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“LOVE IS THE GREATEST”

Love Is the Greatest

¹ If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. ³ If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing. **1 Corinthians 13:1-3 NLT**

- Paul says that love is more important than spiritual gifts.
- Paul says that love is more important than knowledge.
- Paul says that love is more important than faith.
- Paul says that love is more important than generosity.

SO, WHAT IS LOVE?

⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶ It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. **1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT**

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- Patient and kind.
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- Does not demand its own way.
- Not irritable.
- Keeps no record of being wronged.
- Does not rejoice about injustice.
- Rejoices when the truth wins out.

- Never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

What love is not:

- It is not being a doormat.
- It is not being an enabler.
- It is not living without boundaries.
- It is not living in a dangerous or abusive situation.

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults **because of your love**. **Ephesians 4:2 NLT**

GOD IS LOVE.

⁷ Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸ But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. ¹⁰ This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. ¹² No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us. **1 John 4:7-12 NLT**

AS WE GROW IN GOD'S LOVE, OUR LOVE GROWS.

¹⁶ We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. ¹⁷ God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. ¹⁷ And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world. ¹⁸ Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love. ¹⁹ We love each other because he loved us first. **1 John 4:16-19 NLT**

- God's perfect love expels all fear.
- We need to grow in our understanding of how much God loves us.

LOVE WILL LAST FOREVER.

⁸ Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever! ⁹ Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture! ¹⁰ But when the time of perfection comes, these partial things will become useless. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. ¹² Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely. Love is eternal. ¹³ Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love. **1 Corinthians 13:8-13 NLT**

Next steps for me today...

- **Receive God's greatest gift of love through faith in Jesus.**
- **Grow in God's love.**
- **Share God's love.**