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What Does The Bible Say About Love? (Part 1)

In this study, the proper, sacred name Yahweh will be used in the commentary for the deity. However, the various versions of the Bible will be quoted as written.

This article does not claim to show all truth or to be an official messenger of Yahweh. The intention of this article is to inspire **you** to investigate and learn what truth is. Learn what the Bible says and what history tells you, then decide what to do with it.

Love, it's something we all know to be very important. It's something we know can make the world a better place. It's been the subject of many songs, writings and works of art. In the Bible love is said to be extremely important. For example, Paul's first letter to the Corinthians illustrates just how important love is. Here is chapter 13 of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, we have chosen the **New International Version** here because it's a bit easier to read than other versions, but we will typically use the **New King James Version** when quoting scriptures throughout the rest of this study.

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (NIV, 1 Cor 13)

In Paul's beautiful words to the Corinthians, he describes love as being the most important thing. He says it is more important than the ability to prophesy, or to have all knowledge and trust. In fact, in the first part of this chapter he seems to describe an almost perfect person but explains that if it's without love, it's all worthless. This is not to say that knowledge, prophecy and trust are worthless. Coupled with

love, those things are powerful tools. However, they are useless without love. The question is then, how do we know if we have love? Can we define it? In other words, **what is love?**

There are many definitions of love in the world. One is the feeling you get when you “fall in love.” Another is something you are very fond of, as in “I love that!” For the purpose of this study, however, the definition of love that we are interested in is Yahweh’s definition from the inspired text of the Bible. Although the Bible was written by men, such as Paul and Peter, they were inspired by Yahweh (2 Peter 1:20f, 1 Cor 2:9-13). In fact, Paul was an apostle (messenger), though not part of the 12, and had within him the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17).

The bible says Yahweh’s desire is that we love **him** with all our heart and love **each other** as ourselves (Matt 22:37-39). Keeping this in mind, what we will attempt to do in the sections below is:

- expand on the attributes of love that Paul describes in his letter to the Corinthians
- see how these attributes apply to love
- in some cases, explore some contrasting positions or opposites of these attributes
- explore how we can apply them to each other and to Yahweh
- further define love using other scriptures

After studying these attributes, and learning what love is, we may then use that knowledge to guide our own actions toward our own growth in love.

Before we begin, it’s important to note that as we attempt to define love, at times, we will be describing love in its near-perfect form. We ask the reader to keep in mind that this study is not an attempt to condemn anyone, nor should the reader focus on how inadequate they may feel compared to the descriptions of love given. The intention of this study is to bring clarity to what love is and provide material to aid us in our growth in love. Even Paul, the man who describes the attributes of love in 1 Corinthians 13, has this to say:

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (NKJV, Rom 3:23f)

John also adds:

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (NKJV, 1 John 1:8-10)

Therefore, we have forgiveness for our shortcomings, if we ask for it. And none of us reach perfection in our current form. But what we can do is strive towards love. As we shall see later in this study, growth in love is a slow process and comes in cycles.

Let’s begin by looking at Paul’s attributes of love.

Love:

- Is patient
- Is kind
- Does not envy
- Does not boast
- Is not proud
- Does not dishonor others
- Is not self-seeking
- Is not easily angered
- Keeps no record of wrongs
- Does not delight in evil
- Rejoices in the truth
- Always protects
- Always trusts
- Always hopes
- Always perseveres
- Never fails

What Paul has given us here is a love checklist of sorts. There certainly is more to love than these, but for now it's a good starting point in our journey toward understanding love. Let's take a closer look at each of these attributes.

Love Is Patient

The first of Paul's attributes is patience. The bible mentions the importance of patience many times. Let's look at Merriam-Webster dictionary's definition of patience.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "patient" as:

1 : bearing pains or trials calmly or without complaint

2 : manifesting forbearance under provocation or strain

3 : not hasty or impetuous

4 : steadfast despite opposition, difficulty, or adversity

To state the obvious, being patient is the opposite of being impatient, or being in a hurry for something. Being impatient is often associated with the feeling of anxiety, irritability, anger and wanting something to happen more quickly. On the other hand, if someone is being patient, they would be in a calm state with the feeling that they are in no rush. But there is more to patience than that. As described in the definition above, patience is the ability to remain calm despite adversity.

So why the need for patience? Because patience will aid your love and impatience will not, in fact, it could hinder it. Let's take the following verse for example, though it is about forgiveness it also speaks to the virtue of patience.

Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. (NKJV, Matt 18:21f)

In this verse Peter wants to know how many times he should forgive someone, asking if seven times is enough. The Messiah responds by saying not seven times but "seventy times seven", which would be 490 times. One could take this literally and start keeping track of the times they've forgiven someone until they've reached this number, but it seems clear that the message the Messiah was really trying to communicate is that you should continually forgive someone. In doing so, you would be demonstrating a great amount of patience. To remain calm while continually forgiving them would give the other person the best chance to see the error in their way and allow room for change. This is the path one would take if one's goal is to be loving. Whether the circumstance is between a married couple, family members, church members or a teacher and student, patience is the thing that provides the time needed for growth. Without it, growth is cut short, and therefore love was not accomplished. This applies to our own growth as well. If one has the patience to try and understand the bible, that person has a higher chance of continuing their spiritual growth. In this instance, that person has succeeded in loving them self and has calmly given them self the time needed to grow.

Being Patient with Yahweh

We have talked a little bit about patience with others, now let's discuss why we must be patient with Yahweh.

Have you ever felt impatient with our creator? It might be hard to admit but many of us have, at times, perhaps without even realizing it. How can we be impatient with our creator? There are several ways. For example, one might pray for something, feel their prayers are not being answered, and feel impatient for their needs to be met. One might want to see prophecies fulfilled about the future and grow impatient with Yahweh's plan. Or, one might feel impatient for the rewards promised to those who endure until the end, rewards which one might not receive in their own lifetime, but in the next. Consider the following verse.

*Therefore be **patient**, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting **patiently** for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be **patient**. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and **patience**. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord--that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. (NKJV, James 5:7-11)*

In this passage James calls for patience, using the prophets and Job as an example. The prophets were not only patient until their deaths but remained patient while suffering. While speaking about some of the patriarchs of the bible, Hebrews 13 has this to say about them:

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (NKJV, Heb 11:13)

The righteous ones that the book of Hebrews talks about all had patience throughout their lives, fully expecting their reward in the world to come. They demonstrated patience with Yahweh and his plan, even while suffering adversity. It's clear that many of the righteous people in the bible had patience toward Yahweh, so why is this patience so important? Because if one grows impatient with Yahweh and his plan, one might lose focus and start to manifest one's own plan. This may lead to seeking a worldly reward, which may hinder one's chances at receiving the heavenly rewards. Patience, then, with Yahweh and his plan is ultimately advantageous to us, but more importantly, it is a loving act toward our Creator.

It's also important to be patient, because we don't always understand everything about Yahweh's plan. He states in Isaiah:

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (NKJV, Isa 55:8-9)

Love Is Kind

Love is kind. Sounds pretty simple, right? For many, being kind to those they love is easy, but let's take a deeper look at what it means to be kind.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "kind" as:

1a: of a sympathetic or helpful nature

was helped by a kind neighbor

They were very kind to us.

b: of a forbearing nature : GENTLE

kind treatment of animals

c: arising from or characterized by sympathy or forbearance

a kind act

a kind smile

2: of a kind to give pleasure or relief

cooled by a kind breeze

3: chiefly dialectal : AFFECTIONATE, LOVING

As we see from the definitions above, there are two important aspects of kindness. One is having a kind demeanor, appearance, and a friendly nature, the other is in the form of action, a kind act, such as helping a neighbor move some boxes. Therefore, a kind person would show kindness in their demeanor as well as by their actions. Most of us demonstrate these two aspects of kindness all the time. For example, smiling at the grocery clerk, waving at a neighbor, helping out family members when they have a need. But if our goal is to grow in kindness then we must ask ourselves “who should we be kind to?” and “when is it difficult to be kind?”

Being kind to those we already know and love may be easy, but what about people we don’t know, people we don’t feel love for, or people that hate us? Let’s take a look at what Luke 6:35 says:

But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. (NKJV, Luke 6:35)

There are several significant things we can gain from this verse. First, Yahweh wants our kindness to know no bounds, being offered to everyone, even our enemies. Second, kindness includes acts of generosity like lending or giving with no expectation of receiving in return. Third, the act of giving to others – even our enemies – means one is acting like our Heavenly Father, showing kindness to the unthankful and evil people. Those who show this kindness will be called sons of the Most High.

Though many of us frequently show kindness to our friends, family, and neighbors, if we are to seek growth in kindness, we must go beyond our comfort zone and show kindness to strangers and even our enemies. Although pursuing this next stage of growth may be difficult, it is ultimately self-rewarding.

Those who are kind benefit themselves, but the cruel bring ruin on themselves. (NKJV, Proverbs 11:17)

Kindness towards Yahweh

How can we be kind to Yahweh? What could we possibly give to him, or do for him? Afterall, the book of Acts seems to tell us that he doesn’t need anything from us.

“God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. “Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. (NKJV, Acts 17:24f)

In ancient times, free-will sacrifices and offerings were one way that people would show a kindness to Yahweh. Breads, grains, drink, and animals were offered to Yahweh throughout the Old Testament, as a way to praise or please him. However, even in the Old Testament it is revealed that this is not what Yahweh wants from us:

But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. (NIV, 1 Sam 15:22)

For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (NKJV, Hos 6:6)

These verses make it clear that Yahweh does not desire offerings and sacrifice from us. Furthermore, 1 Samuel 15 makes the point that what he really wants is obedience and for us to heed his word, while Hosea 6 informs us he wants us to have mercy and the knowledge of him. As we shall see from this next verse, although Yahweh does not desire the sacrifice of animals, there is a type of spiritual sacrifice we can offer:

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. (NKJV, Heb 13:15f)

Though it may seem difficult to understand how we may show kindness to Yahweh, being that he doesn't need anything from us, we see from the verses above that what we can do is obey him, heed his word, be merciful, seek knowledge of him, and offer spiritual sacrifices by praise, giving thanks, doing good, and sharing. This is love.

Love Does Not Envy

Some of the strongest desires of humankind is to achieve, accomplish, and accumulate. Setting ourselves up with enough money and material wealth to enjoy a life of luxury can be very appealing. Or maybe the goal is to be recognized for our achievements and be honored. But it's common for many to feel they haven't achieved or accomplished enough. This can be even more apparent when we see what we'd hoped to accomplish being enjoyed by others, and this may cause envy.

Let's look at the definition of envy.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "envy" as:

1: painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another joined with a desire to possess the same advantage

2 obsolete : MALICE

3: an object of envious notice or feeling

his new car made him the envy of his friends

As we see, envy is not just wanting something but wanting something that someone else has. It's commonly understood that envy is not a good thing. You can see this in the definition because it is

“painful” and “resentful.” As one of our tools, when we are dealing with an attribute that is NOT love – in order to find out what love is – we should consider contrasting positions or even opposites.

It’s obvious that the first contrasting position is “not envying.” But this is merely a ban on the act of envying. This isn’t the root of love and what Paul is directing the Corinthians toward.

Another set of interesting contrasting positions may be “being grateful for what you have” or even “being happy for what others have.” These certainly have a positive educational message for the reader (as opposed to just “not envying”), but to go even further we might consider “generosity” as the opposite of envy.

In other words, if envy is wanting to possess what someone else has, then we might consider the opposite to be wanting to give to others. How does giving demonstrate love? It provides another with the things they need to survive or grow. To give someone food or shelter is providing them with life’s essentials, which they need to survive. To give someone your time, knowledge, and affection is providing them with the things they need to grow spiritually, but if one is full of envy this does not fulfill love but is opposed to love. Therefore, to fulfill love, we must not envy, but rather do the opposite, and give.

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (NIV, Heb 13:16)

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. (NKJV, 2 Cor 9:7)

Not envying Yahweh

Of course, envying Yahweh is quite unimaginable, however we may absolutely accomplish the opposite and give. Although the father owns everything, even our own bodies (Psalms 24:1), we may still demonstrate our love to him by offering up what we have, our time, our possessions, even our lives.

For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. (NKJV, Rom 11:36f)

Love Does Not Boast

Most of us are guilty of boasting or bragging about ourselves at some point. Some may do it a lot and others rarely, but boasting is fairly common in the world. However, according to Paul boasting is not part of love.

Let’s look at the definition of boast.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “boast” as:

*1: to praise oneself extravagantly in speech : speak of oneself with excessive pride
boasting about her accomplishments*

2 archaic : GLORY, EXULT

transitive verb

1: to speak of or assert with excessive pride

He liked to boast that he was the richest man in town.

2 a: to possess and often call attention to (something that is a source of pride)

boasts a new stadium

b: HAVE, CONTAIN

a room boasting no more than a desk and a chair

As we see from the definition above, to boast is to praise oneself and to speak extravagantly about one's own accomplishments or possessions. But what does this have to do with love? We will once again utilize our method of considering contrasting positions and opposites to find the answer.

It's very easy to interpret Paul's words and say that the opposite of boasting is to "not boast." However, this does not give a positive educational message about what love actually is, rather, "not boasting" is a neutral position, neither good nor bad.

If boasting is verbally building one's own self up, then its opposite might be to encourage and build up others instead. This is exactly what 1st and 2nd Thessalonians tells us to do:

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (NIV, 1 Thes 5:11)

Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. (NIV, 2 Thes 1:4)

So, we should build others up and encourage one another with words. This is an act of love that would aid the spiritual growth of others as well as ourselves, whereas to boast could be destructive to growth.

Not Boasting to Yahweh

Just as we should not be boastful before people, we also should not be boastful before Yahweh, but we should verbally build up Yahweh instead of ourselves. This means praising him, honoring him with our words, and giving thanks.

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. (NKJV, Heb 13:15)

Love Is Not Proud

Pride is another attribute that is hard to escape. However, there is no lack of evidence that Yahweh does not favor the proud. The word “proud” appears 47 times in the New King James Bible, and not once is it portrayed as a good thing, or even acceptable. Rather, it is clear that Yahweh is against the proud of this world. Here are just a few verses that demonstrate this point.

Better [to be] of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud. (NKJV, Prov 16:19)

Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith. (NKJV, Hab 2:4)

But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” (NKJV, James 4:6)

Let’s look at the definition of proud.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “proud” as:

1: feeling or showing pride: such as

a: having or displaying excessive self-esteem

b: much pleased : EXULTANT

c: having proper self-respect

2a: marked by stateliness : MAGNIFICENT

b: much pleased : EXULTANT

the proudest moment in her life

As we see from some of the definitions above, not all aspects of pride seem bad. One of the definitions given is “having proper self-respect,” which is definitely not a bad thing. It is the negative side of pride we are looking to understand. The definition that more closely hits the mark is “having or displaying excessive self-esteem.” So why is this bad? Why is Yahweh so opposed to the proud? Again, we must look at the contrasting position or opposite of proud to understand. The opposite of being proud is being humble, therefore if being proud is NOT love then being humble IS love.

Using scriptures, let’s compare some of the attributes of the proud against those of the humble.

Attributes of the proud

The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek [God;] God [is] in none of his thoughts. (NKJV, Psalm 10:4)

You rebuke the proud--the cursed, Who stray from Your commandments. (NKJV, Psalm 119:21)

He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered. (NKJV, Proverbs 28:25)

I will punish the world for [its] evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. (NKJV, Isaiah 13:11)

Attributes of the humble

The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way. (NKJV, Psalm 25:9)

When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble [is] wisdom. (NKJV, Proverbs 11:2)

A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor. (NKJV, Proverbs 29:23)

According to the verses above, the Proud:

- Do not seek Yahweh
- Stray from his commandments
- Stir up strife
- Are arrogant

Whereas the humble are:

- Able to be guided in justice and taught Yahweh's ways
- Have wisdom
- Retain honor

As we can see, Yahweh clearly does not like pride but loves humility. As we have all dealt with our own pride and the pride of others, we know that it can complicate our interactions with each other. It can cause anger, make us closed off from one another, and be an overall destructive force. This type of pride cannot serve love. Humility, on the other hand, will help us to be gracious with each other, let us be open to learning and communicating, and can be a uniting force. This serves love very well.

Not Proud Toward Yahweh

With the above information in mind, it becomes clear why Yahweh favors humility and is opposed to pride. Just as pride will close us off from each other, it will close us off from him as well. The proud do not seek Yahweh but stray from his commandments and stir up strife. This is not love. On the other hand, the humble have wisdom and are open to his guidance and teachings. This is love.

Love Does Not Dishonor Others

The NIV version of 1st Corinthians 13:5 says that love "does not dishonor others", whereas other versions say that love "is not rude". However, whether it's the word "dishonor" or "rude" the English translations of this verse might not convey all that was intended by Paul when he wrote it. To find the true intention of 1st Corinthians 13:5, we have to look at the Greek word behind the English translation.

The underlying Greek word that is translated as “dishonor” is “*aschēmoneō*”. Let’s look at the Strong’s Concordance definition of this word.

Strong’s Concordance gives the definition of *aschēmoneō* as:

(to be deformed; of a bald man, Aelian v. h. 11, 4); to act unbecomingly ([Euripides], Xenophon, Plato, others): 1 Corinthians 13:5; towards one, i. e. contextually, to prepare disgrace for her, 1 Corinthians 7:36. (SEC #807)

The definition above defines *aschēmoneō* as “to act unbecomingly” (inappropriate or unseemly). This word only occurs twice in the New Testament, once in 1 Corinthians 13:5 and once in 7:36. In the context of Corinthians 7:36, the word *aschēmoneō* is used to describe one who is acting inappropriately towards a virgin, so perhaps there is a sexual connotation to the meaning of this word as well. Whether one is dishonoring another, behaving rudely, or acting in an inappropriate way, these behaviors are not an act of love.

Using our contrasting position or opposite model, we are able to determine what positive actions we can take. Instead of dishonoring others we should honor them, instead of being rude we should be polite, and instead of acting inappropriately we should treat others with respect and dignity.

Not Dishonoring Yahweh

If the above section is true for humans, it certainly applies to our Father and Creator. Whether it is dishonoring, acting rudely, or inappropriately, we should not behave this way toward Yahweh. On the other hand, we should honor him and treat him with the utmost respect. This can be done through prayer, giving thanks and honor, and treating his word and commands in scripture with reverence.

Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel (NKJV, Phil. 1:27)

Love Is Not Self-Seeking

To be self-seeking is to seek out one’s own interest or advancing oneself in some way. Even if one does something seemingly good for others, if that person is only interested in the personal gain it will bring, this is also an example of self-seeking. There are different forms of self-seeking, for example, seeking material rewards, fame, glory or high regard from others. Whatever the case, Paul describes being self-seeking as something that is not part of love. To be clear, this does not mean that one cannot, at any time, seek something for themselves. All have needs to be met and there is nothing wrong with personal gain. For example, Abraham was extremely rich and yet was described as being righteous (Rom 4:3, Gen 13:2). So why is it bad to be self-seeking? Let’s look at the definition of self-seeking to try and understand.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “self-seeking” as:

Definition of self-seeking (Entry 1 of 2)

: the act or practice of selfishly advancing one's own ends

Definition of self-seeking (Entry 2 of 2)

: seeking only to further one's own interests

As we see, the first definition describes being self-seeking as selfishly advancing one's own ends, whereas the second definition describes being self-seeking as the act of only seeking your own interests (not the interests, gain, or growth of others). We can see from these definitions that to be self-seeking is not merely meeting your own needs but implies a selfishness, and a disregard for the needs of others. Now it becomes clear why this is not, and cannot be, part of love.

Therefore, the first thing we must do in order to grow in love is to try not to be self-seeking. However, this is simply a neutral position. If we desire to advance in love, we must use our contrasting position or opposite model to determine what positive actions we can take. The opposite of being self-seeking could be to seek the benefit and advancement of others. Whether you seek to meet the physical needs of others, like food, clothing, shelter, etc. or if you seek to advance the spiritual growth of others, this IS love.

Not Being Self-Seeking to Yahweh

Not being self-seeking to Yahweh might seem like a conundrum. When we communicate to our Father in prayer, we are often asking to have our needs met. There is nothing wrong with this. In fact, the Messiah gives an example of how to pray and ask for things we need (Matt 6:11).

So how might we pray for something without being self-seeking? Fortunately, the messiah gives us a great example of this as well.

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." (NKJV, Matt 26:39)

We see from this verse that even though the Messiah asked for something, he was ultimately seeking the Father's will and the advancement of the Father's plan. This is the ultimate example of not being self-seeking. While in his human form the Messiah clearly felt fear and dread for what he was about to suffer. He prayed that if it were possible, he may avoid it. However, he submitted to the will of the Father. We see that it is OK to ask for something from Yahweh, as long as we submit to his will and ultimately seek to further his plan over our own.

Love Is Not Easily Angered

What is interesting about this one is that it does not say "love is not angered" but that love is not "easily" angered. Anger can absolutely come from a place of love, just as a parent may become angry with their child who is misbehaving. However, if one is to try to demonstrate love, this anger should not come easily. Why is being easily angered not part of love? Because when one is easily angered it often drives those who experience it away, resulting in a roadblock to communication. This does not serve love. Yet, when a person is able to restrain anger, and take a calmer approach, this allows for

communication, learning, and resolve. Interestingly, the ability to be slow to anger may be achieved if one has practiced the other attributes of love in this list. For example, if one has worked on their patience and kindness and not being proud or self-seeking, this would aid them in their ability to not be easily angered. Anger has its place and is an emotional response built into all of us, but if one is to attempt to act with love, that anger should be buffered with the attributes of love.

To further our understanding, we once again use our opposite model to seek a positive counterpart to anger. Some attributes that could be considered an opposite of anger are calmness, peacefulness, understanding, and forgiveness. In particular, having understanding is often crucial to curbing anger. Not understanding the cause behind one's behavior in a certain situation could lead to frustration and anger. However, taking the time to understand where they are coming from may help one to see that anger is not necessary and rather inspire patience. Practicing the attributes of love is a great way to buffer anger, open communication, make room for understanding and forgiveness and, ultimately, growth. This is love.

Not Easily Angered Toward Yahweh

We know that Yahweh is perfect (Matt 5:48, Psa 18:30), so it may seem odd that one could be easily angered with him. In fact, we shouldn't be angry with him at all, but many of us have experienced this. Even some of the righteous figures in the bible have experienced anger or frustration with our creator (Jonah 4:1-2). When dealing with others, we grapple with the various flaws and offences that come along with being human. But since our Heavenly Father is perfect, and does no wrong, the root of any anger felt towards him is merely a lack of understanding. If one does not understand why life is so hard, why people often suffer, etc., this can cause anger, frustration and resentment. If we are to demonstrate love towards our creator, we should try to exercise the traits of love, have patience, and seek to understand his plan instead of allowing ourselves to become angry. This may not always be an easy task, but this is love.

Love Keeps No Record of Wrongs

Love keeps no record of wrongs. One way of looking at this statement is love does not hold a grudge. We have all been wronged by others, and often multiple times. According to Paul, if we are to act with love, we should not keep a record of these wrongs and carry it with us. What this means is that love is forgiving. However, this does not mean that we are not allowed to address those that have wronged us in some way. In fact, in the book of Matthew, chapter 18:15-18, the Messiah gives us an example of how we should proceed when confronting someone who sins against us. Also, in Luke 17:3f he tells us:

Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him. (NKJV, Luke 17:3f)

According to the verse above, one may rebuke another who has sinned against them. But does this mean that repentance is required in order to forgive? Let's look at the following verses for answers:

And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses. (NKJV, Mar 11:25f)

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (NKJV, Matt 6:14f)

The verses above seem to indicate that when we pray we should forgive anyone we may hold something against, and that receiving forgiveness from our Heavenly Father requires it. Our Messiah even asked the Father to forgive those who put him to death (Luk 23:34). This demonstrated a high level of love. In any case, if one feels wronged by another, they may confront that person. However, regardless of whether that person repents or not, one must ultimately forgive. Here are some more verses about forgiveness:

Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." (NKJV, Matt 18:21f)

Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (NKJV, Luke 6:37)

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (NKJV, Col 3:13)

Another way of looking at what it means to "keep no record of wrongs" is to not keep a record of a person's past wrongs or sins. By keeping a record of one's past sins, we make ourselves judges of that person. As we shall see below, that is not our place. If there is an issue that must be addressed among a church, assembly, or between individuals, then it must be handled in an appropriate way. The Messiah gives us some guidelines in Mathew 18 on how to properly do that. Otherwise, we should not inappropriately judge another but instead exercise forgiveness.

Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. (NKJV, Rom 14:4)

But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (NKJV, Rom 14:10)

Not Keeping a Record of Wrongs Toward Yahweh

Just as we discussed in the previous section "Not Easily Angered Toward Yahweh" the conundrum here is that we know Yahweh is perfect and does no wrong. However, this does not mean that at times some may feel wronged by Yahweh. Feeling wronged by Yahweh may in turn cause some to feel anger or frustration toward Yahweh, relating back to the previous section, and it comes down to a lack of understanding. It is not a bad thing to say we don't always understand why things are the way they are. Life can be very difficult and painful at times, and if one does not understand why things must be this

way, it can create a perception of being wronged. In order to practice love though, we should try and use the other attributes of love (patience, humility, etc.) and seek understanding and the knowledge of his plan. By exercising these attributes, we show our love to Yahweh, and perhaps we may get a little closer to understanding his plan and that it all has to do with his love for us.

Love Does Not Delight in Evil

The fact that love does not delight in evil may seem obvious. After all, love and evil are often perceived as conflicting concepts. However, “not delighting in evil” may be more difficult to avoid than we might think. Taking delight in evil is something that can be done from a distance, for example, taking pleasure in a bad thing that happens to someone we dislike. Or applauding something a friend did that was perhaps a bit sinful. Most of us have probably experienced something like this in our lives, as we are only human. Yet, if we are to grow in love, we should attempt to not take delight in evil things, even if it is something that we are not personally involved in.

Not delighting in evil is a great first step toward growing in love, but if one wants to take love even further, we must look to our opposites model. If delighting in evil is not love, then delighting in good or righteousness is love. Here are a few verses that talk about righteousness and evil:

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. (NKJV, Rom 12:19)

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. (NKJV, Mat 5:6)

Hate evil, love good; Establish justice in the gate. It may be that the LORD God of hosts Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. (NKJV, Amo 5:15)

We see from the above verses what kind of attitude we should have in regard to good and evil. In Paul’s letter to the Romans, he says we should abhor evil and cling to good, while Matthew informs us that those who hunger for righteousness are blessed. Therefore, it is clear that we should not delight in evil, but delight in good and righteousness, this is love.

Not Delighting in Evil Toward Yahweh

As mentioned in previous sections, Yahweh does no evil. However, we may still take delight in his good! By giving praise and thanks we acknowledge and celebrate his good deeds, as well as demonstrate our trust and belief in him. This is a great way to show our love to our Heavenly Father.

Love Rejoices in The Truth

It may come as no surprise that love rejoices in the truth. We have all heard the verse “the truth will set you free” (John 8:32). However, the truth might not always be easy to accept. But if we intend to grow in love this is when rejoicing in truth is the most crucial. In what way is the truth difficult? One way the truth can be difficult is when it comes to self-examination. For example, the Apostle John states:

For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.” (NKJV, John 3:20f)

In the passage above we see that those content with doing evil hate the light because it exposes their deeds, whereas those who practice truth come to the light. Coming to the light means that we see our own actions for what they are, which could be a humbling and uncomfortable experience. It could be tempting to ignore painful truths, but those who seek to grow in love must seek the light and rejoice in its truth.

Rejoicing in truth may not always be easy, but one thing that will help us to do so is having a love for the truth. If one loves truth more than they love avoiding discomfort, that person would rejoice in learning truth, even if it's a difficult truth. The following passage demonstrates just how important the love of truth is.

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (NKJV, 2 Thes 2:9f)

We see that loving truth is important, not only because it will help us to rejoice in it, but because it is essential to our salvation as well. Those mentioned above who perished did so because they did not have the love of the truth, which would have saved them from the “lying wonders” and the “unrighteous deception.” Those who have a love of truth, and rejoice in it, have a much better chance at avoiding being deceived.

Speaking about the body of Messiah (the Church), Paul reinforces the importance of truth when he tells the Ephesians:

that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— (NKJV, Eph 4:14f)

We see from all the verses above that truth - the love of it, as well as rejoicing in it - is important. Truth helps us to examine ourselves, which would in turn allow us to grow. A love of truth will motivate one to seek it, which in turn would enable sharing it with others, promoting their growth as well. In this way, rejoicing in truth serves love very well.

Rejoicing In Truth Toward Yahweh

Another reason we should rejoice in truth, and perhaps the most important reason, is that Yahweh is truth. As pointed out by the next two verses, there is no falsehood or lie in our creator:

in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began (NKJV, Titus 1:2)

God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. (NIV, Heb 6:18)

If Yahweh is truth and we love him, we should love and rejoice in truth. Truth will enable us to better serve our creator as well as each other, which is what love is all about. Therefore, we should rejoice in truth.

Love Always Protects (Bears)

The NIV translates the first part of 1 Corinthians 13:7 as “It always protects” in regard to love. However, most other bible versions (KJV, NKJV, CSB, ESV, RSV, etc.) translate this verse as “bears all things”. In order to understand what Paul intends by this verse we must determine what this word means. The underlying Greek word translated by the NIV as “Protects” is the word “*stegō*”. The Strong’s Concordance defines “*stegō*” as:

To roof over, i.e. (figuratively) to cover with silence (endure patiently): —(for-)bear, suffer. (SEC #4722)

Thayer’s Greek Lexicon defines “*stegō*” as:

- 1. to protect or keep by covering, to preserve...*
- 2. to cover over with silence; to keep secret; to hide, conceal... 1 Corinthians 13:7, is explained by some, love covereth (so R. V. marginal reading), i. e. hides and excuses, the errors and faults of others; but it is more appropriately rendered (with other interpreters) beareth.*
- 3. by covering to keep off something which threatens, to bear up against, hold out against, and so to endure, bear, forbear.*

Further, every other bible verse that uses this word uses it in the context to bear or endure something (1Co 9:12, 1Th 3:1, 1Th 3:5).

Perhaps the NIV translated “*stegō*” as “protects” because some translators took the definition of “roof over” or “cover with silence” to mean “hides and excuses, the errors and faults of others” as Thayer’s Greek Lexicon points out. However, given the evidence from other verses where this word is used, “*stegō*” seems to indicate bearing or enduring something quietly, hence “To roof over, i.e. (figuratively) to cover with silence.” The “silence,” then, that Strong’s was talking about, was “your own” silence, while bearing up under hardship or adversity.

Now that we have a clearer idea of what “*stegō*” means (to bear or endure quietly) we can examine scriptures to see how this pertains to love. In 1 Corinthians 9 we read:

*For it is written in the law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.” Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure [*stegō*] all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. (NKJV, 1 Co 9:9-12)*

In the passage above, Paul writes to the Corinthians about the time that he and Barnabas spent ministering to them. Although they had the right, he explains that they did not receive material rewards for their service. Instead, they chose to “*stegō*” (bear, endure quietly) all things. He explains that they did not use their right to receive rewards because they did not want to “hinder the gospel of Christ.” How was this an act of love? Instead of reaping rewards, they put their own needs last so that the Corinthians could absorb the teachings of the gospel without hinderance. The indication is that “*stegō*” means to patiently endure and bear quietly for the greater good, or for the benefit of others.

Besides its use in 1 Corinthians 13:7 and the quote above, the word “*stegō*” is only used in two other passages in the bible (1Thes 3:1 and 5). In both of those cases it describes how Paul could not bear (“*stegō*”) being away from his brothers and sent Timothy to check on them. So, although the definition of “*stegō*” is “bearing or enduring hardship in silence,” we urge you to read these three passages in the context of how it was used in the bible. It is important to keep in mind that “*stegō*” does not refer to enduring a situation of abuse or exploitation of power towards you or others (see passages Col 3:19, Psa 11:5, 2 Tim 3:1-8, 1 Peter 3:7, Matt 18:15, Eph 5:11).

How can we apply this to ourselves? When we patiently endure something without complaint, putting our own needs and desires aside for the benefit of others, this is an act of love.

Enduring Toward Yahweh

Likewise, if we patiently endure the trials of this world without complaining to Yahweh, understand it is for our own growth and is ultimately part of a greater plan, this is an act of love.

Love Always Trusts (Believes)

The Greek word translated as “trust” in 1 Corinthians 13:7 is “*pisteuō*”. This word is more accurately translated as “believe”, which is how it is translated in every other occurrence in the NIV and NKJV bibles. Belief is an important topic in the bible and has been the necessary element in many miracles (Matt 8:13, 9:28) and, as we shall see below, for our salvation as well. To understand belief, we must also talk about the word faith. The Greek words that are translated as “believe” and “faith” are closely related, and for good reason.

By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (NKJV, Heb 11:5f)

Citing many of the actions of the biblical forefathers, chapter 11 of the book of Hebrews explains the importance of faith. The above passage is important because it further defines what faith is. The passage states that without faith it is “impossible to please Him”, that is Yahweh. It then goes on to define what that faith is when it states, “for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.” The first important point is that faith is based on belief, that the two go hand in hand, and are essential for salvation. The second important point is that it says Yahweh rewards those who “seek him”. This implies that faith and belief are not blind but that we are supposed

to seek him, meaning to search out knowledge of him and his ways. This goes against the idea that faith is the act of believing without seeking evidence, but rather suggests faith and belief are based on a proactive approach. Here are a few verses that further this point:

And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?" (NKJV, Luke 6:39)

Regarding the Bereans, scriptures say:

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. (NKJV, Acts 17:11)

Test all things; hold fast what is good. (NKJV, 1 Thes 5:21)

We see from the scriptures above that we should not blindly follow others but test all things ourselves. Seeking truth then is the foundation of faith and belief.

When it comes to others, we should extend our belief or faith to them. However, as we have seen, belief and faith are based on the seeking of truth. Therefore, if you have seen the evidence that another person is trustworthy and yet you still have issues trusting them, this is not love. In the circumstance of a brother or sister of your church or assembly, an untrusting atmosphere could prove to be destructive and would certainly hinder unity within the group. Therefore, trust and belief are an essential part of unity, growth, and love.

Believing Yahweh

We know from scripture that Yahweh is not a flawed human, and does not lie (Tit 1:2, Heb 6:18). We also know that his word and commands are trustworthy. So how could we fail to believe him or fail to believe in him? It comes down to the important ingredient of belief, which is seeking. From the verses in this section, we have seen that Yahweh is a rewarder of those who seek him and that we must test all things. We must not follow blindly, but rather do the work ourselves and seek Yahweh's truth. By doing this, we demonstrate our love for our Heavenly Father.

Love Always Hopes

Before we talk about how hope is important to love, we should first understand what hope is. In modern English the meaning of hope can be confusing as it may seem interchangeable with words like "want" or "desire." Hope also seems to have traits of trust or belief. For instance, when someone says they "have hope," they see a likelihood of something happening that they want to occur.

We see that hope has aspects of desire and trust/belief. Let's look at some of the definitions of hope to further our understanding.

The underlying Greek word translated as “hope” in 1 Corinthians 13 is “*elpizō*.” The Strong’s Concordance defines *elpizō* as:

el-pid'-zo; from G1680; to expect or confide: —(have, thing) hope(-d) (for), trust. (SEC #1679)

In this definition, we see the attributes of both trust and expectation. Let’s look at the Merriam Webster dictionary’s definition of hope:

intransitive verb

1 : to cherish a desire with anticipation : to want something to happen or be true

hopes for a promotion

hoping for the best

I hope so.

2 archaic : TRUST

transitive verb

1 : to desire with expectation of obtainment or fulfillment

I hope she remembers.

hopes to be invited

2 : to expect with confidence : TRUST

Your mother is doing well, I hope.

We see in these definitions the attributes of desire, expectation, and trust. Hope seems to be the desire for something to happen, or to obtain something, along with the trust that it will or could happen. To desire or want something alone does not mean you trust that it will happen, and to trust that something will happen doesn’t mean that you want it to. Hope, however, combines trust and desire together. Finally, to understand another important part of hope let’s look at how the bible describes it.

For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. (NKJV, Rom 8:24f)

According to the passage above, hope is also something unseen, as well as something that is eagerly waited for with perseverance. In addition to desire and some level of trust, hope seems to require not having full knowledge of the outcome (it hasn’t happened yet), and to continue in that hope one needs perseverance.

To summarize, scriptures indicate that hope is a mixture of trust (a belief that something could happen), desire (wanting that thing to happen), uncertainty (not full trust yet), and perseverance (patiently enduring).

So, what does hope have to do with love? Now that we understand hope a little better let's see if we can apply it to our love towards one another.

If we love another person, then we want them to obtain salvation, to grow spiritually, and to have what they need; this is the desire of hope. If we love another person, we extend our trust and belief to them, not doubting, but encouraging; this is the belief of hope. Also, if we love another person, we will be patient throughout their journey, forgiving them for their mistakes, and not holding a record of wrongs; this is the perseverance of hope. Finally, we do all this not knowing the outcome, this is the trust of hope. Having hope for one another is important for our growth and is an act of love.

Hope and Yahweh

When we hope in Yahweh, it is usually us hoping to receive something from him, whether it's a worldly or spiritual thing. But more importantly we should have hope for his plan. This means we have a desire for his plans and promises to come about, trust in those plans, and will persevere until their fulfillment. Therefore, our hope in Yahweh is an attribute of love and is a crucial part of enduring until the end. Here are a few verses about the hope for Yahweh's plan:

The Gentiles hope in Messiah:

And again, Isaiah says: "There shall be a root of Jesse; And He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, In Him the Gentiles shall hope (NKJV, 1Co 15:17-19)

Hope in the resurrection:

Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? (NKJV, 1Co 15:12)

And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. (NKJV, 1Co 15:17-19)

But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. (NKJV, 1Th 4:13)

Hope in eternal life:

Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, (NKJV, Tit 1:1f)

that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (NKJV, Tit 3:7)

Love Always Perseveres

At the end of the NIV translation of 1st Corinthians 13:7 it says love always “perseveres.” Most of the other commonly used bible versions use the word “endures” instead. To add to the confusion, in the same verse, it says that love “bears all things” (translated as “protects” in the NIV), which also holds the meaning to endure. So, what is the difference between these words? Let’s take a look at the underlying Greek word that is translated as “perseveres.”

The Greek word translated as “persevere” is “*hypomenō*”. The Strong’s Concordance defines *hypomenō* as:

hoop-om-en'-o; from G5259 and G3306; to stay under (behind), i.e. remain; figuratively, to undergo, i.e. bear (trials), have fortitude, persevere: —abide, endure, (take) patient(-ly), suffer, tarry behind. (SEC #5278)

According to the definition above, “*hypomenō*” means to stay behind or remain; however, the word is often used figuratively to mean endure or bear trials. In other words, to stay or remain in a situation that causes you discomfort, as opposed to removing yourself from that situation. The following are a few examples that demonstrate times when this word is used to mean “endure” and times when it is used to simply mean “remain” or “stay behind.”

*And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who **endures** to the end will be saved. (NKJV, Mat 10:22)*

*But he who **endures** to the end shall be saved. (NKJV, Mat 24:13)*

*When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus **lingered behind** in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; (NKJV, Luk 2:43)*

*Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy **remained** there. (NKJV, Act 17:14)*

The above verses reinforce the fact that the word “*hypomenō*” literally means to remain or stay behind, yet is often used to mean “endure”, that is, remain in a situation that causes you to bear trials. In this sense, the NIV correctly translates it as “persevere” since the word not only means to bear trials, but to remain in them. So, how is “*hypomenō*” different than the word “*stegō*”? (See section on Love Always Protects/Bears.) The answer is in the subtle difference in the definition of these words. “*Hypomenō*” means to “remain” and in context refers to bearing trials for the right reason and not fleeing or giving up. “*Stegō*,” on the other hand, means to “roof over,” which indicates patiently bearing something in silence, without complaint. Therefore, “*stegō*” refers to demonstrating patience and composure during trials; whereas, “*hypomenō*” speaks of the long-term endurance of these trials.

Now that we have a better understanding of perseverance, let’s see how it applies to love.

Many of the trials in love that we will all endure involve struggling with one another. Whether it’s church, family members, work associates, or complete strangers, sometimes dealing with people is

difficult. Regardless of this fact, Yahweh wants us to bear with each other and to strive for unity. Paul mentions this when he tells the Ephesians:

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (NKJV, Act 17:14)

Perseverance also plays a big role as we continue to practice love. If we are to apply the attributes of love in 1 Corinthians 13, what good would it be if we only last a day, a week, or a month? If we attempt to live with love, our efforts should be continuous. The following verse uses the word “*hypomenō*” to point out that our reward only comes if we persevere until the end:

*But he who **endures** to the end shall be saved. (NKJV, Mat 24:13)*

We see then that we should bear with one another, practice the attributes of love, and do so continuously, not making love a temporary goal, but a lifelong effort.

Perseverance and Yahweh

Perseverance plays a big role in our love toward Yahweh as well. For those who try to uphold biblical principles, it is not uncommon to encounter adversity, such as confrontation by those who hold opposing views. Some of the ways this could happen are: being mocked for your beliefs, being outcast, or even persecuted. In whatever form trials may manifest, to bear them because of your loyalty and trust in Yahweh is a great demonstration of love. To persevere until the end is not only the ultimate sign of love, but a key factor in our own salvation.

Love Never Fails

Last but not least, love never fails. After going through the attributes of love and seeing what they imply, we see how much weight this statement holds. Whether it's being patient, kind, forgiving, trusting, hopeful, humble, generous, enduring, etc., if we act with love, these do not fail. Of course, we are only human and our love is bound to fail at times. Perfect love may be unattainable in this life, but what we can attain is growth, which may lead us closer to perfect love. For this growth to happen, it will require practice and a continual effort. When our love fails, there is repentance and forgiveness. How we adjust after failure is a part of growth.

Love Never Fails and Yahweh

Love does not fail, but we can fail at love. As we attempt to grow in love, we must practice it toward one another and, above all, toward our heavenly Father Yahweh. When we fail at love, we must try again. We must seek forgiveness from those we wrong and forgive those who have wronged us. Although our love is flawed and imperfect, the good news is that Yahweh's love is perfect. Our love toward Yahweh may fall short; however, his love toward us will not. He wants us to practice love because he loves us, and he IS love.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (NKJV, 1Jo 4:7f)

Summary

Although we are hesitant to provide a conclusion, as this is something we urge you to come to on your own, the following section offers a summary of the main points that have been addressed throughout our study.

If we list the attributes of love and pair them with some of the finer points that were discussed and proposed, we are presented with the following list.

Love:

- Is patient = remains calm despite adversity, allowing for our own growth and the growth of others as well.
- Is kind = goes beyond our comfort zone and shows kindness to strangers and even our enemies.
- Does not envy = being content with what we have, happy for others and what they have, and taking it further, being generous towards others.
- Does not boast = builds others up instead of ourselves and encourages one another with words.
- Is not proud = is humble.
- Does not dishonor others = Instead of dishonoring others we should honor them, instead of being rude we should be polite, and instead of acting inappropriately we should treat others with respect and dignity.
- Is not self-seeking = seeks the benefit and advancement of others instead of only doing so for ourselves.
- Is not easily angered = takes the time to understand where others are coming from because it may help one to see that anger is not necessary and rather inspire patience.
- Keeps no record of wrongs = exercises forgiveness and doesn't judge another for past wrongs.
- Does not delight in evil = delights in good and righteousness.
- Rejoices in the truth = seeks, loves, shares, and grows in the truth, even difficult truth.
- Always protects = patiently endures and bears adversity, quietly for the greater good.
- Always trusts = seeks truth as a foundation for trust instead of blind faith.
- Always hopes = has a desire and belief in the growth of others as well as Yahweh's plan, all the while having patience.
- Always perseveres = endures adversity for the right reason.
- Never fails = repents, forgives, and grows because our love is bound to fail at times. Practice and continual effort are required for this growth to come about.

Love is the way one interacts with others, the outlook one has for others, and, ultimately, the way one reacts to adversity. Having all knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, even unto the ability to prophesy and remain sinless, without love, would all be worthless. The greatest commandments of all are to love Yahweh with all our heart and strength, and love our neighbors as ourselves. While it may seem that some of the goals above describe a perfect person, the verses in 1 Corinthians seemed to focus more on the attempt and growth. Paul gave these beautiful words and concepts about love to the Corinthians, but we know it was meant for us as well. Love is the answer.