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CAPITOL MINISTRIES UPDATE

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*Ministry Leader, New York*

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# Rekindling Your Marriage Over Summer Recess



**N**EXT WEEK IS THE BEGINNING of summer recess. Among other things, it represents an opportunity to refocus one's priorities, an opportunity to rebalance your life. Take deliberate advantage of that. My prayer for you is this: It will be a time of reflection and readjustment wherein the tyranny of the urgent is of lesser reality. Now is a time to ponder your marriage. In a world where most members commute, summer recess provides you time to concentrate on your spouse. Accordingly, let us examine the biblical ingredients of love. Choose several from the list that follows — areas where perhaps you are habitually deficient — and determine a plan of emphasis and implementation during these upcoming weeks when hopefully you'll be together more. Make it a goal to improve your marriage in some way before reconvening. This is a time beloved when you need to shift gears. Let me see if I can help you with some biblical insights to make the most of that . . . .

Ralph Drollinger

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## Weekly Bible Study During Session

SENATE: 8:00 AM Tuesdays, Rotating Offices of Senators. *Hot Breakfast Served.*  
 CONGRESS: Capitol H324: Monday or Tuesday Evenings. *After First Votes Back.*





## CAPITOL MINISTRIES UPDATE

### Pastor Dale Walker

Ministry Leader to the  
New York State Legislature

**I**N-DEPTH BIBLE studies are important to law-makers because God is the head legislator of the universe. It is His law we are supposed to be living by. Every king in the Old Testament was supposed to not only own a copy of the law, but write out his own personal copy of the law, and have it right by his side so he would not stray from its teachings.



Deuteronomy 17:18-20 says, “Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.”

*Continued on page 3*

## I. INTRODUCTION

**C**ONTEXTUALLY, chapter 13 of 1Corinthians is sandwiched between two chapters of instruction by Paul to the Church at Corinth whose members, in their carnality, emphasized the practice of certain spiritual gifts above the practice of Christian love. Paul instructs them that love is preminent. Again, it’s what ties people together.

Of special note are the love-defining verbs that follow under the second outline point: “The Elements of Love.” All 15 are in the present continuous tense “denoting actions and attitudes which have become habitual, ingrained gradually by constant repetition.”<sup>1</sup> These defining characteristics of love are worthy of constant review and practice, especially with our spouses, family members, office staff and professional colleagues. Again and again, as my choice of graphics on the first page suggests, love is what ties us together and sustains our relationships.

Given that repetition is the key to ingraining, I like to revise and teach this study often. Akin to driving a car, these specific, measureable aspects of love should become habitual responses in our lives — even though they are more difficult and take much longer to cultivate than the rote habits of driving a car.

Before examining the fundamental aspects germane to objective love, Paul first emphasizes — and appropriately so — the superiority of love. So let’s look at that first.

## II. THE ESSENTIALITY OF LOVE 1CORINTHIANS 13:1-3

*If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become*

*a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

In these three opening verses, Paul makes three stark comparisons in order to underscore the incomparability of love. These introductory remarks exclaim the dominance of **love** as a virtue over all other character traits. It is important, motivational and insightful to note that the three comparisons *are related to qualities necessary* from a human perspective for one to succeed in the Capitol community! One must possess speaking skills, leadership and self-sacrifice. As critical as those are, love — from a godliness perspective — is of greater importance! The first comparison in verse one is to a person’s oratory abilities . . .

### A. LOVE OVER ORATION 1CORINTHIANS 13:1

*If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.*

One’s love for others is more important than his speaking abilities. The metaphorical meaning of **becoming a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal** relates to empty philosophizing. Someone who knows and exclaims all the right answers but has no love is akin to the Church of Ephesus as described in Revelation 2:1-7. That church had all the right doctrine but had lost their love for God. Proverbs 3:3 summarizes the necessary virtues a legislator needs possess: both a herald of truth and a man or woman of



love . . . . “Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.” Solomon’s use of the word **neck** and **heart** bespeak of both **love** (kindness) and **truth** as being a part of one’s outward and inward adornment. The meaning of the Hebrew word for **heart** *leb* includes the aspects of one’s intellect, emotion and will. The mature believer possesses **love** and **truth** simultaneously in full measure. The loving legislator, because his or her priorities are straight, is neither inwardly nor outwardly a **noisy gong or clanging cymbal** — even when he or she heralds the truth on the floor, such speech should be couched in words of **love**.

### How To Become A Marginalized Public Servant

In my 12 years of ministry in the California State Capitol, and the last 5 years in the US Capitol, I have observed certain members who become marginalized, ineffective and discarded by others because they double down on truth at the expense of love. I beg you not to follow in their footsteps. It is essential that you are as loving as you are truthful!

### B. LOVE OVER LEADING 1CORINTHIANS 13:2

*If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.*

It is not a stretch to interpret the second verse of chapter 13 to be a statement of the primacy of **love** over leadership. A legislator who knows the Word of God and who is acutely **knowledgeable** of

all the policy issues and possesses **faith** — visionary leadership for his or her personal and party’s future — who possesses not a genuine, heart-felt love for people, Scripture states emphatically herein, amounts to **nothing**. The phrase **so as to remove mountains** is Pauline hyperbole<sup>2</sup> (also seen in verse 7) intended to emphasize the conveyable meaning “to make what seems impossible possible.”<sup>3</sup> You may be a great leader or an up-and-coming great leader in American government — one who may be able to achieve what others deem impossible, a man or woman of great **faith** — but never forget that it is more important to **love** people, especially those who have nothing to do with helping you to accomplish your leadership objectives. Don’t kid yourself into thinking that people don’t pick up on self-centeredness.

### C. LOVE OVER SELF-SACRIFICE 1CORINTHIANS 13:3

*And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

For sure, one who gives sacrificially of time, talent and treasure is to be exalted above the lazy and uncommitted who do not. But in comparison to **love**, sacrificial qualities are of lesser significance. In fact a life of personal sacrifice for one’s cause will **profit nothing** when all is said and done in eternity. One who lacks **love** is woefully deficient.

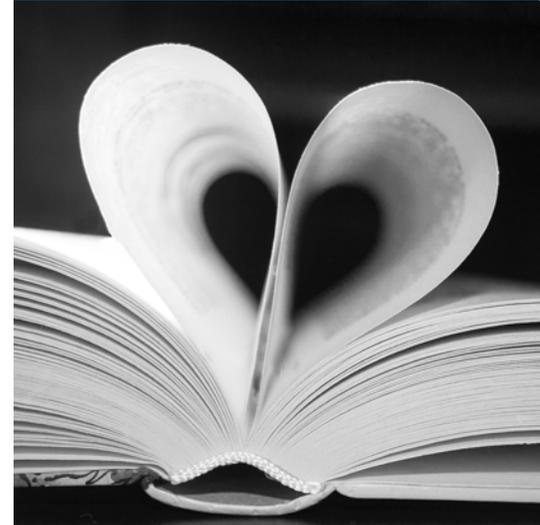
**“LOVE IS THE INDISPENSIBLE ADDITION WHICH ALONE GIVES WORTH TO ALL OTHER CHRISTIAN GIFTS.”**

Lord, help us to get this — to work on

### ♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

## 1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

**Faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.**



*Love is the indispensable addition which alone gives worth to all other Christian gifts.*

Dale Walker, continued from page 2

And secondly, the job of being a legislator is so stressful and difficult that they need a really solid spiritual foundation to serve God effectively. They need it because they should know God’s will, and they need it because in-depth teaching of the Bible is the only way any of us can grow.

— Pastor Dale Walker, Ministry Leader to the New York Legislature.

*Knowing very few people in his first 13 months as Ministry Leader, Pastor Walker knocked on doors at the New York State Capitol and when session was over, he drove around the state to knock on doors at district offices. During that time he led 13 Legislators to Christ.*



John Adams



*“[T]he foundations of national morality must be laid in private Families. In vain are Schools, Accademics [sic] and universities instituted, if loose Principles and licentious habits are impressed upon Children in their earliest years.... How is it possible that Children can have any just Sense of the sacred Obligations of Morality or Religion, if, from their earliest Infancy, they learn that their mothers live in habitual Infidelity to their fathers, and their fathers in as constant Infidelity to their Mothers.*

— John Adams, John Adams, Second President of the United States; Signer of the Declaration of Independence; Judge; Diplomat; One of two signers of the Bill of Rights.’

*John Adams, Entry of June 2, 1778, in Diary and Autobiography of John Adams, ed. Lyman H. Butterfield (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962), Vol. 4, p. 123.*

being more loving! Life in the Capitol, in the community, or in the home without **love** is **nothing** *oudeis* meaning “nothing at all.” How are you doing as a preeminently loving person — a lover of people and especially your mate if you are married? What follows the essentiality of love in the inspired mind of the Apostle Paul are the biblically-objective indications of **love**; they should help to answer the question “am I a loving person?” more realistically, versus analyzing subjective feelings that may or may not accurately reflect one’s real **love** quotient.

### III. THE ELEMENTS OF LOVE

#### A. FROM 1CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

*Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

After first stating for openers what love is: **love is patient** and **kind**, Paul describes the characteristic elements of love’s non-existence; the following seven descriptors on this inspired-by-God passage list what **love is not**. Sometimes the best way to describe what something is, is to state what it’s not.

After briefly examining and defining all of these virtues in 1Corinthians 13 we will review Colossians 3:12-14 for additional insights relative to the emotional aspects of **love** in order to round out the study. (Because love is emotive as well — but let’s be careful not to get the cart before

the horse.) Keep in mind that emotions, both good and bad, always stem from one’s thinking, either proper or improper thinking respectively. Given our cultural misunderstanding of **love**, I think it is essential for both you and me to approach and teach on **love** in this order: 1Corinthians 13 before Colossians 3.

#### 1. Love is patient *makrothumeo*

Literally “suffers long.” This first characteristic is the ability to be taken advantage of by a person many times and not be upset. The root word means “to persevere.” James uses this same Greek word in describing the attitudinal response of the prophets of old whose words went unheeded by their peers (cf. Ja. 5:8ff.). Program your mind with Philippians 1:6 . . .

*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

The truth of this passage will help you to sober to the fact that God is not through sanctifying the other person — nor am I perfect either! So be **patient**, not condemning and judgmental! Remember too that since Christ forgave your sins — past, present and future, that you must find room in your heart to forgive others who have wronged you. To be longsuffering, **patient** with another’s shortcomings is to be categorically **loving!**

#### 2. Love is kind *chresteuomai*

The counterpart to **patience**, is **kindness**. The Greek word means “to show one’s self mild.” This characteristic is a willingness to give to another, including one’s enemies, to be gentle and slow in avenging. The Greek root means “one desires and works



for another's welfare." It is the idea of good will, generous responses and actions, in contradistinction to holding onto past bad memories and thence being bothered by another in the future (aka "he or she gets on my nerves").

### 3. Love is not jealous *zeloo*

Literally the root means "earnestly desire." Contextually, **jealousy** is similar to covetousness as it is used here, carrying the idea of envy. It is a desire to have what another possesses as well as fearing someone will steal what you possess. To the contrary, Scripture commands us to not want what another possesses, but rather to "rejoice with those who rejoice" (Rom. 12:15). Choose to be glad for those who have — be they more talented, successful, popular or beautiful — versus envious. Are you the biggest cheerleader of your colleagues?

### 4. Love does not brag *perpereuomai*

Literally "to talk conceitedly." The mature in Christ have forgotten about self-importance. Center on others, not self. Proverbs 27:2 states . . .

*Let another praise you and not your own mouth, a stranger and not your own lips.*

Further, be characterized by asking another sincere questions (cultivate personal curiosity), talking little about self. Don't be quick to add your personal stories to every conversation; in the crowds in which you circulate, everyone already gets the point. It is better to spend your time asking questions of others. Love does not brag.

**THINK WHEN APPROACHING CONVERSATION, "WHAT CAN**

## I LEARN FROM THIS PERSON?" VERSUS "WHAT CAN I TELL THIS PERSON ABOUT ME?"

### 5. Love is not arrogant *phusioo*

Literally, "to puff or blow up." William Carey who translated the Bible into 34 languages was once put down in a banquet. An arrogant man said to him, "Mr. Carey, I understand that you were once a shoemaker." Carey replied, "I was not a shoemaker, only a shoe repairman!" Strive to be big-hearted, not bigheaded. Make it a habit to play-down self in the presence of others. Proverbs 16:18 states . . .

*Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.*

Reciprocally, keep in mind James 4:6 . . .

*God . . . gives grace to the humble.*

### 6. Love does not act unbecomingly *aschemoneo*

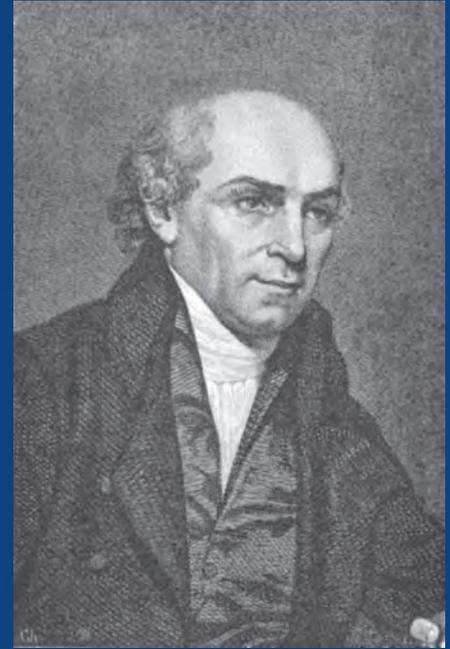
This is the characteristic of someone who cares so little for others around him that he acts without proper decorum for the occasion. It is to act rudely or impolitely, maybe even crudely. Work always on sensitivity for others. Always display respect for another regardless of their position or ability to assist in your objectives.

### 7. Love does not seek its own *zeteo heautou*

Jesus "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mt. 20:28). Be occupied with others' needs, not yours. Philippians 2:3 states . . .

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty*

William Carey





Coach John Wooden



## Rekindling Your Marriage Over Summer Recess

*conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.*

Herein is boilerplate Christianity! Are your mate's objectives more important to you than your own? What will you do by way of time, talent and treasure for your mate that will spell out to her or him in no unmistakable actions that you cherish her or him above yourself? One of the measureable aspects of love is not seeking your self-interests all the time. Coach Wooden used to stress the habit of doing a kind deed on a daily basis for someone who in no way could repay you. That is an excellent habit because it keeps reminding us of this truth: **Love does not seek its own.**

### 8. Love is not provoked *paroxuno*

Literally "to irritate, arouse to anger." Love guards against being upset, irritated or angered. Remember, **love is kind.** A person who is intent on having his or her own way is easily **provoked** when he or she is denied what they want.<sup>5</sup>

### 9. Love does not take into account a wrong suffered *logizomai*

The Greek has the idea of not "ledgering" of the **wrongs** someone has done and keeping a log. To the contrary, an important early Church father, Chrysostom remarked that a **wrong** done against **love** is like a spark that falls into the sea and is extinguished forever. The famous saying, "Don't get mad, get even" illustrates the **opposite idea** being conveyed here. If you are a Christian, your response must be to forgive and forget. Blatantly lacking in euphemistic prose, I call this concept "flushing the toilet." Do

not engender in one's self a memory akin to an elephant. Praise God He takes not into consideration our past sin! Clasp onto the virtue of Christ's forgiveness enables one to forsake the bondage of bitterness. Don't keep a **log** — it is not **loving.**

### 10. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness *adikia*

Isaiah warns, "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil" (5:20). It is not loving to sacrifice truth. One should not applaud the presence of sin in another. For sure the biblical concept of love is not emotional sentimentality devoid of truth.

### 11. Love rejoices with the truth *aletheia*

**Love** cares that what another believes is **truthful.** It is not **loving** to allow another to be hurt by lies, since what one believes (and then acts upon) is determinative to personal, familial and national destinies. It follows that love does not **rejoice** with erroneous thinking.<sup>6</sup>

The following remaining four elements of love are stated in a literary device known as hyperbole, exaggeration in order to make a strong point. (See endnote No. 2). The repetition of **all things** therefore relates to **all things** within the confines of God's righteousness, will and tolerance.

### 12. Love bears all things *stego*

Literally "to cover." "Love covers a multitude of sins" (cf. Prov. 10:12; 1Peter 4:8). You can measure your love for another as to how quickly you are willing and apt to forgive and forget, to move on relative to another's faults. God's nature, and hopefully the believer's actions must emulate God's

Chrysostom





revealed character in Psalm 103:12 . . . .

*As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

It follows that in order for us to be as loving as Jesus expects us to be that we be forgiving and forgetful.

### 13. Love believes all things *pisteuo*

Love trusts, it is confident; it isn't suspicious or cynical. Love trusts even after past hurts for having trusted. It is better to trust and be hurt again than to end up living life alone and bitter. Keep taking risks in your relationships!

### 14. Love hopes all things *elpizo*

Literally "to anticipate with pleasure." Jesus did not take Peter's failure as final. The believer continues to hope that sinners will someday turn from their sin and that believers will someday mature in Christ-likeness, for to lose hope is equivalent to losing love. Again, and similar to the virtue of **patience**, "I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" stated Paul in Philippians 1:6. Remember, as long as God's grace remains operational in this world, human failure is never final. People do learn from their mistakes; **hope** for the best in a person relative to his or her future. To carry in you such an optimistic attitude toward others is to be loving!

### 15. Love endures all things *hupomeno*

This Greek word was used of an army that held its position no matter what the

cost. Love holds fast to the one it loves. It will stand against all opposition. Love remains loyal even when the object of love is less than perfect.

**THESE FIFTEEN VIRTUES  
MAY SEEM SOMEWHAT  
MECHANICAL. THEY WILL  
HOWEVER PRODUCE THE  
EMOTIONS OF LOVE THAT ARE  
CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO  
EVERY HUMAN BEING AND  
NECESSARY TO TYING US  
TOGETHER FOR THE  
LONG RUN!**

Keep in mind, theologically speaking, all of these attributes of love already and completely exist in the life of the child of God per Colossians 2:10a. The believer is made positionally perfect before God at the point of salvation. How obedient one is to his new God-given, loving positional perfection in his everyday practice is a matter of obedience. All that to say this: No believer can reason, "I am just not a very loving person." All believers are perfect in their love: How obedient are you to your new nature in Christ?

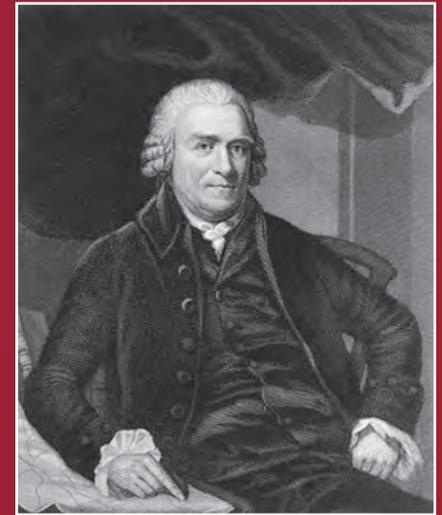
## IV. THE EXUBERANCE OF LOVE

Colossians 3:12-14 speaks to the passions of love:

*So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.*

In light of all the perfect and sacrificial love

Samuel Adams



*"Nothing is more essential to the establishment of manners in a State than that all persons employed in places of power and trust must be men of unexceptionable characters."*

— Samuel Adams, Signer of the Declaration of Independence; Father of the American Revolution; Ratifier of the US Constitution; Governor of Massachusetts

Samuel Adams, letter to James Warren, November 4, 1775



Jesus Christ has displayed to and for the world (John 3:16) God expects nothing less in response from His followers. **Heart of compassion** *splagchnon oiktirmos* speaks of the seat of emotions. These elements of God's exuberant, supernatural love are poured out via the indwelling Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Again and importantly, all of the elements of love presently exist in the believer's heart (cf. Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; 2Pe. 1:3-4). It isn't a matter of gaining them; it is a matter of taking ownership and using them!

love in your personhood!

The 1Corinthian 13 passages go on to contrast the importance of love with the spiritual gifts in the body of Christ (which is another study with a great deal of complexity).

May God help you to put on the very nature every believer already possesses: the *essential, elemental, exuberant* and *eternal* aspects of love. Amen! **cm**

<sup>1</sup> Prior, David The Message of 1Corinthians (Nottingham, England: Inter Varsity Press, 1985) p. 229-30

<sup>2</sup> In the literary genre of Scripture, as in the best of writing today, various figurative devices are inculcated to communicate both effectively and artfully. These devices would include (among many) the use of simile, allegory, ellipsis, metaphor, paradox, irony, euphemisms, etc. The figurative device used by Paul in 1 Cor. 13:2 & 7 is hyperbole. The people of the Middle East in ancient time used intensified exaggerated expressions to convey a thought with more force. An additional example would be what the Apostle John states in his Gospel about the life of Christ, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (21:25). (cf. E.W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech Used in the Bible [London: Messrs, Eyre, and Spottis-woods, 1889], pp. 171ff.) Such insights defy a wooden literalistic approach (of which Evangelicals are often falsely accused) to biblical interpretation/hermeneutics.

<sup>3</sup> H.L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, 1922-1928. As quoted in Barrett, C.K. The First Epistle To The Corinthians, Blacks New Testament Commentary Series (London: Hendrickson Publishers, 1968) p. 301.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 303. This quote in its tightest context relates to the point of chapter 13 in comparison to chapters 12 and 14. The application of the quote is nonetheless an appropriate capstone as used in the placement of these notes.

<sup>5</sup> The exception to being not provocative is if another is maligning or contradicting God's Word. Being provoked over such is akin to righteous indignation.

<sup>6</sup> Herein biblical Christianity conflicts with Postmodernism in that the Christian faith is based upon perspicuous moral absolutes as explicated in and through propositional truth, i.e. infallible and inerrant biblical revelation.

The *essential, elemental* and *exuberant* aspects of love, as listed in Corinthians and Colossians, are all characteristic ingredients of the truly redeemed, and they should naturally flow forth in and from the life of every Spirit-filled follower of Christ!

### V. THE ETERNITY OF LOVE 1CORINTHIANS 13:8

Now let us return to the closing passages on love as found in 1Corinthians 13.

#### A. LOVE NEVER FAILS

Love is permanent. It is an attribute of God, which means it never withers or decays. The believer should view this as a communicable attribute from God. Love is to be present and active in the life of every believer. Likened to Jesus we need possess eternal, unending, ever-present love! Never failing love! Agape love is part of the believer's very nature! May these virtues be increasingly unfolding in your life! May you conscientiously and regularly cultivate the habitual traits of Christ's unending



*Making Disciples of Jesus Christ  
in the Political Arena  
Throughout the World*

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