

*CTL.TODAY*

*PRESENTS*

*CHRISTIAN LOVE!*

*by*

*Rev. J.C. Ryle*



*LOVE*



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THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I have become a sounding brass, or a clanging symbol. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing.

Love is patient, and is kind; love does not envy. Love doesn't brag, is not proud, does not behave itself inappropriately, doesn't seek its own way, is not easily provoked, takes no account of evil, doesn't rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails: but where there are prophecies, they shall fail; where there are various languages, they shall cease; where there is knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abides faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is LOVE.—I COR 13.

# **CHRISTIAN LOVE!**

*J.C. Ryle, 1878*

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love!" 1 Corinthians 13:13

**"The end of the commandment is love." 1 Timothy 1:5**

Love is rightly called "the Queen of Christian graces." It is a grace which all people profess to admire. It seems a plain practical thing which everybody can understand. It is none of "those troublesome doctrinal points" about which Christians are disagreed. Thousands, I suspect, would not be ashamed to tell you that they knew nothing about justification or regeneration, about the work of Christ or the Holy Spirit. But nobody, I believe, would like to say that he knew nothing about "love!" If men possess nothing else in religion, they always flatter themselves that they possess "love."

A few plain thoughts about love may not be without use. There are false notions abroad about it which require to be dispelled. There are mistakes about it which require to be rectified. In my admiration of love, I yield to none. But I am bold to say that in many minds, the whole subject seems completely misunderstood.

I. Let me show, firstly, the place which the Bible gives to love.

II. Let me show, secondly, what the love of the Bible really is.

III. Let me show, thirdly, where true love comes from.

IV. Let me show, lastly, why love is "the greatest" of the graces.

I ask the best attention of my readers to the subject. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that the growth of love may be promoted in this sin-burdened world. In nothing does the fallen condition of man show itself so strongly, as in the scarcity of Christian love. There is little faith on earth, little hope, little knowledge of Divine things. But nothing, after all, is so scarce as real love!

### **I. Let me show the PLACE which the Bible gives to love.**

I begin with this point in order to establish the immense practical importance of my subject. I do not forget that there are many high-flying Christians in this present day, who almost refuse to look at anything practical in Christianity. They can talk of nothing but two or three favorite doctrines. Now I want to remind my readers that the Bible contains much about practice as well as about doctrine, and that one thing to which it attaches great weight, is "love."

I turn to the New Testament, and ask men to observe what it says about love. In all religious inquiries there is nothing like letting the Scripture speak for itself. There is no surer way of finding out truth, than the old way of turning to plain texts. Texts were our Lord's weapons, both in answering Satan, and in arguing with the Jews. Texts are the guides we must never be ashamed to refer to in the present day. "What do the Scriptures say? What is written? How do you read?"

Let us hear what Paul says to the Corinthians: "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not 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 have not love--I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love--I gain nothing!" 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Let us hear what Paul says to the Colossians: "Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." (Colossians 3:14.)

Let us hear what Paul says to Timothy: "The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart" (1 Timothy 1:5.)

Let us hear what Peter says: "Above all things, have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8.)

Let us hear what our Lord Jesus Christ Himself says, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34, 35.)

Above all, let us read our Lord's account of the last judgment, and mark that lack of love will condemn millions. "Then He will say to those on the left: Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels! For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in; I was naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not take care of Me." (Matthew 25:41-43.)

Let us hear what Paul says to the Romans: "Owe no man anything--but to love another: for he who loves another has fulfilled the law." (Romans 13:9.)

Let us hear what Paul says to the Ephesians: "And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." (Ephesians 5:2.)

Let us hear what John says: "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love." (1 John 4:7, 8.)

I shall make no comment upon these texts. I think it better to place them before my readers in their naked simplicity, and to let them speak for

themselves. If anyone is disposed to think the subject of this paper a matter of light importance, I will only ask him to look at these texts, and to think again. He who would take down "love" from the high and holy place which it occupies in the Bible, and treat it as a matter of secondary consequence, must settle his account with God's Word. I certainly shall not waste time in arguing with him.

To my own mind, the evidence of these texts appears clear, plain, and incontrovertible. They show the immense importance of love, as one of the "things that accompany salvation." They prove that it has a right to demand the serious attention of all who call themselves Christians, and that those who despise the subject are only exposing their own ignorance of Scripture.

## **II. Let me show, secondly, WHAT the love of the Bible really is.**

I think it of great importance to have clear views on this point. It is precisely here that mistakes about love begin. Thousands delude themselves with the idea that they have "love," when they have not, from downright ignorance of Scripture. Their love is not the love described in the Bible.

(a) The love of the Bible does not consist in giving to the poor. It is a common delusion to suppose that it does. Yet Paul tells us plainly, that a man may "bestow all his goods to feed the poor" (1 Corinthians 13:8)--and not have love! That a charitable man will "remember the poor," there can be no question. (Galatians 2:10.) That he will do all he can to assist them, relieve them, and lighten their burdens--I do not for a moment deny. All I say is, that this does not make up "love." It is easy to spend a fortune in giving away money, and soup, and milk, and and bread, and coals, and blankets, and clothing--and yet to be utterly destitute of Bible love!

(b) The love of the Bible does not consist in never disapproving anybody's conduct. Here is another very common delusion! Thousands pride themselves on never condemning others, or calling them wrong, whatever they may do. They convert the precept of our Lord, "do not judge," into an



excuse for having no unfavorable opinion at all of anybody! They pervert His prohibition of rash and censorious judgments, into a prohibition of all judgment whatever.

Your neighbor may be a drunkard, a liar, and a violent man. Never mind! "It is not love," they tell you, "to pronounce him, wrong!" You are to believe that he has a good heart at the bottom! This idea of love is, unhappily, a very common one. It is full of mischief. To throw a veil over sin, and to refuse to call things by their right names, to talk of "hearts" being good, when "lives" are flatly wrong, to shut our eyes against wickedness, and say smooth things of immorality--this is not Scriptural love!

(c) The love of the Bible does not consist in never disapproving anybody's religious opinions. Here is another most serious and growing delusion. There are many who pride themselves on never pronouncing others mistaken, whatever views they may hold. Your neighbor may be an Atheist, or a Buddhist, or a Roman Catholic, or a Mormonite, a Deist, or a Skeptic, a mere Formalist, or a thorough Antinomian. But the "love" of many says that you have no right to think him wrong! "If he is sincere, it is uncharitable to think unfavorably of his spiritual condition!"

From such love--may I ever be delivered!

At this rate, the Apostles were wrong in going out to preach to the Gentiles!

At this rate, there is no use in missions!

At this rate, we had better close our Bibles, and shut up our churches!

At this rate, everybody is right--and nobody is wrong!

At this rate, everybody is going to Heaven--and nobody is going to Hell! Such love is a monstrous caricature! To say that all are equally right in their opinions--though their opinions flatly contradict one another; to say that all

are equally in the way to Heaven--though their doctrinal sentiments are as opposite as black and white--this is not Scriptural love. Love like this, pours contempt on the Bible, and talks as if God had not given us a written standard of truth. Love like this, confuses all our notions of Heaven, and would fill it with a discordant inharmonious rabble. True love does not think everybody right in doctrine. True love cries, "Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world!" 1 John 4:1. "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him!" 2 John 1:10

I leave the negative side of the question here. I have dwelt upon it at some length because of the days in which we live and the strange notions which abound. Let me now turn to the positive side. Having shown what love is not, let me now show what it is.

Christian love is that "love," which Paul places first among those fruits which the Spirit causes to be brought forth in the heart of a believer. "The fruit of the Spirit is love." (Galatians 5:22.)

Love to God, such as Adam had before the fall, is its first feature. He who has love, desires to love God with heart, and soul and mind, and strength.

Love to man is its second feature. He who has Christian love, desires to love his neighbor as himself.

Christian love will show itself in a believer's doings. It will make him ready to do kind acts to everyone within his reach, "both to their bodies and souls. It will not let him be content with soft words and kind wishes. It will make him diligent in doing all that lies in his power to lessen the sorrow and increase the happiness of others. Like his Master, he will care more for ministering than for being ministered to, and will look for nothing in return. Like his Master's great apostle, he will very willingly "spend and be spent" for

others, even though they repay him with hatred, and not with love. True love does not want wages. Its work is its reward.

Christian love will show itself in a believer's readiness to bear evil as well as to do good. It will make him . . .

patient under provocation,  
forgiving when injured,  
meek when unjustly attacked,  
quiet when slandered.

It will make him bear much and forbear much, put up with much and look over much, submit often and deny himself often--all for the sake of peace. It will make him put a strong bit on his temper, and a strong bridle on his tongue.

True love is not always asking, "What are my rights? Am I treated as I deserve?" but, "How can I best promote peace? How can I do that which is most edifying to others?"

Christian love will show itself in the general spirit and demeanor of a believer. It will make him kind, unselfish, good-natured, good-tempered, and considerate for others. It will make him gentle, affable, and courteous, in all the daily relations of private life. It will make him thoughtful for others' comfort, tender for others' feelings, and more anxious to give pleasure than to receive.

True love never envies others when they prosper, nor rejoices in the calamities of others when they are in trouble. At all times, it will believe, and hope, and try to put a good construction on others' actions. And even at the worst, it will be full of pity, mercy, and compassion.

Would we like to know where the true Pattern of love like this can be found? We have only to look at the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, as described in the

Gospels, and we shall see it perfectly exemplified. Love shone forth in all His doings. His daily life was an incessant "going about" doing good. Love shone forth in all His bearing. He was continually hated, persecuted, slandered, misrepresented. But He patiently endured it all. No angry word ever fell from His lips. No ill-temper ever appeared in His demeanor. "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats." (1 Peter 2:23.) Love shone forth in all His spirit and deportment. The law of kindness was ever on His lips. Among weak and ignorant disciples, among sick and sorrowful petitioners for help and relief, among publicans and sinners, among Pharisees and Sadducees--He was always one and the same--kind and patient to all.

And yet, be it remembered, our blessed Master never flattered sinners, or connived at sin. He never shrank from exposing wickedness in its true colors, or from rebuking those who would cleave to it. He never hesitated to denounce false doctrine, by whoever it might be held, or to exhibit false practice in its true colors, and the certain end to which it tends. He called things by their right names. He spoke as freely of Hell and the fire that is never quenched, as of Heaven and the kingdom of glory. He has left on record an everlasting proof that perfect love does not require us to approve everybody's life or opinions, and that it is quite possible to condemn false doctrine and wicked practice--and yet to be full of love at the same time.

I have now set before my readers the true nature of Christian love. I have given a slight and very brief account of what it is not, and what it is. I cannot pass on without suggesting two practical thoughts, which press home on my mind with weighty force, and I hope may press home on others.

Think, for a moment, how deplorably little love there is upon earth! How conspicuous is the absence of true love among professing Christians! I speak not of heathen now, I speak of professing Christians! What angry tempers, what passions, what selfishness, what bitter tongues--are to be found in private families! What strifes, what quarrels, what spitefulness, what malice, what revenge, what envy between neighbors and fellow-parishioners! What

jealousies and contentions between Churchmen and Dissenters, Calvinists and Arminians, High Churchmen and Low Churchmen! "Where is love?" we may well ask, "Where is love? Where is the mind of Christ?"--when we look at the spirit which reigns in the world. No wonder that Christ's cause stands still, and infidelity abounds--when men's hearts know so little of love! Surely, we may well say, "When the Son of man comes, shall He find love upon earth?"

Think, for another thing, what a happy world this would be--if there was more love. It is the lack of love which causes half the misery which there is upon earth. Sickness, and death, and poverty, will not account for more than half the sorrows. The rest come from ill-temper, ill-nature, strifes, quarrels, lawsuits, malice, envy, revenge, frauds, violence, wars, and the like. It would be one great step towards doubling the happiness of mankind, and halving their sorrows--if all men and women were full of Scriptural love.

### **III. Let me show, thirdly--where the love of the Bible comes from.**

Love, such as I have described, is certainly not natural to man. Naturally, we are all more or less selfish, envious, ill-tempered, spiteful, ill-natured, and unkind! We have only to observe children, when left to themselves, to see the proof of this. Let boys and girls grow up without proper training and education--and you will not see one of them possessing Christian love! Mark how some of them think first of themselves, and their own comfort and advantage! Mark how others are full of pride, passion, and evil tempers! How can we account for it? There is but one reply. The natural heart knows nothing of true love.

Christian love will never be found except in a heart prepared by the Holy Spirit. It is a tender plant, and will never grow except in one soil. You may as well expect grapes on thorns, or figs on thistles--as look for love when the heart is not right.

The heart in which love grows, is a heart changed, renewed, and transformed by the Holy Spirit. The image and likeness of God, which Adam lost at the

fall, has been restored to it, however feeble and imperfect the restoration may appear. It is a "partaker of the Divine nature," by union with Christ and sonship to God; and one of the first features of that nature is love. 2Peter 1:4

Such a heart is deeply convinced of sin--hates it, flees from it, and fights with it from day to day. And one of the prime motions of sin which it daily labors to overcome, is selfishness and lack of love.

Such a heart is deeply sensible of its mighty debt to our Lord Jesus Christ. It feels continually that it owes to Him who died for us on the cross, all its present comfort, hope, and peace. How can it show forth its gratitude? What can it render to its Redeemer? If it can do nothing else, it strives to be like Him, to drink into His spirit, to walk in His footsteps, and, like Him--to be full of love. "The love of Christ shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit" is the surest fountain of Christian love. Love will produce love.

I ask my reader's special attention to this point. It is one of great importance in the present day. There are many who profess to admire love--while they care nothing about vital Christianity. They like some of the fruits and results of the Gospel--but not the root from which these fruits alone can grow, or the doctrines with which they are inseparably connected.

Hundreds will praise love--who hate to be told of man's corruption, of the blood of Christ, and of the inward work of the Holy Spirit. Many a parent would like his children to grow up unselfish and good tempered--who would not be much pleased if conversion, and repentance, and faith, were pressed home on their attention.

Now I desire to protest against this notion, that you can have the fruits of Christianity, without the roots--that you can produce Christian tempers, without teaching Christian doctrines--that you can have love which will wear and endure, without grace in the heart.

I grant, most freely, that every now and then one sees a person who seems very charitable and amiable, without any distinctive Christian religion. But

such cases are so rare and remarkable, that, like exceptions--they only prove the truth of the general rule. And often, too often, it may be feared in such cases the love is only apparent, and in private it completely fails. I firmly believe, as a general rule, you will not find such love as the Bible describes, except in the soil of a heart thoroughly imbued with Bible religion. Holy practice will not flourish without sound doctrine. What God has joined together, it is useless to expect to have separate.

The delusion which I am trying to combat, is helped forward to a most mischievous degree by the vast majority of novels, romances, and tales of fiction. Who does not know that the heroes and heroines of these works are constantly described as patterns of perfection? They are always doing the right thing, saying the right thing, and showing the right temper! They are always kind, and amiable, and unselfish, and forgiving! And yet you never hear a word about their religion! In short, to judge by the generality of works of fiction, it is possible to have . . .

excellent practical religion--without doctrine,  
the fruits of the Spirit--without the grace of the Spirit,  
and the mind of Christ--without union with Christ!

Here, in short, is the great danger of reading most novels, romances, and works of fiction. The greater part of them give a false or incorrect view of human nature. They paint their model men and women as they ought to be, and not as they really are. The readers of such writings get their minds filled with wrong conceptions of what the world is. Their notions of mankind become visionary and unreal. They are constantly looking for men and women such as they never meet--and expecting what they never find.

Let me entreat my readers, once for all, to draw their ideas of human nature from the Bible, and not from novels. Settle it down in your mind, that there cannot be true love without a heart renewed by grace. A certain degree of kindness, courtesy, amiability, good nature--may undoubtedly be seen in many who have no vital religion. But the glorious plant of Bible love, in all its

fullness and perfection, will never be found without union with Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit. Teach this to your children, if you have any. Hold it up in schools, if you are connected with any. Lift up love. Make much of love. Give place to none in exalting the grace of kindness, love, good nature, unselfishness, good temper.

But never, never forget, that there is but one school in which these things can be thoroughly learned--and that is the school of Christ. Real love comes down from above. True love is the fruit of the Spirit. He who would have it--must sit at Christ's feet, and learn of Him.

#### **IV. Let me show, lastly--why love is called the "greatest" of the graces.**

The words of Paul, on this subject, are distinct and unmistakable. He winds up his wonderful chapter on love in the following manner: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love!" 1 Corinthians 13:13

This expression is very remarkable. Of all the writers in the New Testament, none, certainly, exalts "faith" so highly as Paul. The Epistles to the Romans and Galatians abound in sentences showing its vast importance. By faith, the sinner lays hold on Christ and is saved. Through faith, we are justified, and have peace with God. Yet here the same Paul speaks of something which is even greater than faith! He puts before us the three leading Christian graces, and pronounces the following judgment on them, "The greatest is love!" Such a sentence from such a writer demands special attention. What are we to understand, when we hear of love being greater than faith and hope?

We are not to suppose, for a moment, that love can atone for our sins, or make our peace with God. Nothing can do that for us, but the blood of Christ; and nothing can give us a saving interest in Christ's blood, but faith. It is Scriptural ignorance not to know this. The office of justifying and joining the soul to Christ, belongs to faith alone. Our love, and all our other graces, are all more or less imperfect, and could not stand the severity of God's



judgment. When we have done all--we are "unprofitable servants." (Luke 17:10.)

We are not to suppose that Christian love can exist independently of faith. Paul did not intend to set up one grace in rivalry to the other. He did not mean that one man might have faith, another hope, and another love--and that the best of these, was the man who had love. The three graces are inseparably joined together. Where there is faith, there will always be love; and where there is love, there will be faith. Sun and light, fire and heat, ice and cold, are not more intimately united than faith and love!

The reasons why love is called the greatest of the three graces, appear to me plain and simple. Let me show what they are.

(a) Love is called the greatest of graces, because it is the one in which there is some likeness between the believer and his God. God has no need of faith. He is dependent on no one. There is none superior to Him in whom He must trust. God has no need of hope. To Him all things are certain, whether past, present, or to come. But "God is love" and the more love His people have--the more similar they are to their Father in Heaven.

(b) Love, for another thing, is called the greatest of the graces, because it is most useful to others. Faith and hope, beyond doubt, however precious, have special reference to a believer's own private individual benefit. Faith unites the soul to Christ, brings peace with God, and opens the way to Heaven. Hope fills the soul with cheerful expectation of things to come, and, amid the many discouragements of things seen, comforts with visions of the things unseen.

But love is pre-eminently the grace which makes a man useful. It is the spring of good works and kindnesses. It is the root of missions, schools, and hospitals. Love made apostles spend and be spent for souls. Love raises up workers for Christ, and keeps them working. Love smooths quarrels, and stops strife--and in this sense, "covers a multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8.) Love

adorns Christianity, and recommends it to the world. A man may have real faith, and feel it--and yet his faith may be invisible to others. But a man's love cannot be hidden.

(c) Love, in the last place, is the greatest of the graces, because it is the one which endures the longest. In fact, it will never die. Faith will one day be swallowed up in sight--and hope in certainty. Their office will be useless in the morning of the resurrection; and, like old almanacs, they will be laid aside. But love will live on through the endless ages of eternity! Heaven will be the abode of love. The inhabitants of Heaven will be full of love. One common feeling will be in all their hearts, and that will be love.

I leave this part of my subject here, and pass on to a CONCLUSION. On each of the three points of comparison I have just named, between love and the other graces, it would be easy to enlarge. But time and space both forbid me to do so. If I have said enough to guard men against mistakes about the right meaning, of the greatness of love--I am content. Love, be it ever remembered, cannot justify and put away our sins. It is neither Christ, nor faith.

But love makes us somewhat like God.

Love is of mighty use to the world.

Love will live and flourish when faith's work is done.

Surely, in these points of view--love well deserves the crown!

(1) And now let me ask every one into whose hands this paper may come a simple question. Let me press home on your conscience the whole subject of this paper. Do you know anything of the grace of which I have been speaking? Do you have Christian love?

The strong language of the Apostle Paul must surely convince you that the inquiry is not one that ought to be lightly put aside. The grace, without which that holy man could say, "I am nothing," the grace which the Lord Jesus says expressly is the great mark of being His disciple--such a grace as this, demands the serious consideration of every one who is in earnest about the

salvation of his soul. It should set him thinking, "How does this affect me? Do I have Christian love?"

You have some knowledge, it may be, of religion. You know the difference between true and false doctrine. You can, perhaps, even quote texts, and defend the opinions you hold. But, remember the knowledge which is barren of practical results in life and temper--is a useless possession! The words of the Apostle are very plain: "If I can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge--but have not love, I am nothing!" (1 Corinthians 13:3.)

You think you have faith, perhaps. You trust you are one of God's elect, and rest in that. But surely you should remember that there is a faith of devils, which is utterly unprofitable--and that the faith of God's elect is a "faith which works by love." It was when Paul remembered the "love" of the Thessalonians, as well as their faith and hope, that he said, "I know your election of God." (1 Thessalonians 1:4.)

Look at your own daily life, both at home and abroad, and consider what place Christian love has in it. What is your temper? What are your ways of behaving toward all around you in your own family? What is your manner of speaking, especially in seasons of vexation and provocation? Where is your good-nature, your courtesy, your patience, your meekness, your gentleness, your forbearance? Where are your practical actions of love in your dealing with others? What do you know of the mind of Him who "went about doing good"--who loved all, though specially His disciples--who returned good for evil, and kindness for hatred, and had a heart wide enough to feel for all?

What would you do in Heaven, I wonder, if you got there without love? What comfort could you have in an abode where love was the law, and selfishness and ill-nature completely shut out? Alas! I fear that Heaven would be no place for an uncharitable and ill-tempered man! A little boy said, "If grandfather goes to Heaven--I hope my brother and I will not go there." "Why do you say that?" he was asked. He replied, "If he sees us there, I am sure he will say, as he does now--'What are these boys doing here? Get them get out

of the way!' He does not like to see us on earth, and I suppose he would not like to see us in Heaven!"

Give yourself no rest, until you know something by experience of real Christian love. Go and learn of Him who is meek and lowly of heart, and ask Him to teach you how to love. Ask the Lord Jesus to put His Spirit within you, to take away the old heart, to give you a new nature, to make you know something of His mind. Cry to Him night and day for grace, and give Him no rest until you feel something of what I have been describing in this paper. Happy indeed will your life be, when you really understand "walking in love."

(2) But I do not forget that I am writing to some who are not ignorant of the love of Scripture, and who long to feel more of it every year. I will give you two simple words of exhortation. They are these:

Practice love diligently. It is one of those graces, above all, which grow by constant exercise. Strive more and more to carry it into every little detail of daily life. Watch over your own tongue and temper throughout every hour of the day, and especially in your dealings with children and spouse. Remember the character of the excellent woman: "In her tongue is the law of kindness." (Proverbs 31:26.)

Remember the words of Paul: "Let ALL your things be done with love." (1 Corinthians 16:14.) Love should be seen in little things, as well as in great ones.

Remember, not least, the words of Peter: "Have fervent love among yourselves;" not a love which just keeps alight, but a burning shining fire, which all around can see! (1 Peter 4:8.) It may cost pains and trouble to keep these things in mind. There may be little encouragement from the example of others. But persevere. Love like this brings its own reward!

Finally, teach love to others. Press it continually on your children. Tell them the great duty of kindness, helpfulness, and considerateness, one for

another. Remind them constantly that kindness, good nature, and good temper, are among the first evidences which Christ requires in children. If they cannot know much, or explain doctrines--they can understand love. A child's religion is worth very little if it only consists in repeating texts and hymns. As useful as they are, they are often . . .

learned without thought,  
remembered without feeling,  
repeated without consideration of their meaning,  
and forgotten when childhood is gone!

By all means let children be taught texts and hymns; but let not such teaching be made everything in their religion. Teach them to keep their tempers, to be kind one to another, to be unselfish, good-natured, obliging, patient, gentle, forgiving. Tell them never to forget to their dying day, if they live as long as Methuselah, that without love, the Holy Spirit says, "we are nothing." Tell them "above all things--to put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." (Colos. 3:14.)

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# SCRIPTURES

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 5:8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:37-39 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

1 John 3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Romans 13:8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Galatians 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Ephesians 4:2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

1 Peter 1:22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

Matthew 5:43-48 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

John 14:21-24 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

John 15:9-17 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.





