



Love

## BOLD LOVE

DAN ALLENDER

(1 Corinthians 13)

**B**old love is the courageous, costly gift of doing good to those who sin against us. When we give that gift, we get a taste of the character of God. Love is forgiveness with feet, the kind that moves toward the one who harmed us, willingly serving that person for the sake of God. Bold love is the active, unnerving pursuit of the offender to wisely and winsomely incite reconciliation by exposing the need for confession, repentance, and restoration.

### DESCRIBING LOVE

First Corinthians 13 describes several characteristics of love: "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" (1 Cor. 13:4-8).

Paul also described several characteristics of love in Romans 12:9-21. He wrote, "Let love be without hypocrisy. . . . Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love." In his description, Paul was not concerned about being systematic, but he romped around the concept of love with exuberance and intensity. He fleshed out the evidence of a heart that is neither hypocritical nor weak. Love is passionate; it is joyful and laughs; it suffers and weeps. It is neither vengeful nor demanding; indeed, love humbles those who injure, by doing good. Bold love is doing good to those who do harm, in order to destroy evil and redeem the heart. These are love's remarkable qualities as described in this passage:

- Bold love is fervent in spirit and service, strong and intense.
- Bold love is joyful, patient, prayerful, generous, and hospitable.

- Bold love blesses persecutors, refusing revenge.
- Bold love is compassionate and humble.
- Bold love is peaceable.
- Bold love overcomes and destroys evil.

The Romans passage begins, however, with a force of energy that is disturbing. Love hates. In order to truly love without hypocrisy, we must "abhor what is evil" (Rom 12:9). To love without hypocrisy, to abhor evil, means to not be polluted and divided. It is not hypocritical to both love and hate, as long as we hold onto that which is good as if it were a life preserver in the middle of the ocean. We love good; we hate evil.

### DOING GOOD

We are not merely to forgive others by ignoring or letting go of the harm; we are called to serve those who have violated us. We are to provide them with their most basic needs. We are to give them bread and water. The whole context implies that the core "basic need" is to be pursued in spite of our needs, emotions, or sin. We are to offer to everyone (and anyone) a taste of passionate empathy, humble care, hospitality, and joyful generosity.

Doing good offers others the food that their souls crave and would die without. But love is far more than merely being nice

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or offering insipid, dutiful care. Paul ties doing good to pouring burning coals onto someone's head. This means that we are not to flee from or fight against those who have sinned against us. Instead, we are to unnerve them by disarming them with bold love.

### **DESTROYING EVIL**

Love is God's weapon to destroy the power of darkness. We live in a day where we think our only viable weapon against evil in our world is to expose it, attack it, and legislate against it. Those who advocate the violence of abortion, for example, are sometimes hunted down, picketed, harassed, even harmed by Christians. Those who advocate the homosexual lifestyle are often derided and blamed for the sufferings of AIDS. When AIDS was spreading in the mid-1980s, many Christians said that it was a plague from God, the homosexuals' deserved punishment for sin. Whether justifiable or not, these attacks do not show bold love, nor do they really destroy evil. Such adversarial attitudes and actions merely foster Christian self-righteousness.

Bold love, however, destroys evil by empathy. It destroys evil by hospitality. It destroys evil by generously offering care for what is needed. It is that very power we have from God *not* to succumb to the provocation of evil that surprises and shames those who harm us or others. Their profound surprise that their evil has not been repaid with evil opens their hearts to redemption.

### **REDEEMING THE HEART**

Love offers a taste of the character of God. God is strong and tender. Our love is to be equal parts strength and tenderness. Strength disarms false power; tenderness invites the heart to rest when it is defenseless. Strength reveals that God is holy and hates sin; tenderness reveals God's grace

and reconciliation. The goal of love is to give a taste of God. Bold love seeks reconciliation with all as far as it is possible for us to go. Paul implicitly acknowledges that we will not be able to be at peace with everyone, but if there is any room to move toward reconciliation, then we are to do so. The result is changed hearts—ours and theirs.

### **FURTHER MEDITATION:**

Other passages to study about the issue of love include:

- > Proverbs 3:12; 10:12
- > Matthew 5:44; 22:34-40
- > Mark 12:28-34
- > Luke 10:26-28
- > John 13:34, 35; 15:13
- > Romans 5:5
- > Galatians 5:13-15
- > Ephesians 5:21-32
- > 1 Peter 4:8
- > 1 John 4:7-12

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To Learn More: Turn to the key passage note on love at 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 on page 1509. See also the personality profile of Hosea on page 1127.

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the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

<sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. <sup>28</sup>And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

<sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup>But earnestly desire the best<sup>a</sup> gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

#### THE GREATEST GIFT

**13** Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>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, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>And though I bestow all my

goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned,<sup>4</sup> but have not love, it profits me nothing.

<sup>4</sup>Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; <sup>5</sup>does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; <sup>6</sup>does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

[Love] bears all things,

believes all things, hopes all things,  
endures all things.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

<sup>8</sup>Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part. <sup>10</sup>But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.

<sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. <sup>12</sup>For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in

12:31 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *greater*. 13:3 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *so I may boast*.

#### KEY PASSAGE



Love

### BEARS, BELIEVES, HOPES, ENDURES

(13:1-7)

Following in context after Paul's discussion of the many spiritual gifts in the church is a treatise on the meaning of love. Spiritual gifts ultimately have no value if the gifted person does not treat others with love. What does love look like?

Love . . .

- > *suffers long*, bearing annoyances and inconveniences, not losing its temper.
- > *is kind*, taking the initiative to be considerate and helpful.
- > *does not envy* but rejoices when others succeed.
- > *does not parade itself, is not puffed up* but instead draws others to it.
- > *does not behave rudely* or impolitely but acts in a manner worthy of Christ.
- > *does not seek its own* but always seeks to benefit others.
- > *is not provoked* but will allow differences of opinion in minor matters.
- > *thinks no evil* but makes allowances for people's flaws.
- > *does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth*.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about love on pages 1512, 1513. See also the personality profile of Hosea on page 1127.

Let her put away her harlotries from her sight,

And her adulteries from between her breasts;

<sup>3</sup> Lest I strip her naked  
And expose her, as in the day she was born,  
And make her like a wilderness,  
And set her like a dry land,  
And slay her with thirst.

<sup>4</sup> "I will not have mercy on her children,  
For they *are* the children of harlotry.  
For their mother has played the harlot;  
She who conceived them has behaved shamefully.

For she said, 'I will go after my lovers,  
Who give *me* my bread and my water,  
My wool and my linen,  
My oil and my drink.'

<sup>6</sup> "Therefore, behold,  
I will hedge up your way with thorns,  
And wall her in,  
So that she cannot find her paths.

<sup>7</sup> She will chase her lovers,  
But not overtake them;  
Yes, she will seek them, but not find *them*.

Then she will say,  
'I will go and return to my first husband,  
For then *it was* better for me than now.'

<sup>8</sup> For she did not know  
That I gave her grain, new wine, and oil,  
And multiplied her silver and gold—  
*Which* they prepared for Baal.

<sup>9</sup> "Therefore I will return and take away  
My grain in its time  
And My new wine in its season,

#### PERSONALITY PROFILE



Love

### HOSEA: A LESSON IN LOVE

(HOSEA 1:2-9)

"And they lived happily ever after"—so ends the typical fairy tale. We enjoy stories with fairy tale endings, but in real life "happily ever after" can be an elusive dream.

Hosea's marriage was hardly a "happily ever after" story. God told Hosea, the prophet, to live his prophecies by taking "a wife of harlotry," Gomer (Hos. 1:2). Hosea obeyed, knowing that his heart would be broken through Gomer's unfaithfulness. Eventually, Gomer left Hosea. Next, as another living lesson, God told Hosea to pursue her and buy her back. Again Hosea obeyed and did so, for "fifteen shekels of silver" (Hos. 3:2)—a very cheap price. Hosea not only brought Gomer home, but he continued to love her.

Hosea did all this to illustrate God's incredible love for His people who had committed spiritual adultery by running after other "lovers"—false gods. Despite the people's unfaithfulness, God continued to love them and pursue them in order to bring them home to Him. As He told Hosea, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods" (Hos. 3:1). Hosea's actions illustrated true love, God's love.

Far beyond mere sexual titillation or tingling feelings of excitement, true love is bold, and it lasts through pain and difficulty. It involves commitment and never gives up. The apostle Paul wrote, "Love suffers long . . . does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil . . . bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" (1 Cor. 13:4-8). And that's how God loves us. Just as Hosea bought Gomer back and loved her, so God has bought us and loves us.

In the same way, our love must be committed, bold, and trustworthy. Otherwise, it is not really love at all.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about love on pages 1512, 1513. See also the key passage note at 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 on page 1509.

may eat of it. <sup>20</sup>But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs to the LORD*, while he is unclean, that person shall be cut off from his people. <sup>21</sup>Moreover the person who touches any unclean thing, *such as* human uncleanness, an unclean animal, or any abominable unclean thing,<sup>a</sup> and who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offering that *belongs to the LORD*, that person shall be cut off from his people.' "

#### FAT AND BLOOD MAY NOT BE EATEN

<sup>22</sup>And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>23</sup>"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'You shall not eat any fat, of ox or sheep or goat. <sup>24</sup>And the fat of an animal that dies *naturally*, and the fat of what is torn by wild beasts, may be used in any other way; but you shall by no means eat it. <sup>25</sup>For whoever eats the fat of the animal of which men offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, the person who eats it shall be cut off from his people. <sup>26</sup>Moreover you shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, *whether* of bird or beast. <sup>27</sup>Whoever eats any blood, that person shall be cut off from his people.' "

#### THE PORTION OF AARON AND HIS SONS

<sup>28</sup>Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>29</sup>"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering to the LORD shall bring his offering to the LORD from the sacrifice of his peace offering. <sup>30</sup>His own hands shall bring the offerings made by fire to the LORD. The fat with the breast he shall bring, that the breast may be waved as a wave offering before the LORD. <sup>31</sup>And the priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'. <sup>32</sup>Also the right thigh you shall give to the priest as a heave offering from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. <sup>33</sup>He among the sons of Aaron, who offers the

blood of the peace offering and the fat, shall have the right thigh for *his* part. <sup>34</sup>For the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering I have taken from the children of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and I have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons from the children of Israel by a statute forever.' "

<sup>35</sup>This is the consecrated portion for Aaron and his sons, from the offerings made by fire to the LORD, on the day when Moses presented them to minister to the LORD as priests. <sup>36</sup>The LORD commanded this to be given to them by the children of Israel, on the day that He anointed them, by a statute forever throughout their generations.

<sup>37</sup>This is the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the consecrations, and the sacrifice of the peace offering, <sup>38</sup>which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai, on the day when He commanded the children of Israel to offer their offerings to the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai.

#### AARON AND HIS SONS CONSECRATED

**8** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup>"Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, the anointing oil, a bull as the sin offering, two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread; <sup>3</sup>and gather all the congregation together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting."

<sup>4</sup>So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. And the congregation was gathered together at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. <sup>5</sup>And Moses said to the congregation, "This is what the LORD commanded to be done."

**7:21** <sup>a</sup>Following Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate; Samaritan Pentateuch, Syriac, and Targum read *swarming thing* (compare 5:2).

#### SOUL NOTE



**Just Do It!** (7:37, 38) Talk is cheap. Speaking a commitment is easy, but it is another thing entirely to live out that commitment. Leviticus spells out practical ways by which God's people could express their commitments to Him. The sacrifices were inconvenient and costly, but they underlined the importance of right living. The sacrifices turned words into actions. Believers today live their faith by their actions. The New Testament expresses it like this: "Let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). **Topic: Love**

<sup>6</sup>Then Mo and washed tunic on hi clothed him on him; and woven band ephod on him, and he in the breast his head. Als put the gold LORD had co  
<sup>10</sup>Also Mo anointed the and consecra it on the alta and all its us to consecrate the anointing ed him, to co  
<sup>13</sup>Then Mo tunic on the put hats on th ed Moses.

<sup>14</sup>And he b ing. Then Aa on the head <sup>15</sup>and Moses l and put some around with l And he poure tar, and conse it. <sup>16</sup>Then he entrails, the and the two burned them hide, its flesh fire outside th manded Mos

<sup>18</sup>Then he f ering. And l hands on the killed it. Th around on th pieces; and th trails and the the whole rag rifice to a sw fire to the Lo Moses.

<sup>22</sup>And he b of consecrati their hands of

<sup>6</sup>So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength *lies*, and with what you may be bound to afflict you."

<sup>7</sup>And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

<sup>8</sup>So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them. <sup>9</sup>Now *men were* lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

<sup>10</sup>Then Delilah said to Samson, "Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with."

<sup>11</sup>So he said to her, "If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

<sup>12</sup>Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" And *men were* lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread.

<sup>13</sup>Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with."

And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom"—

<sup>14</sup>So she wove *it* tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom.

<sup>15</sup>Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength

*lies.*" <sup>16</sup>And it came to pass, when she persecuted him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, <sup>17</sup>that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I *have been* a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

<sup>18</sup>When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart." So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. <sup>19</sup>Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him,<sup>a</sup> and his strength left him. <sup>20</sup>And she said, "The Philistines *are* upon you, Samson!" So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.

<sup>21</sup>Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison. <sup>22</sup>However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.

#### SAMSON DIES WITH THE PHILISTINES

<sup>23</sup>Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said:

"Our god has delivered into our hands  
Samson our enemy!"

**16:19** <sup>a</sup>Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint reads *he began to be weak*.

#### SOUL NOTE



**True Love?** (16:15) Samson had lied to Delilah three times, and Delilah had shown three times that she was willing to betray him to the Philistines. "How can you say, 'I love you?'" she asked, when he would not tell her the truth about his strength. Samson lied to Delilah; Delilah lied to Samson and was willing to sell him out for eleven hundred pieces of silver (16:5). Both supposedly were in love with each other. Whatever these two had going on, it was not love. True love "does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth" (1 Cor. 13:6). **Topic: Love**



13 For behold,  
He who forms mountains,  
And creates the wind,  
Who declares to man what his<sup>a</sup> thought  
is,  
And makes the morning darkness,  
Who treads the high places of the  
earth—  
The LORD God of hosts is His name.

#### A LAMENT FOR ISRAEL

**5** Hear this word which I take up against  
you, a lamentation, O house of Israel:

2 The virgin of Israel has fallen;  
She will rise no more.  
She lies forsaken on her land;  
There is no one to raise her up.

<sup>3</sup>For thus says the Lord GOD:

“The city that goes out by a thousand  
Shall have a hundred left,  
And that which goes out by a hundred  
Shall have ten left to the house of  
Israel.”

#### A CALL TO REPENTANCE

<sup>4</sup>For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel:

“Seek Me and live;  
5 But do not seek Bethel,  
Nor enter Gilgal,  
Nor pass over to Beersheba;  
For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,  
And Bethel shall come to nothing.  
6 Seek the LORD and live,  
Lest He break out like fire in the house  
of Joseph,  
And devour it,  
With no one to quench it in Bethel—

7 You who turn justice to wormwood,  
And lay righteousness to rest in the  
earth!”

8 He made the Pleiades and Orion;  
He turns the shadow of death into  
morning  
And makes the day dark as night;  
He calls for the waters of the sea  
And pours them out on the face of the  
earth;  
The LORD is His name.

9 He rains ruin upon the strong,  
So that fury comes upon the fortress.

10 They hate the one who rebukes in the  
gate,  
And they abhor the one who speaks  
uprightly.

11 Therefore, because you tread down the  
poor  
And take grain taxes from him,  
Though you have built houses of hewn  
stone,

Yet you shall not dwell in them;  
You have planted pleasant vineyards,  
But you shall not drink wine from them.  
12 For I know your manifold transgressions  
And your mighty sins:  
Afflicting the just and taking bribes;  
Diverting the poor from justice at the  
gate.

13 Therefore the prudent keep silent at that  
time,  
For it is an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil,  
That you may live;  
So the LORD God of hosts will be with  
you,

4:13 <sup>a</sup>Or His

#### SOUL NOTE



**Bold Love** (5:14, 15) God didn't ignore the Israelites' evil ways or deny what they were doing. Instead, He confronted them through prophets who spoke truth, and with trials designed to encourage the people to return to Him (4:6, 9-11). In all of this, God was showing His love for His own. At times, love must be bold, tough, and willing to speak the truth. People dealing with sin need the light of God's truth. Then, through repentance, they can bask in the warmth of His forgiving love.

**Topic:** Love

<sup>44</sup>Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. <sup>45</sup>And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. <sup>46</sup>I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. <sup>47</sup>And if anyone hears My words and does not believe,<sup>a</sup> I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. <sup>48</sup>He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. <sup>49</sup>For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. <sup>50</sup>And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

#### JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES' FEET

**13** Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

<sup>2</sup>And supper being ended,<sup>a</sup> the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, <sup>3</sup>Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup>rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. <sup>5</sup>After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. <sup>6</sup>Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

<sup>7</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

<sup>8</sup>Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

<sup>9</sup>Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also *my hands and my head!*"

<sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash *his feet*, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." <sup>11</sup>For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

<sup>12</sup>So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup>You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. <sup>14</sup>If I then, *your Lord and Teacher*, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup>For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup>Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master: nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. <sup>17</sup>If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

#### JESUS IDENTIFIES HIS BETRAYER

<sup>18</sup>"I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, '*He who eats bread with Me<sup>a</sup> has lifted up his heel against Me.*'"<sup>b</sup> <sup>19</sup>Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He. <sup>20</sup>Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

<sup>21</sup>When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said:

**12:47** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *keep them*. **13:2** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *And during supper*. **13:18** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *My bread*. <sup>b</sup>Psalms 41:9

#### SOUL NOTE



**A New Commandment** (13:34, 35) God's Law tells people to love one another (Lev. 19:18). Jesus said that He was giving a "new commandment"—to love with a self-sacrificing love. Such love would set His followers apart from the rest of the world, helping them to serve God and build His kingdom. Such love would draw others to the Savior, and it would be the natural response of believers to the One who died for them. As John wrote later in his life, "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). **Topic: Love**

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives another, perishes."

<sup>23</sup>Now there was one of His disciples, named Simon Peter, then he said to Him, "Lord, why do you say this to him? He has given a piece of bread to eat with us."

And having dipped the piece of bread, he said to him, "What do you say to him?"

He said to him, "Buy us a feast, or that he will be poor."

<sup>30</sup>Having received the answer, he then went out immediately.

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

<sup>31</sup>So, when he was glorified, and God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself.

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name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. <sup>27</sup>Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. <sup>28</sup>You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

<sup>29</sup>"And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. <sup>30</sup>I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. <sup>31</sup>But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

#### THE TRUE VINE

**5** "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup>Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away;<sup>a</sup> and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in Me, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

<sup>5</sup>"I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will<sup>a</sup> ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. <sup>8</sup>By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

#### LOVE AND JOY PERFECTED

<sup>9</sup>"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

<sup>11</sup>"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. <sup>12</sup>This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. <sup>15</sup>No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. <sup>17</sup>These things I command you, that you love one another.

#### THE WORLD'S HATRED

<sup>18</sup>"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it* hated you. <sup>19</sup>If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup>Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. <sup>21</sup>But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. <sup>22</sup>If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they

**14:28** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *I said*. **15:2** <sup>a</sup>Or *lifts up*  
**15:7** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *you will*.

#### SOUL NOTE



**Learning to Love (15:12, 13)** Jesus gave two commandments to His followers: "Love Me," and "love each other." He had previously told the Pharisees that these two commandments were the greatest because "on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 22:40). Jesus said that His

followers should love each other as He loved them. So great was that love that Jesus would give His life for them. We are to love others as Jesus loved us. We probably won't have to die for anyone, but we show our great love for others by listening, helping, encouraging, and giving. Christ's humble, sacrificial love is our example. **Topic: Love**

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part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

<sup>13</sup>And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

PROPHECY AND TONGUES

**14** Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. <sup>2</sup>For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. <sup>3</sup>But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. <sup>4</sup>He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. <sup>5</sup>I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for <sup>a</sup>he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

TONGUES MUST BE INTERPRETED

<sup>6</sup>But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you un-

less I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching? <sup>7</sup>Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played? <sup>8</sup>For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle? <sup>9</sup>So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air. <sup>10</sup>There

Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:12

are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. <sup>11</sup>Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me. <sup>12</sup>Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.

<sup>13</sup>Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. <sup>14</sup>For if I pray in a

14:5 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads and.

SOUL NOTE



**The Gift of Love (13:7)** "Bears all things" means that love shelters or covers. "Believes all things" means that love never loses faith in others and is willing to think the best of them. "Hopes all things" means that love looks forward with optimism, knowing that God works all things together for good. "Endures all things" means that love holds on. In the end, love never fails and it never ends. When we love, we take part in eternity. We can ask God to perfect our love for Him and for others.  
Topic: Love

SOUL NOTE



**Grown Up (13:11)** Adults have "put away childish things" when they no longer need bottles or teddy bears. The same is true in the Christian life. New believers need care and guidance to help them learn how to grow in their faith. As we mature, we know how to look to God for guidance for ourselves. As we feed on God's Word, we develop muscles and increase our strength. Even so, our faith will not be complete until we see Christ face to face. Then we will understand everything clearly. In the meantime, we should aim to grow and develop, seeking to be more like Christ every day.  
Topic: Life Transitions

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## THE OUTWORKING OF LOVE

<sup>16</sup>By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. <sup>17</sup>But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

<sup>18</sup>My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. <sup>19</sup>And by this we know<sup>a</sup> that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. <sup>20</sup>For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. <sup>21</sup>Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. <sup>22</sup>And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. <sup>23</sup>And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us<sup>a</sup> commandment.

## THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND THE SPIRIT OF ERROR

<sup>24</sup>Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

<sup>4</sup>Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but <sup>4</sup>test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup>By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, <sup>3</sup>and every spirit that does not confess that<sup>a</sup> Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

<sup>4</sup>You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. <sup>5</sup>They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them. <sup>6</sup>We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

## KNOWING GOD THROUGH LOVE

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>He who does not love

<sup>3:19</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *we shall know*. <sup>3:23</sup> <sup>a</sup>M-Text omits *us*. <sup>4:3</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *that* and *Christ has come in the flesh*.

## SOUL NOTE



**In Deed!** (3:18) To understand true love, we need only to look at the Cross, where Christ performed the ultimate act of love. Christ loved us so much that He died for us. This should motivate us to love others. This means not just saying we love people but really loving them by our actions. We can love our families by showing respect, patience, and understanding in many ways. We can love our neighbors as we reach out in kindness. We can love the needy of the world by sharing our possessions with them. Loving actions reveal the truth and depth of our love. **Topic: Love**

## SOUL NOTE



**Battle Lines** (4:4) There are two types of people in this world—Christians and non-Christians. Christians worship God; non-Christians, no matter what they say, worship Satan. They may not formally be members of the occult religion, but their refusal to accept Christ puts them on Satan's side. Satan is already a defeated enemy, so believers can continue their work for God's kingdom fearlessly. For as powerful as Satan's army appears to be, Christ is greater by far: "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." **Topic: Occult**

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does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup>In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

#### SEEING GOD THROUGH LOVE

<sup>12</sup>No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. <sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we

have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *as* Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup>And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

#### THE CONSUMMATION OF LOVE

<sup>17</sup>Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup>There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made

#### SOUL NOTE



**Love Story (4:7)** God authored the concept of love. When people become believers, they learn how to “love one another” because the Spirit within shows them how as they yield to His leading. Christian relationships ought to be the most loving in the world. Christians who meet each other for the first time experience a bond of love that transcends understanding. The love that binds Christians makes for solid and eternal relationships. The love in our relationships reveals God in us.

**Topic: Relationships**

#### SOUL NOTE



**Through Us (4:12)** No one has ever seen God, but God reveals Himself to the world through His frail and imperfect people by perfecting His love in them. As believers go into the world living their faith, they reveal God to everyone they meet. Their love reveals God’s presence in their lives. When believers show love toward one another and to the unbelieving world, God makes Himself known and His love is “perfected” in them. God often shows His love through His people. What does our love for others say on God’s behalf? **Topic: Love**

#### SOUL NOTE



**Too Many Critics (4:19–21)** When believers hate one another, they certainly are not showing love. At times, a critical spirit will cause believers’ relationships to become strained as they judge each other. Believers will always disagree on some matters, but they should still be able to celebrate their unity in Christ. Those with critical spirits, however, will be unable to love others: If they cannot love their fellow believers whom they can see, how can they possibly love the invisible God? Believers who claim to love God but hate others are lying to themselves, God, and everyone else. **Topic: Judgmentalism**