

5. What are some ways in which a person might manifest a love for money? ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
6. The person who loves money feels that he can never get enough. What is the danger involved in this? 
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

7. Discuss the results of a love of money as listed in I Timothy 6:9. _________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

8. What should be our attitude toward money? In what ways can we use it for good? ____________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. What would cause us to want the praises of men more than the praise of God? _________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

10. Is it always wrong for us to accept the praises and awards that men give? Explain your answer. ________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

11. Why is it not possible to please everybody? ________
________________________________________________________________________
12. How do we please God? _______________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

13. Do you agree or disagree with the statement, "Some love for oneself is necessary"? Explain your answer.
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

14. What are the dangers of vanity and pride? _________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

15. Is there ever a situation in which we should put ourselves before the Lord? Explain your answer. _____
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." ___________________________
Chapter Twelve
Mistaken "Love"

Memory Work:
"But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." (John 5:42).

Mistaken "Love"?

Just as in the last chapter, we are dealing here with a concept totally foreign to the minds of many. How could anything that wears the name "love" be wrong? How could it be possible for us to think something is love when in fact it is not?

To many in the world, something is only wrong if it hurts them personally. Otherwise, they sanction and encourage it, regardless of Biblical or even societal principles that action may violate. Contrary to their belief, the standard for right or wrong is not that which does or does not harm them. The ultimate standard is God's Word, for by it we shall all be judged (John 12:48). Consequently, if the Bible says there are forbidden loves and mistaken loves, it must be so. God inspired His Word completely so that it came to man without even the slightest hint of error (II Timothy 3:16; Psalm 19:7). There are actions and feelings that man calls love that in fact do not even remotely resemble the Bible's definition of this tremendous term.

"Love" That Rejects God's Will

In the fifth chapter of John we find Jesus engaging in one of several confrontations that He had with the Jews. The Savior had healed a man on the Sabbath and had also made the statement, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5:17). This raised the ire of the Jews "because
he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." (John 5:18).

Responding to His detractors, Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." (John 5:39-42).

Statements such as this cut many of the Jews to the heart. "How dare he suggest that we do not love God. We are Abraham's children and Jehovah is our God. We love and serve Him alone." This is what they thought, but they were sadly mistaken about their love for God.

Jesus told them to look into the Word. They thought they loved God. They thought they had eternal life. But if they had really loved God then they would have accepted Jesus' proofs that He was the Christ. The law of Moses prophesied His coming. Did they believe the law of Moses? Did they love God and His Word enough to accept it? No, they did not. If they had had the love of God in them, they would have recognized and followed Jesus. Instead, they hated and eventually murdered Him. No doubt they firmly felt that they loved God, but theirs was actually a mistaken love.

There are many men and women today who are walking in the steps of these Jews. They profess a love for God. They proudly call themselves Christians but all the while they hold to their man-made traditions, to their creed books and to their denominational dogmas. They may indeed search the scriptures, but they look at God's Book through glasses that reflect their biases. They do not give it a fair study. They refuse to see the contradictions between their teachings and the Bible. They think they have eternal
life. They feel that they love God.

In Matthew 7:21-23 Jesus indicated that there will be a host of souls in Judgment who will claim Him as their Lord and will profess they were followers of His. The Lord made it clear that the litmus test in that day will be, "Did you do my Father's will?"

Regardless of the magnitude of love we might profess for God, the proof of our love is in our willingness to humble ourselves to His will. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," Jesus said. (John 14:15). Again, "If a man love me, he will keep my words...He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." (John 14:23,24). Further still, "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him." (I John 2:5). The person who hears the truth but is unwilling to surrender himself in obedience to it for whatever reason may shout from the rooftops that he loves God, but his is a mistaken love.

**Love or Lust?**

The soap operas and romance novels frequently portray a wife being swept off her feet by another man or a husband being rejuvenated via an extramarital affair. (The term "extra-marital affair" is used only in an accommodative sense. The Bible calls such acts of immorality "adultery.")

It is indeed tragic that such things are normally placed in the category of love. The wife will tell her husband, "I'm divorcing you because I love another man." Friends and family will give this as the reason for the breakup of the marriage: "He fell in love with someone else."

Perhaps in one sense this could be called love, but only in the sense that it is one of those forbidden loves. The Bible commands husband and wife to stay together and be
faithful to one another for life (Matthew 19:4-6). Adultery falls into the category of love for the world and is therefore a sin.

It is clear that adultery is a mistaken love. No matter how much a man or woman may think they love someone other than their spouse, theirs is a mistaken love. In fact, it would most accurately be labeled "lust."

Bible love, as it is to be maintained in the home, has the husband and wife committed to their vows. Lust on the other hand, prompts one to desire and pursue anyone who suits his or her liking. Lust is not restrained by Bible principles and morals. Its end is punishment (Galatians 5:16-21).

Don't allow yourself to be drawn into the world's concept of love. An adulterous relationship may be labeled love by the world, but it is a mistaken love. It will destroy your marriage, cause your family untold heartache and it will lead you into eternal damnation.

"Love" that Does Not Act

Here is a point that has been made again and again in this volume. For love to be the kind of love that pleases God, it must take action. To merely say, "I love you" is not sufficient. Only those words supported by action will find approval in the eyes of God.

The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew is a most impressive one when it comes to the subject of the Judgment and preparation for it. Therein we read two parables concerning our need for preparation; one about ten virgins and another about three men with various amounts of money. As the chapter closes we find painted for us a picture of the Judgment scene.

If you will notice very carefully you will see that in Matthew 25, all of the people who suffered punishment did
so because of a lack of obedience. We often call this the sin of omission as opposed to a sin of commission in which a person commits something that God has specifically forbidden.

No doubt the five foolish virgins thought they were right in what they did. The one talent man thought he was right. The damned in Judgment saw themselves as right in life. They would all have professed a love for God, but theirs was and will be considered a mistaken love. They did not act.

Many in Judgment will say that they love God and that they have always loved God. But did they show this love? Some have never visited the sick, helped the needy, shown compassion to the downtrodden. True, perhaps they never committed adultery or lied or stole, but still they are guilty of the sin of "do nothing." Theirs is a mistaken love because, while they professed to love, they never did show it.

Compromising "Love"

The word "compromise" is itself not a bad word. There are times when a little compromise, a little give and take is necessary, but this is never true when it applies to God's truth. Solomon counseled, "Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom and instruction and understanding." (Proverbs 23:23).

It has been said that he who does not stand for anything soon falls for everything. So much of what has already been said in this book could be incorporated into this point but to avoid redundancy this will not be done. To be brief, if we say we love and yet refuse to take a stand for God's Word, to defend it and boldly proclaim it without fear or favor, we have only a mistaken love. If out of a desire to never say anything "negative" we allow sin to go
unchecked, we may claim to love but we are mistaken.

It is impossible for me to love you any more than to want you to go to heaven and to teach you God's truth and encourage you to obey it. If I water it down or change it, I do not truly love you or God. I may say I do but I am mistaken and I have harmed both you and myself more than either of us can imagine.

**Conclusion**

It is possible for one to claim to have love and yet be mistaken. How do we know that we have real love? Don't rely on feelings for the answer. Don't try to fit your love into the world's standards. True love, the kind that is pleasing to God, the kind that is patterned after the love of our Lord, is defined and described only in the pages of the Bible. Don't be mistaken about love or else it will be the biggest mistake you will ever make for it will take you away from God.

**Exercise Your Mind**

**TRUE OR FALSE**

1. T - F: It is possible for one to think that he has love and yet be mistaken.
2. T - F: Some people consider something to be wrong only if it hurts them personally.
3. T - F: Jesus taught that obeying God has nothing to do with loving Him.
4. T - F: Bible love as maintained in the home has the husband and wife committed to their vows.
5. T - F: It is not necessary for love to be shown.
MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. The standard for right or wrong is: A) Each person's feelings; B) What the majority of the world believes to be right or wrong; C) God's Word.
2. When the Jews to whom Jesus spoke in John 5 searched the scriptures: A) They thought they found eternal life for themselves but were mistaken; B) They investigated them carefully without any bias; C) They saw clearly that Jesus was the promised Messiah.
3. In the Day of Judgment: A) Everyone will be saved regardless of how they lived; B) Only those who obeyed God's Word will be saved; C) Everyone who on earth said, "Lord, Lord" will be saved.
4. Adultery is the result of: A) Lust; B) True love; C) Faithfulness to the Word of God.
5. Compromising the truth is: A) Necessary in order to spare people's feelings; B) One of the best ways to save men's souls; C) An act of mistaken love.

FILL IN THE BLANKS
1. "My _______ worketh hitherto, and I ________."  
2. "Search the ________; for in them ye ________; ye have ______________ life: and they are they which _________________ of me. And ye will not _______________ to me, that ye might have ______. I receive not ______________ from men. But I ________________ you, that ye have not the _______________ of ______________ in you."  
3. "If ye ______________ me, ______________ my ______________."  
4. "But whoso ______________ his ______________, in him verily is the _______________ of God _______________; hereby ______________ we that we are ______________ him."
5. "________ the truth and __________ it not; also ___________ and ___________ and ___________."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
1. What are some other mistaken loves? ____________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________

2. Why are man's feelings not a sufficient standard for determining right and wrong? ____________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________

3. What keeps people from being willing to give up their error and obey the truth? ____________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________

4. Why is it so important that we study and obey God's Word? ____________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________

5. How have man-made traditions and creed books hurt the world? ____________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
   ___________________________________________
6. Why does the world want to cover up and excuse sins like adultery? ________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

7. What effects are marital unfaithfulness and divorce having on our world? Our families? The church? _____
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

8. Read II Samuel 11-12 and discuss how lust harmed king David and his family. ______________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

9. What is the sin of "do nothing"? Why is it such a tragic sin? ________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

10. Of what worth is a love that does not act? __________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

11. Will God save those who merely say they have love? Why or why not? _____________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
12. In what areas is it permissible to compromise? ______

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

13. Why is it wrong to compromise the truth? ______

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

14. Are there situations in which the truth not only can be compromised but should be compromised? Explain your answer. _________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

15. Why is mistaken love one of the biggest mistakes we could ever make? _____________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." _____________________________
Chapter Thirteen
Famous Loves

Memory Work:
"Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love." (II John 3).

The Power of Example
Countless volumes could be written about the power of an example. Concerning the rearing of children, Albert Schweitzer said, "There are but three ways to teach children. The first is by example. The second is by example. The third is by example." Longfellow reminds us that each of us can ourselves be examples for others to follow:

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.

The Lord recognized the power of example. The Bible exalts Jesus as the One after whom we are to pattern our lives. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." (I Peter 2:21). The word translated "example" means "to write under." It was used in the context of a teacher instructing a child to learn to write. The teacher would write at the top of a page and the child was to copy beneath what the teacher had penned.

In I Corinthians 10:6 Paul, writing of the events that occurred in the lives of the Israelites who wandered through the wilderness, stated, "Now these things were our
examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." In verse 11 he adds, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews lists several great figures of faith. Each person therein serves as an outstanding example of living faith.

On and on we could go establishing the fact that God laced His Word with examples, both good and bad. We have examples of faith, examples of unrighteousness, examples of wisdom, examples of rebellion. Inherent in each one is a powerful lesson concerning either how the Lord wants us to be or does not want us to be.

A search through the Sacred Scriptures turns up men and women who were exemplary in their love. Jesus, of course, was the ultimate example in this and in all areas. A discussion of His love for us has already been presented in another chapter. For this chapter, we turn our attention to some other outstanding examples of love in order that we might see love in action so that we ourselves will learn to adhere to the pattern that has been laid out for us in the Bible.

An Example of Love For a Friend

Solomon wrote, "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly…" (Proverbs 18:24). In the Bible there is no greater example of friendship between mere men than the friendship of David and Jonathan.

It is sadder than sad that those bent on wrestling the scriptures to their own destruction have taken the relationship of David and Jonathan and perverted it in an attempt to promote homosexuality. A discussion of the falseness of this view as well as a demonstration of the
The sinfulness of homosexuality is too lengthy for this book. Suffice it to say that David and Jonathan as righteous men of God were not involved with one another sexually. They were, however, dear and loving friends.

The depth of their friendship for one another is seen in many statements. I Samuel 18:1 says, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." "He loved him as his own soul" is said again in I Samuel 18:3 and I Samuel 20:17. David's lament for his fallen friend also bespeaks the great love the two had for one another (II Samuel 2:25-27).

David and Jonathan showed their love for one another. Their friendship was sacrificial. Jonathan gave David some of his personal belongings (I Samuel 18:4). Beyond that, Jonathan risked his life to protect his friend (I Samuel 20:33). He had said, "Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee." (I Samuel 20:4). True friends are willing to share with one another, willing to help one another regardless of the personal cost involved. Their thoughts are not on their own desires but on the needs of the other.

The friendship of David and Jonathan was also characterized by devotion. They made a covenant with one another (I Samuel 18:3). Later, David made a promise to Jonathan that he would care for his family after Jonathan was dead (I Samuel 20:11-17).

The friendship of these two great men was an enduring one. Long after Jonathan had died, David remembered their bond. Jonathan was not around to see if David would carry out the promise he had made concerning Jonathan's family. Lesser men would have considered this a good reason for breaking the promise. "After all," some would reason. "He'll never know." But because of the enduring nature of his friendship with Jonathan, David kept his
promise and took good care of Jonathan's crippled son, Mephibosheth (II Samuel 9).

This great example of how to love friends teaches us that to be a true friend is to be sacrificial and devoted, though of course never to the point of exalting one's friend above God. The result of this kind of friendship is encouragement, strength and comfort that endures throughout life.

**An Example of Love For Family**

An entire book of the Bible is devoted to telling about fair Ruth. The love that she had for her second husband, Boaz must have been on a par with that which she had for her first husband before his decease. In like manner, the love that Boaz returned to her is exemplary.

Ruth had a love that was not limited to her husband or her children. Her love extended to those we commonly refer to as "in-laws." Much too often the in-laws are the forgotten family. Husband wants to spend time only with his parents. Wife wants to spend time only with her parents. No wonder the subject of in-laws is one that is often the cause of trouble in a marriage.

Ruth especially loved her mother-in-law. She was brought to Judaism through the efforts of Naomi. She did not want to leave her side even though she knew that Naomi would have no more sons for her to marry. Said Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." (Ruth 1:16-17).

For some odd reason, the mother-in-law is the subject of ridicule in our day. Songs and jokes about her show her
to be a woman much maligned and even despised by some. Ruth is held up here as an example of love for family because she was able to love all of her family. She did not pick and choose which family members she would love and which ones she would despise. Naomi was only an in-law in name to her. In practice, Ruth considered her as much a part of her family as her own mother.

When a person marries, he or she takes on more than just a spouse. They are enlarging their family by as many as are related to their new wife or husband. A person must learn to love his new family as well as the one in which he grew up and the one that he and his spouse are establishing. Ruth showed how to love the entire family. She set a marvelous example for us in this.

An Example of Love For Fellow Christians

The apostle Paul had a love for all mankind. He wanted souls to be saved. He described this as his heart's desire and prayer to God (Romans 10:1). Concerning the unbelieving Jews of his day he wrote, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Romans 9:2-3). In this love for the souls of all men, Paul was exemplary, but his love for his brethren in Christ is the subject of this section.

Paul constantly thought of the needs of his brethren. He said his care (concern) for the church burdened him daily (II Corinthians 11:28). In II Corinthians 11:29 he said, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" In Philippians 1:23-24 he spoke of his longing to go home and be with the Lord, to cast off the shackles of this troublesome existence and exchange them for eternal rest in heaven. But Paul knew that the brethren needed him. They needed his teaching. They needed his influence. They
needed his encouragement and strength. Thus, while he continued to long for heaven, he busied himself on earth by doing whatever he could to exhort his brethren in Christ to greater faithfulness.

Paul dearly loved the church. He would have given his life to help fellow Christians. He sacrificed greatly. He traveled thousands of miles by boat and on foot. Sometimes he traveled just for the purpose of strengthening the brethren (Acts 14:21,22; 15:36).

Nowhere is Paul's love for the church seen more clearly than in his first epistle to the church in Thessalonica. He had been run out of Thessalonica and the entire country when the church there was in its infancy (Acts 17:1-15). He had a burning concern for the welfare of those brethren. Were they being faithful? Had they allowed Satan's ministers to throw them off course? Paul wanted to know.

Read I Thessalonians 2:17-3:11. You will feel the burning within Paul's heart. You will see the joy he experienced when Timothy brought him the report of the faithfulness of the church in Thessalonica. He wrapped himself up so much in the church that when he heard the good report he spoke of how comforting it was to know of their faithfulness. In I Thessalonians 3:8 he stated, "For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord."

Paul so very badly wanted people to go to heaven. He desired deep within his innermost self that the church remain strong and faithful to God. He is an example of tremendous love for fellow Christians. Do we have as much concern and love for the church as Paul did?

**Conclusion**

With the apostle Paul I now say as he said in Hebrews 11:32. "And what shall I say more, for the time would forbid me to tell of ____________" (fill in the blank). The
Bible gives us numerous marvelous examples of love, each one being a person who first of all had an exemplary love for God.

II Timothy 3:16 says that the Word of God is profitable. It teaches us, reproves us, corrects us and instructs us in righteousness. The Bible and the Bible alone is capable of making us mature, completely furnished unto all good works (II Timothy 3:17).

Love is central to the Christian life. Go to the Bible to learn what real love is. Go to the Bible to learn how to develop real love in your own life and then pray that you will "increase more and more." (I Thessalonians 4:10).

Exercise Your Mind

TRUE OR FALSE
1. T - F: There are many lessons we can learn from examples.
2. T - F: David and Jonathan were sacrificial and devoted friends.
3. T - F: In-laws should not be considered a part of a person's family.
4. T - F: Paul frequently thought of his brethren in Christ and did what he could to encourage and strengthen them.
5. T - F: We must study the Bible to know what real love is.

MULTIPLE CHOICE
1. Jesus is not only our Savior, He is also: A) Our friend; B) Our example; C) Both A and B.
2. The Bible: A) Is full of examples, both good and bad; B) Holds up only a few people as examples; C) Never uses the word "example."
3. David and Jonathan: A) Were involved in an immoral relationship; B) Had the best and purest of friendships; C) Only put on a show of love when in actuality they despised one another.

4. In this day and age, the mother-in-law: A) Is highly respected by all; B) Is never due any respect; C) Is often much maligned and even despised.

5. For his brethren, Paul: A) Would only give what they gave him; B) Would give his very life; C) Cared nothing at all.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. "For even _____________ were ye ___________; because ____________ also _______________ for us, leaving us an _______________, that ye should ____________ his steps."

2. "Now these things were our ________________, to the _________ we should not ___________ after _______________ things, as they also _____________."

3. "The ________________ of ______________ was __________ with the soul of _________________, and Jonathan _________ him as his ____________ soul."

4. "Entreat me not to ___________ thee, or to return from _______________ after thee: for whither thou ____________, I will go; and where thou ____________, I will lodge: thy _____________ shall be my people, and thy _________________ my God: Where thou ________________, will I die, and there will I be ________________: the ______________ do so to me, and more also, if aught but _________________ part thee and me."

5. "Who is ______________, and I am not ___________? who is ______________, and I ____________ not?"
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is teaching by example such a powerful form of instruction?

2. Name some other good examples of whom we read in the Bible.

3. Name some bad examples mentioned in the Bible.

4. What are some of the benefits of having close friends?

5. Discuss the description of David and Jonathan's friendship as given in the latter part of I Samuel 18:1.

6. Why did David keep his promise to Jonathan even after Jonathan's death?
7. What did Solomon mean when he said, "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly?" 

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

8. Which should a person put first in his life, his friends or God? Explain your answer. ____________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. If a friend turns to a life of sin, what would be the loving thing for us to do to or for him? ____________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

10. Why do some people have trouble getting along with their in-laws? ________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

11. How many people in our family does God expect us to love? ________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
12. Why did Paul have such great concern for lost souls? Why did he have such great concern for the welfare of the church?

13. How can we develop love for our brethren in Christ?

14. What are some ways in which we can show love for our brethren in Christ?

15. What should be our greatest goal in life?

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES
Where is the following Bible verse located?

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."
Appendix

God's Plan of Salvation

The Bible teaches that you and I are sinners (Romans 3:10,23). As such, we are displeasing to God (Psalm 5:5). Our sins, like a brick wall, separate us from Jehovah (Isaiah 59:1,2). They separate us from the One who is going to judge this world, the One who has the power to cast us into eternal hell or take us into eternal glory in heaven at Judgment (Matthew 7:21-23; 25:31-46).

Certainly all of us desire to avoid the punishment of hell and to go to heaven, but how can we accomplish this desire if we are sinners who stand separated from God? Were it not for the grace of God, we could not accomplish it at all (Matthew 19:25,26; Titus 2:11).

Ephesians 2:8 states, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." That "gift of God" is "eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23). Prompted by His perfect love, God gave His only begotten Son, Jesus the Christ, as a sacrifice for our sins (John 3:16). The penalty for sin has to be paid. Because of God's grace and love, He does not want us to have to pay that penalty (though we hasten to mention that God's perfect justice demands that those who do not obey the Lord be punished – II Thessalonians 1:7-9). The blood of His Son that was shed on a cross on the hill of Calvary nearly 2000 years ago paid the price for sin.

Our sins CAN be forgiven. We CAN be pure in the sight of God IF we will take of the soul-saving blood of Christ that is made available to every sinner. But how do we partake of this blood? God's grace saves us, but His grace alone does not save. It is by His grace that everyone has the opportunity to be saved and it is by His grace that
some will be saved, but not everyone will be saved in eternity (Matthew 7:13,14). Only those who obey the Lord's Gospel and thus take of the blood of Christ will have the hope of eternal life (Revelation 1:5).

Again referring to Ephesians 2:8, we learn that faith plays a part in our salvation. By His grace, God provides salvation but **WE** must do something to receive it. We must believe (have faith) not only in Him (Hebrews 11:6), but also in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (John 8:24). **BUT**, faith alone is not sufficient to save us from our sins (James 2:24). James 2:19 says that the devils believe, but they are not saved. Faith that is not put into action is a dead faith that is useless (James 2:20).

The New Testament very clearly tells us how to act on our faith so as to secure the blessing of forgiveness of sins. With the faith that we gained from God's Word, the Bible, firmly planted in our hearts and minds (Romans 10:17), we learn from the Bible of our sinful state. Knowing that we don't want to continue our lives as lost sinners, the next logical step for us to take is repentance. To repent means to change one's direction, to turn from one's devotion to Satan and turn to a devotion to God. Jesus stated that we all absolutely **MUST** repent (Luke 13:3). Peter indicated the same in Acts 2:38 and 3:19.

Faith and repentance are still not enough to secure Divine forgiveness. In the New Testament book of Acts, sometimes called the book of conversions, we have an example of a believing, penitent sinner making a public confession of Christ. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," he declared. (Acts 8:37). Jesus had earlier stated that confession of belief in Him was necessary (Matthew 10:32,33). The apostle Paul later wrote that confession is made unto (in order to receive) salvation, "for the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."
Faith, repentance and confession still fall short of the blood of Christ. II Timothy 2:10 says that salvation is **IN** Christ Jesus. The alien sinner has to get **INTO** Christ somehow, but nowhere does the Bible say that we can believe into Christ. Nowhere does Sacred Scripture tell us that we can repent into Christ. The Divine record contains not one statement that says we can confess into Christ. How then can we get into Christ and receive the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb of God (Hebrews 9:13,14)?

One passage of the Bible answers this question for us. Galatians 3:27 speaks of people who had been baptized (immersed) **INTO** Christ. Verse 28 speaks of them being **IN** Christ Jesus. They got there by virtue of their immersion into Christ.

The absolute necessity of immersion to be saved is taught in several New Testament passages (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3ff; I Peter 3:21). This immersion is to be the one authorized by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in God's Word (Matthew 28:19). It is immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ.

Faith, repentance, confession and immersion for the remission of sins form man's part of being saved. These are not man-made works, for no one shall be saved by works that man creates (Ephesians 2:9). These are acts of obedience that God has mandated in His Word, acts that we **MUST** do if we want to break down the wall of sin that stands between us and Him.

Following these steps of salvation and rising up from the waters of immersion, not only is one a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17), but he is then a member of the Lord's church, the one and **ONLY** one Jesus promised to build
(Matthew 16:18). The Lord adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47).

His church is not a denomination but is the one body into which all who want to be saved in eternity must come (Ephesians 1:22,23; 4:4-6; 5:23; II Timothy 2:1). Only those who have obeyed the Gospel and thus become members of the Lord's church can be called Christians (Acts 11:26).

Won't you, dear reader, read the scriptures that have been cited, examine them carefully and let them sink deeply into your heart? Won't you then muster the courage to obey the Lord? Your sins will be washed away, you will become a servant of the Lord (Romans 6:17,18) and a part of His family (Ephesians 3:10-15) and you will have the hope of eternal life (Titus 1:1,2; I John 2:25), a hope that will become reality in Judgment if you will only continue to follow the Word of God exclusively all the days of your Christian life on earth (II Timothy 4:7,8; Hebrews 10:36).
This book has been designed to explore the Bible's teaching on the subject of love. It considers what God's Word has to say on a variety of matters regarding this vital topic, from God's love for man to some examples of forbidden and mistaken "loves." Each chapter ends with practical exercises and challenging discussion questions designed to lead the reader into a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the love that God has for us and the type of love that we are to have for Him and for one another.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (I Corinthians 13:13)

Michael Gifford has been preaching and teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ for 39 years. He is the author of the books, The Greatest of These, The Essence of Living Faith, Hope - Anchor of the Soul, In the Lap of God - Comfort from the Psalms, and A Walk with Grief, as well as numerous articles that can be found online at www.SoundBibleStudies.com. He has preached in located works in Georgia and Alabama, has hosted and co-hosted Bible-based radio and television programs, and is currently an instructor for the Georgia School of Preaching and Biblical Studies. He holds the Bachelor of Arts degree in Bible from Freed-Hardeman University and the Master of Arts in Religion degree in Counseling from Harding Graduate School of Religion. He is married to the former Emily Waites. They have six children and seven grandchildren. Michael and Emily reside in Dacula, Georgia and are members of the church of Christ in Buford, Georgia.

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