

DON'T STOP BELIEVING!

1 Corinthians 13:1-8, 13

- **In our LOVE FOR REAL series, we've learned that:**
  - **Our #1 goal in life should be to love God and others better.**
  - **Love is a choice we can make, an action we can take, a skill we can develop, and a habit we can adopt.**
  - **The best use of life is love, the best expression of love is time, and the best time to show love is now.**
  - **We're to love others like Jesus has loved us (John 13:34-35).**
  - **Genuine love is patient, kind, humble, tactful, gentle, and forgiving.**
  - **Genuine love overcomes anger and frustration with others.**
- *"Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. . . . Love will last forever!"* (1 Corinthians 13:7-8)
- **When going through life's challenges one thing we can count on is God's love for us (Isaiah 54:8, Jeremiah 31:3).**
- *"Nothing can ever separate us from God's love."* (Romans 8:38)
- **The Lord wants us to love others, even the most difficult people around us, in the same way that He's loved us.**
- Jesus – *"I command you to <u>love each other in the same way</u> that I love you."* (John 15:12)
- "It's not real love unless it's eternal." - Euripides
- **Love that lasts for a lifetime has to overcome the "Deadly D's" – difficulties, disagreements, differences, disappointments, dead-ends, depression, delay, doubt, distance, death, debt and demands.**
- *"Love <u>never stops</u> being patient, <u>never stops</u> believing, <u>never stops</u> hoping, and <u>never</u> gives up."* (1 Corinthians 13:7 GW)
- ***What "qualities" demonstrate that we have "lasting love" for others?***

We Demonstrate Lasting Love To Others When:

WE EXTEND <u>GRACE</u> TO THEM

- *"Love never gives up."* (1 Corinthians 13:7a)
- *"Love never stops being patient."* (1 Corinthians 13:7a GW)
- **We won't have lasting relationships unless we're willing to extend forgiveness, mercy, patience, acceptance and grace to others.**
- **Grace is essential to relationships because no one is perfect (Romans 3:10).**
- *"If we say we have no sin, we're only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth."* (1 John 1:8)
- **The way we build strong relationships is to treat other people the way that God treats us.**
- *"Accept each other just as Christ has accepted you."* (Romans 15:7)
- **One of the ways we accept people is by listening to them and being patient with them.**
- *"Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love."* (Ephesians 4:2)
- ***Who do I need to be patient with or show grace to this week?***

We Demonstrate Lasting Love To Others When:

WE EXPRESS <u>FAITH</u> IN THEM

- *"Love . . . never loses faith."* (1 Corinthians 13:7b)
- *"Love . . . never stops believing."* (1 Corinthians 13:7b GW)
- **Real love is about believing in people.**
- **Three kinds of people in the world include those who are gullible, those who are cynics, and those who are healthy and trusting.**
- "Trusting people live happier lives." (Dr. Julian Rotter, *Psychology Today*)
- **One key evidence of our love for and trust in others is our willingness to give other people a second chance.**
- *"God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God."* (Romans 8:28)
- **When we feel that we can't trust anyone else, we can always trust God.**
- *"What is important is faith expressing itself in love."* (Galatians 5:6)
- **Being able to trust God and others brings us health and happiness.**
- ***Who do I need to communicate trust to this week?***

We Demonstrate Lasting Love To Others When:

WE EXPECT THE <u>BEST</u> OF THEM

- *"Love . . . is always hopeful."* (1 Corinthians 13:7c)
- *"Love . . . never stops hoping."* (1 Corinthians 13:7c GW)
- "Whoever loves believes in miracles." (Poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

- **People tend to live up to our expectations of them, so we need to treat them the way we want them to become, not the way they are.**
- **Neglect is what kills love and relationships.**
- ***Who do I need to express belief in this week?***

We Demonstrate Lasting Love To Others When:

WE ENDURE THE <u>WORST</u> FROM THEM

- *"Love . . . endures through every circumstance."* (1 Corinthians 13:7d)
- *"Love . . . never gives up."* (1 Corinthians 13:7d GW)
- **Lasting love is determined and will not give up on a relationship.**
- **The purpose of relationships is not to make us happy, but to make us holy, and it takes faith and determination in the midst of trials to become holy.**
- *We can rejoice when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us - they help us learn to endure. And endurance develops strength of character in us."* (Romans 5:3-4)
- **All marriage, family and relationship problems come down to ego, pride and selfishness.**
- ***Who do I need to express commitment to this week?***

- **Learning to love is what life is all about, and so we must focus our lives on loving God and loving others (Matthew 22:37-39).**
- **The greatest news in the world is that God has extended grace, trust, encouragement and faithfulness to us.**
- "Because God loves me He is slow to lose patience with me. Because God loves me He takes the circumstances of my life and He uses them in a constructive way for my growth. Because God loves me He does not treat me as an object to be possessed or manipulated. Because God loves me He has no need to impress me with how great and powerful He is because He's God. Nor does He belittle me as His child in order to show me how important He is. Because God loves me He is for me and He wants to see me mature and develop in His love. Because God loves me He does not keep score of all my sins and then beat me over the head with them whenever He gets the chance." - Rick Warren
- **Human love wears out; so the real secret to lasting love is letting God's love flow through us.**
- *"We know how dearly God loves us, because He has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love."* (Romans 5:5)
- ***What is the Lord communicating to me through this message?***