

Agapao

- A. The noun *agapao* (ἀγαπάω) has the following cognates:
1. *Agape* (ἀγάπη) (noun), “divine-love”
 2. *Agapetos* (ἀγαπητός) (adjective), “beloved, divinely loved one.”
- B. Classical
1. What English speaking people call “love” is differentiated in the Greek mind and is expressed in various ways.
 2. Classical Greek has 4 verbs that denote “to love”:
 - a. *Erao* (ἐράω) (verb), “to love passionately, to desire, to yearn”
 - b. *Stergo* (στεργώ) (verb), “to affectionately love parents or children”
 - c. *Phileo* (φιλέω) (verb), “to personally love friends or family members”
 - d. *Agapao* (ἀγαπάω) (verb), “to be satisfied with, to honor, to receive, to greet, to prefer”
 3. *Phileo* is the most common indicating attraction towards a person or thing such as love for one’s relatives or friends.
 4. In contrast *eros* is love, which desires to have or take possession.
 5. *Agapao* originally meaning “to honor, welcome” is the least specifically defined word in classical Greek.
 6. It was synonymous in classical Greek with *phileo* but this is not the case in the Greek New Testament.
 7. *Phileo* is the most general word for love or regard with affection.
 8. It has many derivatives words.
 9. The verb denotes the attraction of people to one another who are close together both inside and outside the family.
 10. It includes concern, care and hospitality, also love for things in the sense of being fond of.
 11. *Stergo* means, “to love, feel affection” especially of the mutual love of parents and children.
 12. It can also be used of the love of a people for their ruler, the love of tutelary god for the people and even of dogs for their master.
 13. It is less common for the love of husband and wife, and does not occur at all in the Greek New Testament, apart from the compounds *astorgos* (Rm. 1:31; 2 Tm. 3:3) and *philostorgos* (Rm. 12:10).
 14. It is found in 1 Clement 1:3 and Polycarp 4:2).
 15. The verb *erao* and the noun *eros*, on the other hand, denote love between a man and a woman, which embraces longing, craving and sexual desire.
 16. The Greeks delighted in physical beauty and sensual desires found expression in the Dionysiac approach to and feeling for, life.
 17. The god of love, *Eros*, was a significant part of Greek life, since she was the god of fertility.
 18. *Eros* was compelled by none but compelled all.
 19. The Greeks sought in *eros* intoxication and thus it was a religion to them.
 20. They would sing hymns to *Eros*.
 21. But *eros* did not simply refer to just the sensual but it also was an ecstasy that transported man beyond rationality.

22. For Plato, *eros* was the striving for righteousness, self-possession and wisdom.
23. It is the embodiment of the good, the way to attain immortality (Symp. 200, 206).
24. Aristotle took the concept to the next level where this striving for righteousness developed towards a spiritual union with the transcendental dominated.
25. The etymology of *agapao* and *agape* is not clear.
26. In classical Greek, *agape* had nothing of the power of *eros* or the warmth of *phileo* for its meaning was weak and subject to change.
27. The verb *agapao* occurs quite frequently from Homer onwards in Greek literature, but the noun *agape* is only a late Greek construction and is almost completely lacking in pre-biblical Greek.
28. The examples of *agape* in classical Greek are few in number and in many cases doubtful or hard to date.
29. There is one reference of *agape* outside the Bible where the goddess Isis is given the title *agape* (Oxyrhynchus Papyri, 1380, 109; 2nd century A.D.)
30. The verb often meant, “to be satisfied with something, to receive, to greet, to honor in terms of external attitude.
31. It related more toward an inward attitude in its meaning of “seeking after something, desiring someone or something.”
32. The verb *agapao* is often used in the classical Greek to denote friendship between equals, or sometimes sympathy.
33. Sometime *agapao* took on the meaning of “to prefer, to set one good or aim above another, to prioritize, to esteem one person more highly than another.”
34. The noun *eros* was a general love of the world seeking to satisfy itself wherever it can thus making no distinctions, whereas *agape* made distinctions, choosing and keeping its object.
35. *Eros* is determined by a more or less indefinite impulsion towards its object, whereas *agape* is a free and decisive act determined by its subject.
36. *Eros* was a self-serving love, whereas *agape* was a giving love for the benefit of another.
37. The adjective *agapetos* was applied to a thing, which is right, or a person who is dear such as a child who is precious to a parent.
38. The verb *phileo* comes from the stem *phil* which became the basis for a wide variety of compounds, and thus was the most general word for love or regard with affection.
39. It denoted the personal love between friends and family members.
40. Liddel and Scott (Greek-English Lexicon, New Edition, page 6):
 - a. Love
 - b. Especially, of the love of God for man and of man for God
 - c. Brotherly love, charity
 - d. In plural, love-feast
 - e. Alms, charity
 - f. Title of Isis

C. LXX

1. The verb *agapao* is quite common in the LXX.
2. It is used to translate as many as 19 different terms.
3. The verb *ʾahav* (אהב) is translated quite often with *agapao* and can refer to both persons and things.

4. *`Ahev* denotes relationships between men with each other and secondly God's relationship with man.
5. It is used to describe Abraham's love for Isaac (Gen. 22:2) and Isaac's love for Rebekah (Gen. 24:67).
6. *Agapao* describes the Lord's virtue-love for Israel (Hosea 11:1), and how Israel was to reciprocate with virtue-love (Deut. 6:5; 11:1, 13).
7. The noun *agape* was to translate the Hebrew noun *`ahavah* (אהבה).
8. David used the word in eulogizing Jonathan who died with his father Saul in battle with the Philistines (2 Sam. 1:26).
9. It is also found in Ecclesiastes 9:1, and in the Song of Solomon (Sos. 2:4-5, 7, 3:5; 5:8; 7:6).
10. The verb occurs far more frequently than the noun in the LXX, and paved the way for its usage in the NT.

D. NT

1. The noun *agape* appears 116 times in the Greek New Testament, the verb *agapao* appears 143 times and the adjective *agapetos* 63.
2. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, "*agapao* and the corresponding noun *agape* (B, No. 1 below) present "the characteristic word of Christianity, and since the Spirit of revelation has used it to express ideas previously unknown, inquiry into its use, whether in Greek literature or in the Septuagint, throws but little light upon its distinctive meaning in the NT. Cf, however, Lev 19:18; Deut 6:5. "*Agape* and *agapao* are used in the NT (a) to describe the attitude of God toward His Son, John 17:26; the human race, generally, John 3:16; Rom 5:8, and to such as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ particularly John 14:21; (b) to convey His will to His children concerning their attitude one toward another, John 13:34, and toward all men, 1 Thess 3:12; 1 Cor 16:14; 2 Peter 1:7; (c) to express the essential nature of God, 1 John 4:8. "Love can be known only from the actions it prompts. God's love is seen in the gift of His Son, 1 John 4:9,10. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects, Rom 5:8. It was an exercise of the divine will in deliberate choice, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself, Cf. Deut 7:7,8. "Love had its perfect expression among men in the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Cor 5:14; Eph 2:4; 3:19; 5:2; Christian love is the fruit of His Spirit in the Christian, Gal 5:22. "Christian love has God for its primary object, and expresses itself first of all in implicit obedience to His commandments, John 14:15,21,23; 15:10; 1 John 2:5; 5:3; 2 John 6. Selfwill, that is, self-pleasing, is the negation of love to God. "Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the welfare of all, Rom 15:2, and works no ill to any, 13:8,9,10; love seeks opportunity to do good to 'all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith,' Gal 6:10. See further 1 Cor 13 and Col 3:12-14." From Notes on Thessalonians, by Hogg and Vine, p. 105. In respect of *agapao* as used of God, it expresses the deep and constant "love" and interest of a perfect Being towards entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential "love" in them towards the Giver, and a practical "love" towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others to seek the Giver. See BELOVED. *agape*, the significance of which has been pointed out in connection with A,

No. 1, is always rendered "love" in the RV where the KJV has "charity," a rendering nowhere used in the RV; in Rom 14:15, where the KJV has "charitably," the RV, adhering to the translation of the noun, has "in love." Note: In the two statements in 1 John 4:8 and 16, "God is love," both are used to enjoin the exercise of "love" on the part of believers. While the former introduces a declaration of the mode in which God's love has been manifested vv. 9,10, the second introduces a statement of the identification of believers with God in character, and the issue at the Judgment Seat hereafter v. 17, an identification represented ideally in the sentence "as He is, so are we in this world."

3. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature lists the following for the noun *agape* (pages 5-6):
 - a. Of human love without indication of the person who is the object of the love
 - b. Of the love of God and Christ to men; God is the source of love; of the relation between God and Christ
 - c. A love-feast, a common meal eaten by early Christians in connection with their church services, for the purpose of fostering and expressing brotherly love
4. The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised lists the following for the noun *agape*, "love, generosity, kindly concern, devotedness; plural, love-feasts" (page 2).
5. The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon lists the following for the noun *agape* (page 4):
 - a. Affection, good-will, love, benevolence; Of the love of men to men; especially of that love of Christians towards Christians, which is enjoined and prompted by their religion, whether the love be viewed as in the soul or as expressed; of the love of men towards God; of the love of God towards Christ; of the love of Christ towards men
 - b. Plural, love-feasts expressing and fostering mutual love, which used to be held by Christians before the celebration of the Lord's supper, at which the poorer Christians mingled with the wealthier and partook in common with the rest of food provided at the expense of the wealthy.
6. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains lists the following for the noun *agape* (volume 2):
 - a. To have love for someone or something, based on sincere appreciation and high regard – 'to love, to regard with affection, loving concern, love' (pages 293-294).
 - b. A special type of communal meal having a particular significance for early Christians as an expression of their mutual affection and concern – 'fellowship meal' (page 253).
7. The Complete Biblical Library defines the noun *agape* as that which "expresses a love that wills to initiate a relationship and show kindness and self-sacrifice regardless of whether the object of the love is worthy or even likable. Thus it is a love that does not depend on emotional response. Rather, it is an expression of the nature and the character of the one who loves" (Greek English-Dictionary, Alpha-Gamma 1-1131, page 34).
8. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains lists the following for the verb *agapao* (volume 2):
 - a. To have love for someone or something, based on sincere appreciation and high regard – 'to love, to regard with affection, loving concern, love' (page 293).
 - b. To demonstrate or show one's love – 'to show one's love, to demonstrate one's love' (page 294).

- c. To like or love something on the basis of a high regard for its value or importance – ‘to love to, to like to, to take pleasure in’ (page 301).
9. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature lists the following for the verb *agapao* (pages 4-5):
 - a. Of affection for persons; by human beings, of love of supernatural beings, of the practice of love, perfect passive participle the one loved by God
 - b. Of the love for things; denoting high esteem for or satisfaction with something
 10. The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon lists the following for the verb *agapao* (pages 3-4):
 - a. To love, to be full of good-will and exhibit the same
 - b. With the accusative of the person, to have a preference for, wish well to, regard the welfare of
 - c. Of the love of Christians towards one another; of the benevolence, which God, in providing salvation for men, has exhibited by sending His Son to them and giving him up to death
 - d. Of the love, which led Christ, procuring human salvation, to undergo sufferings and death
 - e. Of the love with which God regards Christ
 - f. When used of love to a master, God or Christ, the word involves the idea of affectionate reverence, prompt obedience grateful recognition of benefits received
 - g. With an accusative of thing *agapao* denotes to take pleasure in the thing, prize it above other things, be unwilling to abandon or do without it
 - h. To welcome with desire, long for
 - i. Concerning the unique proof of love which Jesus gave the apostles by washing their feet
 11. The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised lists the following for the verb *agapao*, “to love, value, esteem, feel or manifest generous concern for, be faithful towards; to delight in; to set store upon” (page 2).
 12. The diligent prayerful and meditative study upon this love of Christ, which is revealed by the Spirit in the Word of God, must be the number one priority for the believer in order for the love of Christ to be manifested and reflected in his life.
 13. The more time the believer spends in fellowship with the Lord in prayer, the study of the Word, the greater the love of God will be manifested and reflected in his life-in his thoughts, words and actions.
 14. Therefore, Bible instruction is a means to an end and not an end in itself.
 15. Bible instruction is a means to an end and that end is the love of God being reflected in our lives.
 16. The apostle Paul taught this principle to Timothy.
 17. **1 Tim 1:5, “But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”**
 18. There are a lot of Christians who have been exposed to Bible teaching for years and thus have a tremendous academic knowledge of the Scriptures but do not have the love of God being reflected in their lives.
 19. This is reflected in their relationships with their fellow believers.

20. This knowledge is a *gnosis*, “an intellectual comprehension, academic knowledge” of the love of God but not an *epignosis*, “experiential knowledge” in the sense that they have not personally encountered the love of God in their own lives.
21. They have not been affected by the Spirit’s revelation in the Word of God through the process of fellowship, the manner and extent and nature in which God has loved them through the Person and Work of Christ.
22. Their knowledge of the Scriptures is not benefiting them or others since they are not applying this knowledge to themselves or their relationships with their fellow believers.
23. God’s objective in revealing His love to us at the Cross of Calvary through His Son Jesus Christ was so that we might live according to His love.
24. We must not take our knowledge of the Word of God to boast and serve ourselves but rather to love and serve others as Christ loved and served us.
25. We must not abuse our knowledge of the Word of God to boast or to criticize and tear down others but rather we are to use that knowledge to encourage and build up our fellow believers and correct them in gentleness when need be.
26. **Romans 14:15, “For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.”**
27. **Romans 15:1-2, “Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.”**
28. We are not to abuse our spiritual freedom to live for self and be inconsiderate and critical of our fellow believer but rather we are to use our spiritual freedom to love and serve the Lord and our fellow believer as Christ loved and served us.
29. **Gal 5:13, “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”**
30. Bible instruction is not an end in itself but rather it is a means to an end and that end is the love of God being reflected in our lives.
31. Our knowledge of the Scriptures should be reflected in our relationships with God and each other and if it is not, we are arrogant.
32. **1 Cor 8:1, “Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.”**
33. They have not been affected by the Spirit’s revelation in the Word of God regarding the manner and extent to which God has loved them through the Person and Work of Christ.
34. Our love for the Lord and all men should grow each day.
35. This was so important that the apostle Paul made it his habit to pray to the Father that the Philippians love toward God and man would continue to grow.
36. **Philippians 1:9, “Now, this I make it a habit to pray that your divine-love might continue to flourish yet more and more by means of a total discerning experiential knowledge.”**
37. This too should be our prayer not only for others but also for ourselves.
38. Without the love of God in our lives, we are living in sin and the darkness of the cosmic system of Satan and are in reality hating our brother.
39. Growing in our love for the Lord and for all men, especially believers should be our main objective in this life for without it, we have wasted our lives here on planet earth.

40. We must not become selfish and self-centered and bitter and resentful towards one another but rather forgive one another as God in Christ has forgiven us.
41. If we know God's love by experience, then we would forgive and not be bitter and critical towards our fellow believer.
42. **Eph 4:31-32, "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."**
43. Our knowledge of the love of God should be reflected in our relationships with each other.
44. God is spirit meaning that He is invisible.
45. **John 4:23-27, "But an hour is coming and now is when the true worshippers, will worship the Father spiritually, yes, by means of truth. In fact, the Father intensely desires such worshippers of Him. God, as to His nature, is spirit and those worshipping Him must worship spiritually, yes, by means of truth."**
46. God is light, which is a figure for the holiness of God and the holiness of God is simply the harmony of all His attributes and God's love is one of those attributes.
47. **1 John 1:5, "Now, this is the proclamation, which we have heard from Him and we are imparting at this particular time for the benefit of all of you that the God is light. In fact, there is absolutely no darkness in Him, none."**
48. God is love.
49. **1 John 4:7-8, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love."**
50. God is love itself.
51. Love is an attribute of God and thus originates with Him.
52. The love of God is of the very essence of God.
53. God's character and nature, His Person is love.
54. **2 Cor 13:11, "Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you."**
55. Love is an attribute that helps to compose the essence of the Triune God.
56. Essence means "inner nature, true substance, a person's qualities or attributes," and implies being or existence.
57. Some of these qualities of a person are visible and some are invisible.
58. God's essence is made up of attributes, which are essential characteristics of the Trinity and without these qualities, God would not be who He is-God.
59. We can only understand God's essence through His attributes.
60. The Scriptures teach that God is 3 co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal Persons with the same identical essence or attributes (Gen. 1:26; Isa. 6:3, 8; 48:16; John 10:30 cf. Psa. 110:1; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Pet. 1:2).
61. God is one in essence, three in Person.
62. All the invisible attributes of God are always present in Him, but not all are revealed to man at the same time.
63. We understand the personality of God from the Scriptures, which reveal the manifestations of His attributes.

64. The Lord Jesus Christ is the love of God incarnate since He is the God-Man who has explained the character and nature of God, and thus has explained the love of God since love is an attribute of God (cf. Jn. 1:18).
65. **John 1:18, “No one has seen God at any time; the uniquely born God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”**
66. The love of God was manifested perfectly to the entire human race through the Father’s sacrifice of His Son at the cross of Calvary and the Son’s willingness to be that sacrifice.
67. God manifested His attribute of love by raising us up when we were under real spiritual death and seating us with Christ at His right hand (Eph. 2:1-10).
68. God’s love is sacrificial.
69. **1 John 3:16, “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”**
70. God’s love is impersonal meaning that God does not need an attractive object to love since He simply loves from His own nature.
71. **Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”**
72. God’s love is immutable meaning that is never changes.
73. **Micah 7:18-20, “Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. You will give truth to Jacob and unchanging love to Abraham, which You swore to our forefathers from the days of old.”**
74. God’s love is eternal meaning it has not beginning and no end.
75. **John 17:24, “Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.”**
76. God’s love is unconditional and faithful.
77. **Rom 8:38-39, “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**
78. The love of God is manifested in the life of the believer when he love’s his fellow believer, as Christ loved him.
79. **1 John 4:12, “No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.”**
80. The love of God is directly related to the holiness of God.
81. The term holiness has become an obscure term.
82. Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines holiness, “the quality or state of being holy; sanctity.”
83. They define sanctity, “sacred or hallowed character.”
84. One of the definitions that Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary gives for the adjective holy is, “entitled to worship or profound religious reverence because of divine character or origin or connection with God or divinity.”
85. Therefore, holiness pertains to the absolute perfection of the divine character.

86. Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines character, "the aggregate of features and traits that form the apparent individual nature of some person or thing."
87. If we paraphrase this definition, and give it a spiritual application we would say that the holiness of God is "the aggregate (i.e. sum total) of perfect features and traits that form the nature of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit."
88. Thus, God's holiness is related to all of His divine attributes and if related to all His attributes, then it is directly related to His attribute of love.
89. The holiness of God is simply the harmony of all His perfections or attributes and God's love is one of those perfections or attributes.
90. Thus, when God's love was manifested through the Lord Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the Cross, His holiness was as well since the holiness of God is simply the harmony of all His attributes and God's love is one of those attributes.
91. In fact, grace is simply the function of the holiness of God (sum total of His divine attributes) toward undeserving mankind.
92. Webster's states that character "refers especially to moral qualities, ethical standards, principles and the like."
93. If we paraphrase this too and give this a spiritual application, we would say that the character of God emphasizes His "perfect moral qualities, ethical standards and principles."
94. The perfect character or holiness of God is the excellence of the divine nature and is the very antithesis to sin, evil, moral blemish or defilement.
95. God's holiness expresses His purity of His character or moral perfection and excellence.
96. The holiness or perfect character of God is the perfection of the glory of God and every Person of the Trinity and is the rule of all Their actions and relationships with both men and angels.
97. The Lord Jesus Christ revealed the holiness of God during His 1st Advent and thus He revealed the love of God in His life.
98. The absolute perfection of God's holiness or perfect character was revealed perfectly at the Cross and thus His love was perfectly revealed as well at the Cross since the holiness of God is simply the harmony of all His perfections or attributes and God's love is one of those perfections or attributes.
99. God's holiness is expressed in His Word and thus since His holiness is expressed in His Word, so God's love is as well since the holiness of God is simply the harmony of all His attributes and God's love is one of those attributes.
100. Sanctification is all about the believer experiencing fellowship with God and His holiness by obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one's fellow believer in the same manner as He loved all men.
101. The apostle John in his first epistle describes the relationship between living in the holiness of God, experiencing fellowship with God and loving one's fellow believer as Christ loves.
102. In 1 John 1:5-2:11, the apostle John under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit teaches that the believer who loves his fellow believer in the same manner as Christ loved him, will experience fellowship with God, which he describes as "abiding in Him" and the holiness of God, which he describes as "walking in the light."
103. **1 John 1:5, "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all."**

- a. The apostle John's statement that "**God is light**" in 1 John 1:5 is designed to refute Gnostic teaching and in particular the Syrian form of Gnosticism, which taught that evil originated from the essence of God.
- b. As language of accommodation, the apostle John under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit is employing a figure of speech here in 1 John 1:5 called an anthropopathism by stating that God is light.
- c. An anthropopathism is language of accommodation through which infinite God reveals Himself to the finite man.
- d. An anthropopathism is a figure of speech and is used to ascribe human passions, actions or attributes to God.
- e. Here in 1 John 1:5, God is figured by an inanimate thing, namely, light.
- f. The apostle John under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit is ascribing to God the characteristic of light in order to explain to the human frame of reference the perfect character of God.
- g. By employing this figure of light, infinite God is explaining or revealing Himself to finite man regarding His perfect eternal character.
- h. He is condescending by ascribing the characteristics of light to Himself in order that finite man can understand something about Himself.
- i. The apostle John employs the figure of light here in 1 John 1:5 to describe the holiness of God, which is His absolute perfection of character.
- j. The believer cannot experience fellowship with God unless he is as holy as God.
- k. This is accomplished positionally at the moment of salvation when the believer received the new Christ nature, which is perfectly holy and cannot sin because it is created in the image of Christ who is holy and is impeccable.
- l. **Eph 4:24, "and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth."**
- m. The new Christ nature provides the believer the capacity to function in the love of God and experience the holiness of God in his life and Christ-likeness is the production or the result of having a lifestyle of living in the new Christ nature.
- n. The new nature gives the believer the capacity to execute the command to be holy as God is holy.
- o. **1 Peter 1:14-16, "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."**
- p. God the Holy Spirit would not issue this command to the believer to be as holy as He is unless the believer had the power or capacity to be holy as Him and this capacity God has given to the believer when He gave the believer a new nature at the moment of salvation through regeneration.
- q. The new Christ nature functions when the believer is obedient to the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God.
- r. After salvation, the believer can experience the holiness of God and fellowship with God by obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one's fellow believer in the same manner as He loved.

- s. Experiencing the holiness of God is contingent upon the believer acknowledging his sins when necessary and obeying the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved (cf. Jn. 13:33-35).
104. **1 John 1:6, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."**
105. **1 John 1:7, "but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."**
106. **1 John 1:8, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us."**
107. **1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."**
108. **1 John 1:10, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us."**
109. **1 John 2:1, "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."**
110. **1 John 2:2, "and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."**
111. **1 John 2:3, "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments."**
112. **1 John 2:4, "The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."**
113. **1 John 2:5, "but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him."**
114. **1 John 2:6, "the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."**
115. **1 John 2:7, "Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment, which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word, which you have heard."**
- a. "New" is the adjective *kainos* (καινός), which does not mean "new in time" or "new in the sense of originating with John."
 - b. But rather it is used with the emphatic negative particle *ouk*, "not" and means, "new in the sense of being unfamiliar" since John goes on to state that his readers have heard this command from the beginning of their Christian instruction.
 - c. Thus, John is stating here in 1 John 2:7 that he is by no means presenting to his readers an "unfamiliar" command meaning a command that they haven't heard taught before.
 - d. On the contrary, it is a command that they have heard from the beginning of their indoctrination to the Christian way of life, thus it is a "familiar" command in that sense.
 - e. "Old" is the adjective *palaios* (παλαιός), which in context means, "familiar" since it is used in contrast with *kainos*, "unfamiliar" and John states that his readers have heard this commandment from the beginning of their Christian indoctrination.
 - f. The Old Testament command to love one's neighbor in Leviticus 19:18 is not in view in the context of 1 John 2:7.

- g. Rather, the command of the Lord Jesus Christ in our Lord's Upper Room Discourse in John 13-17 is being referred to by John here in the context of 1 John 2:7.
 - h. **John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."**
 - i. **John 15:12-13, "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."**
116. **1 John 2:7, "Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment, which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word, which you have heard."**
117. **1 John 2:8, "On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining."**
118. **1 John 2:9, "The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now."**
119. **1 John 2:10, "The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him."**
120. **1 John 2:11, "But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes."**
121. 1 John 1:5-2:11 clearly indicates that the believer who does not love his fellow believer in the same manner as Christ loved him is not walking in the light.
122. **"Abiding in the light"** is a figure for experiencing the holiness of God and fellowship with God and if the believer does not love his fellow believer in the same manner as Christ loved, he is not experiencing fellowship with God nor is he experiencing the holiness of God.
123. Therefore, the believer experiences the holiness of God in his life by obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one another as He has loved all men.
124. **1 Thess 3:11-13, "Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints."**
125. Paul is teaching the Thessalonians that if they respond to the Lord and abound in love for one another and for all people their hearts will be established without blame in holiness before God the Father at the rapture of the church.
126. The greatest demonstration of God's love in history took place two thousand years ago at the Cross of Calvary when the Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily suffered spiritual death (loss of fellowship with the Father in His human nature) as a substitute for every human being in human history-past, present and future.
127. **Rom 5:6-8, 'For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own divine love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died as a substitute for all of us.'**

128. At the Cross, God the Father imputed to the impeccable human nature of Christ on the Cross, every sin in human history-past, present and future and as a result of this imputation, our Lord became a curse for us and was judged in our place.
129. **Gal 3:13, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us -- for it is written, ‘CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE.’”**
130. The judgment that the Lord Jesus Christ in His perfect human nature experienced was the loss of fellowship with His Father during those last three hours of supernatural darkness on the Cross, which constituted spiritual death.
131. **Matt 27:45-46, “Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?’ that is, ‘MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?’”**
132. The anguish that our Lord experienced in His soul during those last three hours on the Cross served as the propitiation for every sin in human history meaning that the Father was satisfied with our Lord’s spiritual death as the payment for every sin in history.
133. **Isaiah 53:10, “But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.”**
134. **Isaiah 53:11, “As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.”**
135. The Father had to forsake the Son because He is holy meaning that God cannot tolerate sin, therefore, the perfect Lamb of God had to be separated from the Father during those last three hours on the Cross in order that we might never be separated from the Father.
136. **Ps 22:1-3, “My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.”**
137. Therefore, the greatest and most profound expression of the love for God and all men in the universe was the Lord Jesus Christ’s obedience to the Father’s will since obedience to the Father’s will is the supreme test of our love for Him.
138. The test of the Son’s love for the Father was His obedience to the Father’s will even to the point of self-denial and self-sacrifice.
139. **Philippians 2:5-6, “Everyone continue thinking this (according to humility) within yourselves, which was also in (the mind of) Christ Jesus, Who although existing from eternity past in the essence of God, He never regarded existing equally in essence with God an exploitable asset.”**
140. **Philippians 2:7, “On the contrary, He denied Himself of the independent function of His divine attributes by having assumed the essence of a slave when He was born in the likeness of men.”**

141. **Philippians 2:8, “In fact, although He was discovered in outward appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by having entered into obedience to the point of spiritual death even death on a Cross.”**
142. The obedient love of the Lord Jesus to the Father’s will serves as the pattern for the believer’s spiritual life after salvation.
143. The perfect example of the love of God was at the Cross where both the Father and the Son loved you and I so much that They were willing to sacrifice something they both infinitely valued, namely, fellowship with One Another.
144. The Lord Jesus loved us all so much in that He was willing to sacrifice something He loved and cherish, namely fellowship with His Father.
145. He loved us so much in that He was willing to be separated from His Father during those last three hours of darkness on the Cross when He cried out, **“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”**
146. The Father loved us so much in that He was willing to sacrifice His **“beloved”** Son to redeem us and reconcile us to Himself.
147. Our Lord’s obedience did not go unrewarded since He was promoted to the right hand of the Father as a result of His perfect obedience to the Father’s will.
148. **Philippians 2:9, “For this very reason in fact God the Father has promoted Him to the highest-ranking position and has awarded to Him the rank, which is superior to every rank.”**
149. **Philippians 2:10, “In order that in the sphere of this rank possessed by Jesus every person must bow, celestials and terrestrials and sub-terrestrials.”**
150. **Philippians 2:11, “Also, every person must publicly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the Father.”**
151. The believer who follows in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ will be promoted as well and will receive his eternal inheritance (Heb. 6:10).
152. The Father draws a human being to Himself through His love that was demonstrated by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Cross (Jn. 12:20-33).
153. Some men are attracted to the love of God as manifested through the Cross of Christ whereas others stumble over Christ and His cross and others consider it ridiculous.
154. **1 Cor 1:23-24, “but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”**
155. He loved His sheep so much that He gave His life for the sheep.
156. **John 10:14-15, “I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”**
157. The Lord loved His disciples who He calls His friends so much that He gave His life for them.
158. **John 13:1, “Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.”**
159. **John 15:12-13, “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”**

160. The Lord Jesus Christ set the example in loving each other and thus His love serves as the source, the power and the motivation for us to love each other in the same manner Christ loved, no matter how obnoxious or unattractive our fellow believer might become.
161. The Lord provides us with the perfect human example of love in every way, manner, degree, extent, and purpose.
162. The entire human race is the object of God's "impersonal" love and all believers are the objects of His "personal" love.
163. Before salvation, the believer was the object of God's "impersonal" love meaning that he was obnoxious and unattractive to God since he was enslaved to the cosmic system of Satan and his old Adamic sin nature and under real spiritual death.
164. At salvation, the believer became the object of God's "personal" love meaning that the believer is attractive to God since God imputed His righteousness to the believer at the moment he exercised faith alone in Christ alone and is now a child of God and a partaker of the divine nature.
165. **1 John 3:1, "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him."**
166. **2 Peter 1:2, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."**
167. **2 Peter 1:3, "seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence."**
168. **2 Peter 1:4, "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."**
169. God loves the unbeliever from His own integrity because the unbeliever does not possess His perfect righteousness, which would make them worthy of God's personal love, thus God's love towards the unbeliever is impersonal.
170. God's impersonal love was expressed towards the believer when He sent His Son into the world to die for the believer's sins and also at salvation when He raised and seated the believer with Christ even though the believer was living under real spiritual death and enslaved to the cosmic system of Satan.
171. All church age believers are the objects of God's personal love and the beneficiaries of this personal love.
172. The Greek adjective *agapetos* (ἀγαπητός), "**beloved**" expresses this fact and which should be translated "divinely loved ones."
173. **Eph 5:1-2, "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."**
174. The imputation of divine righteousness at the moment of salvation transforms the believer into an object of God's personal love.
175. **Rom 4:3, "For what does the Scripture say? 'ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.'"**
176. The divine-love of God the Father expressed itself through His work in eternity past on behalf of every church age believer:

- a. Election
 - b. Predestination
 - c. Escrow Blessings (i.e. eternal inheritance) (Eph. 1:1-14).
177. The divine-love of God the Son expressed itself through His work in time at the Cross:
- a. Redemption: The Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross-purchased the entire human race out from the slave market of sin with His substitutionary spiritual death (Mark 10:45; 1 Cor. 1:30; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13-14; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).
 - b. Propitiation: The Lord Jesus Christ satisfied the righteousness of God with His substitutionary spiritual death on the Cross-as the payment for our sins (Lev. 1; 16; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10).
 - c. Reconciliation: God's peace treaty with the entire human race as a result of the substitutionary spiritual death of Christ the Cross which removed the Barrier which separated mankind from God (2 Cor. 5:18-21; Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 1:20-21).
 - d. Mediatorship of Christ: Our Lord as the God-Man is the Peacemaker or Mediator between God and man (Eph. 2:14-16; 1 Tim. 2:5).
178. At the present time, the Lord Jesus Christ is expressing His divine-love towards the believer through His Advocacy for the believer at the right hand of the Father where He defends the believer against the accusations of Satan.
179. **1 John 2:1, "Now, if anyone does enter into committing an act of sin, then we possess as an Advocate with the Father, Jesus who is the righteous Christ."**
180. The divine-love of God the Holy Spirit expresses itself through His seven salvation ministries on behalf of the believer:
- a. Efficacious Grace: Makes faith in Jesus Christ effective for salvation (2 Cor. 6:1-2; Eph. 2:8-9).
 - b. Regeneration: Creates a human spirit for the purpose of the imputation of eternal life (John 3:1-16; Titus 3:5).
 - c. Baptism of the Spirit: Places every believer in union with Jesus Christ (John 7:37-39; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:5; 1 Pet. 3:21).
 - d. Indwelling: Creates a temple for the indwelling of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:16).
 - e. Filling: Influences the soul of the believer in executing the plan of God for the church age (Eph. 5:18).
 - f. Sealing: Puts His stamp on the believer to guarantee his salvation (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30).
 - g. Distribution of Spiritual Gifts: Gives every believer a spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pet. 4:10).
181. God the Holy Spirit's post-salvation ministries on behalf of the believer:
- a. Empowers the believer to execute the plan of God (Jo. 14:16, 26; Ga. 5:16, 25; Eph. 5:18; Phlp. 2:13).
 - b. Reproduces Christ-like character (fruit of the Spirit) in the believer (Ga. 4:19; 5:5, 16-23).
 - c. Teaches the believer the doctrines of Christ (Jo. 14:26; 1 Co. 2:10-16; 1 Jo. 2:20, 27).
182. The fact that we are beneficiaries of God's divine-love before salvation and objects of His personal love after salvation is designed to not only bless us but also to

encourage us when we go through adversity in life and also serves to challenge us to advance to maturity and execute the plan of God.

183. The love of God has many characteristics.
184. God's love is "self-sacrificial" (John 3:16; 15:13; Gal. 2:20).
185. It is "forgiving" (Eph. 4:32-5:2).
186. God's love is "tolerant" of others (Eph. 4:2).
187. It love intercedes for others in prayer (Ja. 5:16).
188. God's love is "merciful" meaning that God is compassionate towards His enemies and pardons them (Eph. 2:1-7).
189. It love is "forgiving" meaning that if we live according to God's love we will pardon those who have sinned against us just as God in Christ granted us a free pardon and gave us the remission of our sins based upon the merits of the Person and Work of Christ on the Cross (Eph. 4:32-5:2).
190. God's love is "tolerant" meaning that if we live according to God's love we will be able to put up with or endure with those whose opinions differ from one's own (Eph. 4:2).
191. It love is also "impersonal" meaning that God can love from His own divine nature sinners who are obnoxious and unattractive to Him.
192. God's love is "self-sacrificial" meaning that if we live according to God's love we sacrifice ourselves for the good of others just as God the Father sacrificed His beloved Son for the good of the entire human race (John 3:16; 15:13; Gal. 2:20).
193. It love is "giving" meaning that God in His love provided the entire human race eternal life as a gift, voluntarily and without expecting any compensation in return (John 3:16; Gal. 2:20).
194. God's love is "immutable" meaning that His love for us can never change (Rm. 8:39).
195. It love is "unconditional" meaning that no matter what sin the believer commits after salvation or how unfaithful the believer is after salvation, God will never ever disown the believer (Rm. 8:35, 39).
196. God's love is "faithful" meaning that He is true or eternally bound to His promise to save us through faith alone in Christ alone and keep us saved (Rm. 8:35, 39).
197. It love is "loyal" meaning that He is faithful to His promise to give us eternal salvation and is unswerving in His allegiance to us (John 21:7, 15-16, 20; Rom. 8:35, 39; Eph. 5:28).
198. God's love is "compassionate" meaning that God intensely desires and will act to alleviate the pain and suffering of another or remove its cause (1 John 3:16-17).
199. It love is "righteous" meaning that He is fair (Rm. 13:8-10).
200. God's love is "just" meaning that His love is based upon truth, justice and fairness (Rm. 13:8-10).
201. It love "encourages" others meaning that the one who operates in the love of God will inspire with confidence others and stimulate others by assistance and approval (1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11).
202. God's love "reciprocates" meaning that believers operating in God's love will have a mutual exchange of care and concern for one another and will compliment one another gracefully and will return love for one another (Phlp. 1:3-7).

203. It love is “sincere” meaning that if we live according to God’s love we will be free from hypocrisy, deceit and will be genuine and real (1 Pet. 1:21-22)
204. God’s love is “magnanimous” meaning that the believer who lives according to God’s love will be generous in forgiving insults and injuries without being vindictive and becoming involved in petty resentfulness.
205. **Philippians 4:5, “Permit your magnanimity to become manifest to everyone. The Lord is immanently near.”**
206. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, the apostle Paul provides us with some of the characteristics of God’s love.
207. **1 Cor 13:1-4, “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. 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. Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant.”**
- “**Is patient**” is the verb *makrothumeo* (μακροθυμέω).
 - If the believer lives according to God’s love, he will be “patient” in the sense that he will endure provocation, annoyance, misfortune, pain without complaint, loss of temper, and will possess the ability and willingness to suppress restlessness and annoyance in waiting for God.
 - “**Is kind**” is the verb *chresteuomai* (χρηστεύομαι).
 - If the believer lives according to God’s love, he will be “kind” in the sense that he will exercise a sympathetic attitude towards others and will possess a willingness to do good to others and be helpful and considerate towards others.
 - “**Is not jealous**” is composed of the emphatic negative particle *ouk* (οὐκ) and the verb *zeloo* (ζηλώω).
 - The believer who lives according to God’s love will not be “jealous” of others in the sense that he will not become resentful, intolerant and suspicious of another’s success, possessions or relationships.
 - “**Is not arrogant**” is composed of the emphatic negative particle *ouk* (οὐκ) and the verb *phusioo* (φυσιόω).
 - The believer who lives according to God’s love will not be “arrogant” or “proud” meaning that he will not have an exaggerated belief in his own importance and will not think or act as if he is superior to others.
208. **1 Cor. 13:5, “does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered.”**
- “**Does not act unbecomingly**” is the emphatic negative particle *ouk* (οὐκ), “not” and the verb *aschemoneo* (ἀσχημονέω), which means “to behave indecently, dishonorably, disgracefully.”
 - The believer who operates in the love of God will do nothing, which would cause shame or disgrace and will be tactful and courteous.
 - “**It does not seek its own**” means that the God’s love is “unselfish” and thus is not concerned with one’s own interests, and concerns and is not without concern for others.
 - God’s love considers others more important than oneself (Phlp. 2:3).

- e. **Phil 2:3-4, “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”**
 - f. **“Is not provoked”** means that God’s love is not “touchy” in the sense that it does not get exasperated with others or easily offended by others and is not provoked to anger and the loss of temper by the actions of others.
 - g. **“Does not take into account a wrong suffered”** meaning that if we live according to God’s love we will not keep a record of wrongs that others have committed against us in the past and therefore it denotes the concept of not holding grudges and not possessing an unforgiving spirit.
 - h. **1 Cor. 13:6, “does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth.”**
 - i. **“Does not rejoice in unrighteousness,”** means that if we live according to God’s love we will not rejoice in those things (whether moral or immoral) in the cosmic system of Satan, which reject God’s Word.
 - j. **“Rejoices with the truth,”** means that the believer who lives according to the love of God will rejoice in the Word of God being taught regardless of who the communicator is.
209. **1 Cor. 13:7, “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”**
- a. **“Bears”** is the verb *stego* (στέγω), which originally meant “to cover over,” and then, “to contain as a vessel.”
 - b. From this latter meaning two metaphorical uses of the word are derived, either of which may be here adopted: (a) that love hides or is silent about the faults of others; (b) that love bears without resentment injuries inflicted by others.
 - c. Therefore, there are two major dimensions to love’s consistent capacity to “hold up” rather than “fold up.”
 - d. First, love bears up silently; that is, love covers sin with a cloak of silence.
 - e. **1 Peter 4:8, “Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.”**
 - f. Love always bears up, no matter how great the persecution, suffering, or adversity.
 - g. Job’s wife “tempted” him to sin by urging him to “curse God and die,” thus bringing his suffering to a conclusion.
 - h. Love never caves in or collapses under duress and always holds up.
 - i. **“Believes all things,”** means that if we live according to the love of God we will trust in God’s care for us no matter how terrible the adversity we are going through or the circumstances surrounding us.
 - j. **“Hopes all things”** means that if we live according to the love of God we will have “confidence” in God because of our eternal relationship with Him, no matter how terrible the adversity we are facing or the circumstances surrounding us.
 - k. **“Endures all things,”** means that God’s love will persevere and endure adversity without complaining.
210. **1 Cor. 13:8, “Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.”**
211. **“Love never fails,”** means that God’s love is eternal and will endure forever.
212. God’s love is “eternal” meaning it has not beginning and no end (John 17:26).

213. **1 Cor. 13:9-13, “For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.”**
214. If we compare 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 with the “fruit of the Spirit” recorded in Galatians 5:22-23, we will see that all of the characteristics of God’s love show up in that fruit.
215. **Gal 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”**
216. Each element in the fruit of the Spirit is but a different facet of divine love.
- a. Joy is love’s song.
 - b. Peace is love’s repose.
 - c. Patience is love’s endurance.
 - d. Kindness is love’s sympathy.
 - e. Goodness is love’s self-forgetfulness.
 - f. Gentleness is love’s forbearance.
 - g. Faithfulness is love’s trustworthiness.
 - h. Self-control is love’s discipline.
217. Several of these characteristics of God’s love are directly related to the believer’s eternal security.
218. God’s love is also “impersonal” meaning that when the believer becomes obnoxious and unattractive to God after salvation by living in his old Adamic sin nature and the cosmic system of Satan, God is still able to love the believer from His own integrity and will never disown the believer.
219. **Rom 5:6-8, ‘For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own divine love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died as a substitute for all of us.’**
220. God’s love is also “unconditional” meaning that no matter what sin the believer commits after salvation or how unfaithful the believer is after salvation, God will never ever disown the believer.
221. God will discipline His children for sin if they do not confess sin but God will never disown His children.
222. **Hebrews 12:6, “FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”**
223. Therefore, the “impersonal” and “unconditional” characteristics of God’s love are directly related to the eternal security of the believer.
224. We have eternal security, as believers because God’s love is impersonal and unconditional meaning that no matter what sin the believer commits after salvation God will never ever disown the believer.
225. The Lord Jesus Christ taught this principle to His disciples in His parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15:11-32).

226. The fact that God's love is unconditional insures the fact that the believer can never lose his salvation because of any act of sin since God judged His Son for every sin in human history at the cross-past, present and future because of His great love for all men (Rm. 5:6-11).
227. If the believer could lose his salvation for a sin that Christ was already judged for as our Substitute, then God would be unjust and would not be acting in accordance with His own perfect virtue and integrity, thus He would not be acting in love and since God is love, He would be denying Himself or who and what He is.
228. For God to deny Himself by disowning the believer for any sin he commits after salvation would be impossible since God's love is "immutable" meaning that it never changes towards us.
229. Because God is immutable, His love is immutable.
230. **Heb 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."**
231. Because His Son was judged as our Substitute at the cross, the Father was free to render the believer justified when he exercised faith in His Son for salvation and He would be unfair if He rescinded that decision that He made at the moment of salvation.
232. **Rom 5:1-2, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God."**
233. The believer has eternal security because he is in union with Christ.
234. **Rom 8:1, "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."**
235. If the believer could lose his salvation for any sin he committed after salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ would in effect be lying since He said the following:
236. **John 3:18, "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."**
237. Because God is love is based upon truth, He will never lie to us.
238. **Hebrews 6:17, "In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath."**
239. **Hebrews 6:18, "so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us."**
240. God would be denying Himself and the Lord Jesus Christ would be a liar if the believer could lose his salvation through any act of sin he committed after salvation (Jn. 17:12; 2 Tim. 2:11-13).
241. God's love is "faithful."
242. **Ps 31:23-24, "O love the LORD, all you His godly ones! The LORD preserves the faithful and fully recompenses the proud doer. Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the LORD."**
243. **2 Thess 3:3, "But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one."**
244. **1 Thess 5:23-24, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the**

coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.”

245. God’s love is faithful, unconditional, impersonal, immutable and truthful towards the believer after salvation no matter how unfaithful the believer becomes after salvation because love is who God is.
246. **1 John 4:16, “We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.”**
247. Therefore, there is nothing after salvation the believer could do that would separate him from the love of God (Rm. 8:28-39).
248. To say that you can lose your salvation is to say that God does not love you and if that is the case, then God is not love.
249. Therefore, the believer’s salvation is as strong as the love of God.
250. In the Greek New Testament, *agape*, “divine-love” has 2 directions:
- Vertical: Love directed toward God (Mark 12:30).
 - Horizontal: Love directed toward man (Mark 12:31).
251. Mark 12:28-31 illustrates for us the directions of love.
252. **Mark 12:28, “One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, ‘What commandment is the foremost of all?’”**
253. **Mark 12:29, “Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD.’”**
254. **Mark 12:30, “AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.”**
- “Love” is the verb *agapao* (ἀγαπάω), which refers to the act of honoring, respecting, revering and being dedicated and devoted to God to the point of self-sacrifice, and which act is the proper, appropriate, obedient and obligatory response by the believer to God’s revelation of Himself since the believer has been created and redeemed for God’s purpose and good pleasure.
 - Mark 12:30 indicates that the believer is to love God with his entire being, with his *kardia*, “heart,” *psuche*, “soul,” *dianoia*, “mind,” and *ischus*, “strength.”
 - Loving God means being obedient to God.
 - John 14:21, “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”**
 - John 14:22, “Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?’”**
 - John 14:23, “Jesus answered and said to 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 abode with him.’”**
 - John 14:24, “He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.”**
255. **Mark 12:31, “The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”**

- a. “**Love**” is the verb *agapao* (ἀγαπάω), which refers to the act of honoring and respecting your fellow human being to the point of self-sacrifice, and which act is the proper, appropriate, obedient and obligatory response by the believer to his fellow human being since both he and his fellow human being were created by God, according to His image of God and redeemed at the Cross.
- b. We cannot love our neighbor as we do ourselves until we first learn to love ourselves.
- c. We cannot love ourselves until we first love God because it is only when we love God that we learn how much He loves us.
- d. When we comprehend how much He loves us, this will give us the capacity to fulfill the command to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- e. The believer who comprehends and acknowledges that he is the object of God’s love will receive the capacity to love others, even the obnoxious.
- f. It is only when the believer realizes the extent to which God loves him that he can in turn love like God.
- g. God commands the believer to love his fellow human being.
- h. God would never command the believer to love like Himself unless He had already given the believer the capacity to execute the command.
- i. The fact that the believer is an object of the Father and the Son’s love provides the believer the capacity to love others and execute these commands.
- j. Every believer knows how impossible and difficult, it often is to love people, who are many times obnoxious and abrasive and argumentative but before going out and meeting people like this, the believer must go in secret to the Lord.
- k. The believer must enter into prayerful and meditative study of the Word, asking himself, with his eyes fixed on his own unworthiness and sin before the Lord, how much he owes Him.
- l. The believer must acknowledge that he was loved while he was obnoxious to God and that God has forgiven Him much and has been patient and tolerant toward him and has bore with his disobedience.
- m. Once, the believer comes to grips with the fact that God has loved him, and then he can love those who are obnoxious in his life.
- n. He must recognize his own sinfulness and unworthiness before God before he attempts to love others in the manner that the Lord has commanded.
- o. The Holy Spirit reveals to the believer the extent to which God has loved him and he does this through prayer and the study of the Word.
- p. The Spirit enlightens the believer regarding the love that has been directed toward him (Eph. 3:14-21).
- q. The believer must look at himself as no better than the obnoxious person in his life and realize that just like the obnoxious person in his life, that he too, is an obnoxious sinner before God.
- r. The believer must experience the love of God in his own life before he can obey the commands to love as Christ has loved all men.
- s. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to experience the love of God in his own life and the Spirit accomplishes this through prayer and the Word of God.
- t. The Lord’s love for the believer serves as the strength of the believer’s love for others.

- u. As long as the believer does not understand these principles, he will never be able to execute the command to love others as Christ has loved him.
 - v. Christ's love must be imparted to the believer by the Holy Spirit in prayer and the study of the Word of God.
 - w. **Rom 5:5, "and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."**
 - x. The believer must be rooted and ground in this divine love since this divine love is the source of the believer's love.
 - y. We are to love the Lord in our fellow believer.
 - z. **Matt 25:39-40, "When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'"**
256. The vertical and the horizontal aspect of *agape*, "divine-love" are inseparable since the vertical aspect is accomplished through the horizontal or in other words, our love for the Lord is demonstrated by our love for our fellow believer.
257. The believer does not love God, whom he can't see, if he does not love his fellow believer who he can see (1 Jn. 4:7-21).
258. The believer who obeys the Lord demonstrates his love for the Lord.
259. If you love the Lord you will obey Him.
260. **John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."**
- a. "Keep" is the verb *tereo* (τηρέω).
 - b. In John 14:15, the verb *tereo* means, "to observe conscientiously."
 - c. To observe means, "to conform one's action or practice to, to comply with."
 - d. To be conscientious means to "careful, thoughtful, heedful, attentive, meticulous."
 - e. Thus, the Lord Jesus is stating with the verb *tereo* in John 14:15 that if His disciples "observe conscientiously" His commandments in the sense of being careful, thoughtful, heedful, attentive, meticulous in conforming their actions in compliance with them, then they are as an eternal spiritual truth loving Him in the sense of honoring and respecting Him.
 - f. The concept of obedience is obviously implied in the word's meaning although it does not specifically mean, "to obey."
261. **John 14:21, "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."**
- a. Once again the verb *tereo*, "to observe conscientiously" appears in John 14:21 and 23.
 - b. Thus, the Lord Jesus is stating with the verb *tereo* in John 14:21 that if His disciples "observe conscientiously" His commandments in the sense of being careful, thoughtful, heedful, attentive, meticulous in conforming their actions in compliance with them, then they are as an eternal spiritual truth loving the Lord in the sense of honoring and respecting Him and in turn the Father will love the believer in the sense of honoring and respecting the believer.
 - c. The obedient believer will become intimate with the Lord and will receive greater revelation and insight into the Lord and His ways and this is indicated by the phrase "will disclose Myself to him."

262. **John 14:23, “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will observe conscientiously My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.**
263. The Lord Jesus is stating with the verb tereo in John 14:23 that if His disciples “observe conscientiously” His commandments in the sense of being careful, thoughtful, heedful, attentive, meticulous in conforming their actions in compliance with them, then they are loving Him in the sense of honoring and respecting Him and will as an eternal spiritual truth experience fellowship with both Himself and the Father.
264. **John 14:24, “He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.”**
265. John 14:24 states emphatically that the believer who does not observe conscientiously the Lord’s Word does not love Him in the sense that they do not honor and respect Him.
266. Obedience to the will of God not only demonstrates one’s love for God but also is absolutely essential in order to experience fellowship with God.
267. **John 15:10-11, “If you observe conscientiously 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 so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”**
268. **1 John 2:3, “Now, by means of this, we can confirm that we know Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) experientially: if any of us at any time does observe conscientiously His (the Lord Jesus Christ’s) commands.”**
269. **1 John 2:4, “The one who at any time does say, ‘I know Him experientially,’ and yet at any time does not observe conscientiously His commands, is a liar and furthermore, the truth is unequivocally not in him.”**
270. Therefore, the test of fellowship with God is obedience.
271. Obedience begins with the believer’s thought process, which must be conformed to the will of the Father (Rm. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 10:3-5).
272. This obedience will then manifest itself in the believer’s words and actions since thought precedes word and action and will serve as a protection for the soul against false doctrine that is propagated by the kingdom of darkness.
273. **2 Cor 10:5-6, “We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.”**
274. Obedience to Bible doctrine purifies the soul.
275. **1 Peter 1:22-23, “Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.”**
276. Obedience on the part of the believer demands denying what self wants in exchange for what God wants.
277. Denying self-means sacrificing even legitimate things in life such as family, friends and other relationships in order to accomplish the Father’s will.
278. Remember what the Lord Jesus said to His disciples: **Luke 14:26-27, “If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children**

and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

279. If you love God, you will deny self and take up your cross and you cannot love God without first denying self.
280. Self-sacrifice springs from self-denial.
281. **Luke 9:23-24, “And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.’”**
282. The perfect example of the love of God was at the Cross where both the Father and the Son loved you and I so much that They were willing to sacrifice something they both infinitely valued, namely, fellowship with One Another.
283. The Lord Jesus loved us all so much in that He was willing to sacrifice something He loved and cherish, namely fellowship with His Father.
284. He loved us so much in that He was willing to be separated from His Father during those last three hours of darkness on the Cross when He cried out, **“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”**
285. The test of the Son’s love for the Father was His obedience to the Father’s will even to the point of self-denial and self-sacrifice.
286. **Philippians 2:5-6, “Everyone continue thinking this (according to humility) within yourselves, which was also in (the mind of) Christ Jesus, Who although existing from eternity past in the essence of God, He never regarded existing equally in essence with God an exploitable asset.”**
287. **Philippians 2:7-8, “On the contrary, He denied Himself of the independent function of His deity by having assumed the essence of a slave when He was born in the likeness of men. In fact, although He was discovered in outward appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by having entered into obedience to the point of spiritual death even death on a Cross.”**
288. Our Lord’s obedience did not go unrewarded.
289. The humanity of Christ was promoted to the right hand of the Father as a result of His perfect obedience to the Father’s will.
290. **Philippians 2:9-11, “For this very reason in fact God the Father has promoted Him to the highest-ranking position and has awarded to Him the rank, which is superior to every rank. In order that in the sphere of this rank possessed by Jesus every person must bow, celestials and terrestrials and sub-terrestrials. Also, every person must publicly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord for the glory of God the Father.”**
291. Our Lord’s obedience to the Father will was to such an extent that He was willing not only to become a human being but also to suffer substitutionary spiritual death as an impeccable Person receiving the imputation of the sins of the entire universe and be judged for them by the justice of God the Father on a Roman cross which was reserved for criminals and traitors of the Empire.
292. Our Lord’s obedience was the greatest expression of love for the Father in both angelic and human history.
293. The believer who follows in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ will be promoted as well and will receive his eternal inheritance.

294. Although, God will test our love and loyalty to Him by asking us at times to sacrifice that which is near and dear to us, He will in the end reward us as He did His Son.
295. **Heb 6:10, “For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.”**
296. The believer acquires the capacity to obey the Father’s will to the point of self-sacrifice by responding to the Spirit’s revelation in the Word of God, of the Father and the Son’s self-sacrificial love at the Cross for him and making personal application of this love.
297. **1 John 4:19, “We love, because He first loved us.”**
298. Obedience is the supreme test of our love for the Lord.
299. Abraham is a perfect example of a believer who demonstrated His love for the Lord by His obedience.
300. There were four great crises in the life of Abraham, which tested his love and obedience to the Lord.
301. He loved the Lord to such an extent that he was willing to sacrifice relationships that were near and dear to him.
302. Abraham obeyed the Lord and left behind his parents (Heb. 11:8-10).
303. Abraham left his nephew Lot in Genesis 13 and he obeyed the Lord and gave up Ishmael whom he loved dearly (Gen. 21:12-14).
304. Lastly, Abraham was commanded by God to sacrifice the son of promise, the child who he and Sarah had waited so long to have.
305. Abraham loved the Lord so much that he was obedient to the Lord’s command to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac.
306. Abraham is a type of the Father and Isaac a type of the Lord Jesus.
307. Abraham loved the Lord so much that like the Father, he was willing to sacrifice his child, namely, his beloved son, Isaac and Isaac loved his father so much that like the Lord Jesus, he willingly laid himself down upon the altar as a sacrifice (Gen. 22:1-18).
308. Obedience is the supreme test of our love for the Lord.
309. **1 John 5:3, “For this is the love for God, that we observe conscientiously His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.”**
310. **1 John 2:3, “Now, by means of this, we can confirm that we know Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) experientially: if any of us at any time does observe conscientiously His (the Lord Jesus Christ’s) commands.”**
311. **1 John 2:4, “The one who at any time does say, ‘I know Him experientially,’ and yet at any time does not observe conscientiously His commands, is a liar and furthermore, the truth is unequivocally not in him.”**
312. **1 John 2:5, “But, whoever, at any time does observe conscientiously His Word, indeed, in this one, the love for the one and only God is accomplished. By means of this we can confirm that we are at this particular moment in fellowship with Him.”**
313. **1 John 2:6, “The one who at any time does say, ‘I am abiding in Him,’ in the same manner He (the Lord Jesus Christ) lived, likewise, he himself, must live.”**
314. The believer who obeys the Lord’s commands is demonstrating His love for the Lord and will experience a more intimate fellowship with the Lord and a more intimate

knowledge of Him since the Lord only discloses Himself to those believers who are obedient to His commands.

315. Intimacy is a close, familiar and usually affectionate or loving, personal relationship with another person or group.
316. In relation to people, intimacy is a close association with or detailed knowledge or deep understanding of a person.
317. **Jer 9:24, “but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,’ declares the LORD.”**
318. If we are obedient to the Lord’s commands, then we will be rewarded with a more intimate, detail knowledge and understanding of the Lord.
319. Our Lord in John 14 illustrates this principle.
320. **John 14:21, “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”**
- “He who loves Me will be loved by My Father”**: The believer who is obedient to the Lord’s commands will be loved by the Father meaning that the Father will honor and show respect towards the obedient believer by rewarding him with a more intimate fellowship with Himself.
 - “Will disclose”** is the verb *emphanizo* (ἐμφανίζω) and expresses the concept that the obedient believer will become intimate with the Lord and will receive greater revelation and insight into the Lord and His ways.
 - “I will love him and will disclose Myself to him”**: The Lord Jesus Christ will love the obedient believer meaning He will honor and respect the believer by rewarding the believer with a more intimate fellowship with Himself.
321. **John 14:22, “Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?’”**
322. **John 14:23, “Jesus answered and said to 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 abode with him.’”**
323. Our Lord in His Vine and the Branches Metaphor that is recorded in John 15 illustrates the principle that the believer’s obedience to the Lord’s command to love one another as He loved, leads to intimacy with Himself.
324. **John 15:1-12, “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also 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 so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”

325. **John 15:13-14, “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you.”**

- a. The term “**friends**” is employed by our Lord to express the intimacy between Himself and the believer who is obedient to His command to love his fellow believer as the Lord has loved him at the Cross.
- b. Friends don’t hold things back from one another and they share secrets and joy with one another and are intimate with one another.
- c. Friendship with the Lord is no different since He shares His secrets and joy and is intimate with the believer who obeys Him.
- d. Abraham and Moses were called “friends of God” because they were on intimate terms with the Lord and they were on intimate terms with the Lord because they were obedient to Him (Ex. 33:11; 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8; Jam. 2:23)

326. **John 15:15-17, “No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things 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 would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. This I command you, that you love one another.”**

327. The Lord loves those believers who make a diligent effort to know Him and they will be rewarded with a more intimate fellowship with Himself.

328. **Prov 8:17, “I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.”**

329. **Heb 11:6, “And 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.”**

330. There is no accident...we are as close to the Lord as we want to be.

331. Those who put the most effort into their relationship with the Lord will experience greater intimacy with the Lord than those who do not put as much effort into their relationship with Him.

332. Finally, those who are diligent in pursuing their relationship with the Lord will also be rewarded in the future with even greater intimacy with the Lord during His millennial reign and eternal state.

333. **Rev 2:17, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.”**

- a. The “**hidden manna**” in Revelation 2:17 refers to the special intimate access to the Person of Christ during His millennial reign and throughout all of eternity and will be given only to the overcomer or winner believer.
- b. The new name or title on the white stone in Revelation 2:17 refers to the privilege of having intimate access to the Person of Christ during His millennial reign and throughout all of eternity which will be exclusively to the overcomer.

334. **Rev 2:26, “He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS.”**
335. **Rev 3:21, “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”**
336. **Rev 22:12, “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”**
337. The love of God is magnanimous.
338. Magnanimity is the quality of being magnanimous which is the quality of being generous in forgiving an insult or injury without being pettily resentful or vindictive.
339. It is being noble in character, loving justice but not insisting upon the letter of the law in order to preserve the spirit of the law.
340. A believer who is magnanimous is generous in forgiving insults and injuries without being vindictive and becoming involved in petty resentfulness.
341. He is generous, tolerant, patient, moderate, courageous, and noble.
342. He does not insist upon his own rights to the fullest but rectifies and redresses the injustices of justice.
343. The magnanimous behavior of a believer manifests one of the characteristics of Christ who was generous and gracious in forgiving and tolerant in the face of insults.
344. It is a manifestation of the Spirit and the Word’s work in the life of a believer.
345. Magnanimous behavior among believers will resolve personality conflicts.
346. Magnanimity is an expression of the love of God and when exercised by believers among themselves will produce unity in the local assembly.
347. **Col 3:14, “Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.”**
348. **Philippians 4:5, “Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.”**
- a. “**Gentle spirit**” is composed of the nominative neuter singular definite article to (to\) and the nominative neuter singular adjective *epieikes* (ἐπιεικὲς).
 - b. The adjective *epieikes* in the Greek New Testament expresses the concept of magnanimity and is a compound word composed of the preposition *epi*, “upon” and the adjective *eikos*, “reasonable, probable.”
 - c. The adjective *epieikes* and the noun *epieikeia* are both derived from *eikos*, “becoming, decent,” or from *eiko*, “to yield, give way,” and mean from Homer onwards “the proper way of life,” or from Thucydides onwards “forbearance, indulgence, mildness.”
 - d. *Epieikes*, together with its derivatives, was originally an expression for the balanced, intelligent, decent in outlook in contrast to licentiousness.
 - e. Then it was used for a considerate, thoughtful attitude in legal relationships, which was prepared to mitigate the rigors of justice, with its laws and claims, in contrast to the attitude, which demands that rights, including one’s own, should be upheld at all costs.
 - f. It is opposed to unbridled anger, harshness, brutality and self-expression.
 - g. It represents character traits of the noble-minded, the wise man who remains meek in the face of insults, the judge who is lenient in judgment, and the king who is kind in his rule.

- h. Hence, it appears often in pictures of the ideal ruler and in eulogies on men in high positions.
 - i. *Epieikes* expresses moderation or kindness towards men.
 - j. *Praotes*, which is also translated “gentleness” in the English translations pertains more to the attitude of the individual, whereas *epieikeia* is related to the outward conduct of the individual.
 - k. *Praotes* is unrestricted divine whereas *epieikeia* is directed towards others.
 - l. The adjective *epieikes* appears only 8 times in the LXX.
 - m. Each time it translates *sallach*.
 - n. The adjective *epieikes* is found 5 times in the NT (Phlp. 4:5; 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 3:2; James 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:18).
 - o. Its cognate noun *epieikeia* is found twice in Acts 24:4; 2 Cor. 10:1.
 - p. The adjective *epieikes* in the NT denotes one who is magnanimous in their behavior.
349. The New Universal Unabridged Dictionary lists the following definitions for the adjective magnanimous:
- a. Generous in forgiving an insult or injury; free from petty resentment or vindictiveness: to be magnanimous towards one’s enemies.
 - b. High-minded; noble: a magnanimous king
 - c. Proceeding from or revealing nobility of mind, character, etc: a magnanimous love of justice.
350. If we paraphrase this definition and apply it to the Christian, we would say that the he must be:
- a. Generous in forgiving an insult or injury; free from petty resentment or vindictiveness especially towards one’s enemies.
 - b. High-minded; noble
 - c. Possessing nobility of mind, character, having a magnanimous love of justice.
351. Magnanimous behavior is one of the expressions of divine-love, which as we have noted has 2 directions:
- a. Vertical: Directed toward God.
 - b. Horizontal: Directed toward mankind.
352. The vertical, motivational divine love of a believer produces the horizontal, functional divine love directed toward all mankind.
353. The Lord Jesus Christ is magnanimous and the apostle Paul wants the Philippian believer’s to follow suit.
354. Magnanimous behavior among the Philippian believers will resolve the personality conflict between Euodia and Syntyche.
355. If they were magnanimous with each other in the first place, there would not have been a problem between the two.
356. Therefore, our corrected translation of Philippians 4:5 should read as follows:
357. **Philippians 4:5, “Permit your magnanimity to become manifest to everyone. The Lord is immanently near.”**
358. Magnanimity is related to forgiveness (Col. 3:13-14).
359. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are inherently magnanimous.
360. It is one of their attributes.

361. The Lord Jesus Christ during His 1st Advent revealed this magnanimous character of the Trinity.
362. The greatest manifestation of God's magnanimity was at the Cross when every sin in human history, past, present and future was imputed to Christ on the Cross and He was judged as our substitute.
363. Our Lord's magnanimous behavior was demonstrated during His 1st Advent by the manner in which He demonstrated the quality of being generous in forgiving insults and injury without being pettily resentful or vindictive.
364. **Luke 23:34, "Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive all of them, for they know not what they are doing.'"**
365. He was noble in character, loving justice but not insisting upon the letter of the law in order to preserve the spirit of the law.
366. The Lord was generous in forgiving insults and injuries without being vindictive and becoming involved in petty resentfulness.
367. He was generous, tolerant, patient, moderate, courageous, and noble.
368. He did not insist upon his own rights to the fullest but rectifies and redresses the injustices of justice.
369. The believer's forgiveness of others is a manifestation of his divine love.
370. The forgiveness of God originates from His very nature.
371. The Old Testament possesses a variety of rich language to describe God's forgiveness.
372. God is proclaimed as a merciful and forgiving God (Ps. 103:12; Is. 38:17; 43:25; Jer. 31:34; Mic. 7:19; cf. Lk. 15:11-24).
373. The Levitical animal sacrifices in the Old Testament depicted the voluntary substitutionary spiritual death of the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union on the cross, which is the basis for the forgiveness of sins.
374. The blood of the animal portrayed the voluntary substitutionary spiritual death of the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union on the cross, which is the basis for the forgiveness of sins.
375. **Hebrews 9:22, "without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."**
376. The forgiveness of sins is offered to the entire human race by God the Father based upon the merits of the voluntary substitutionary spiritual death of His Son, the impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union on the Cross.
377. A person appropriates by means of faith alone in Christ alone the forgiveness of his sins.
378. **Col 1:13-14, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."**
379. From the earliest mention of forgiveness, the Lord has never discounted nor overlooked our sins.
380. He forgives us because Christ made restitution.
381. Though God made the restitution for us, it was still required to obtain God's forgiveness.
382. To put it the opposite way: without the restitution payment of Jesus Christ, there would be no forgiveness!

383. God bases His forgiveness or receipt of His pardon upon the restitution for sins that Christ voluntarily made for the world.
384. There would be no forgiveness of sins if Christ had not propitiated the Father.
385. **1 John 2:1a, “My little children, I am providing information in writing at this particular time concerning these things for the benefit of all of you in order that all of you might not enter into committing an act of sin.”**
386. **1 John 2:1b, “Now, if anyone does enter into committing an act of sin, then we possess as an Advocate with the Father, Jesus who is the righteous Christ.”**
387. **1 John 2:2, “Furthermore, He Himself is the propitiation with regards to our sins. In fact, He Himself is the propitiation not with regards to our sins only in contrast with the rest of unregenerate humanity, absolutely not, but also with regards to the entire world, without exception and without distinction.”**
388. Unbelievers are not judged according to their sins at the Great White Throne Judgment but rather are judged according to their self-righteous human good works, which do not measure up to the perfect work of the impeccable Christ on the Cross, therefore the unbeliever goes to the lake of fire because of his rejection of Christ (Rev. 20:11-15).
389. 1 Timothy 2:4 and John 3:16-17 clearly indicates that God desires all men to be saved, therefore, He has made provision for the forgiveness of sins and thus for all men to be saved through the Person and Work of Jesus Christ on the Cross.
390. The believer who confesses his personal sins to the Father is promised the forgiveness of his sins and is restored to fellowship immediately upon doing so.
391. **1 John 1:9, “If any of us does confess our sins, then, He (God the Father) is faithful and just with the result that He forgives us our sins and purifies us from each and every wrongdoing.”**
392. The believer is restored to fellowship because of the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the Cross and thus the Father is faithful and just to forgive the believer his sins.
393. The believer is both object and the subject of forgiveness.
394. There are 2 categories of forgiveness:
- a. Forgiveness of personal sins by God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ at the cross.
 - b. Forgiveness of others as a function of divine-love under the royal family honor code.
395. Our forgiveness of one another is based upon God’s forgiveness of us, therefore the believer is both the object and the subject of forgiveness.
396. Not only is the believer the object of God’s forgiveness but also he has now become the subject of forgiveness since he is to exhibit the same attitude toward others as God has displayed towards him.
397. Since the believer is the object of God’s forgiveness, he is obligated to forgive his fellow believer in the same manner as God in Christ has forgiven him.
398. **Colossians 3:12-13, “Therefore, put on as the elect of God, separate and beloved, compassionate affections, graciousness, wisdom, humility, patient-endurance; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, if anyone should have a complaint another, even as the Lord Christ forgave all of you, so also you should forgive others.”**

399. **1 Peter 4:8, “Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.”**
400. The impeccable humanity of Christ in hypostatic union exhibited a forgiving attitude on the cross while enduring the greatest suffering that any member of the human race has ever had to endure in history when He received the imputation of the sins of the entire world as well tremendous verbal and physical abuse from other members of the human race.
401. The Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples to forgive (Matt, 18:21-35).
402. The believer who does not acknowledge his unforgiving attitude towards others will not be forgiven by God meaning that the believer will not be restored to fellowship with Him if he does not acknowledge to the Father his unforgiving attitude toward others.
403. **Matthew 6:14-15, “For if you forgive men their failures (acknowledging your own sin to the Father and forgive others), Your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive men their failures (failure to acknowledge your own sin to the Father and forgive others), neither will the Father forgive you (restoration to fellowship), your failures.”**
404. The humanity of Christ in hypostatic union set all precedence for the attitude that the believer is to possess in life, which is to always maintain an attitude of forgiveness towards others (Luke 23:24).
405. **Luke 23:34, “Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive all of them, for they know not what they are doing.’”**
406. His forgiving attitude on the cross while enduring the greatest suffering of any member of the human race in history set all precedence for the believer here in the church age.
407. The believer finds the capacity to forgive others when he is convicted by the Spirit’s revelation in the Word of God that God in Christ has forgiven him and only then will he have the capacity to forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven all men.
408. God’s forgiveness in Christ serves as the believer’s power and motivation to forgive others.
409. The believer who can forgive others who have injured him or someone that they love is manifesting the power of God in their lives and is revealing Christ to others with their attitude.
410. They are in reality revealing the Shekinah Glory of God Who is Christ, which is the same Glory that Moses desired to see (Ex. 33:18-19; 34:34:6-7).
411. The local assembly cannot advance as a spiritual combat unit without each member putting into practice the doctrine of forgiveness.
412. It is not enough to know the doctrine of forgiveness but it is practicing forgiveness, which manifests to others that you are the Lord’s student (John 13:34-35).
413. Forgiveness is essential in every human relation:
- a. Local Assembly
 - b. Marriages
 - c. Friendships.
414. The church age believer must always keep in mind when involved in any type of relationship whether marriage, the church, friendships or business that if God the Father forgave him through Christ, he in turn is obligated to forgive others without exception.

415. Those believers who are obedient to the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved all men will experience the joy of the Lord.
416. The propaganda of Satan's cosmic system has promoted the lie that wealth, good environment, marriage, having children, approbation from men will produce true happiness and joy.
417. Satan's propaganda machine promotes the lie that good circumstances and people and "looking out for number one," are the basis for true happiness and joy, but the Word of God states that true happiness and joy is based upon doing the Father's will by loving and serving one another.
418. In His Vine and the Branches Metaphor that is recorded in John 15, the Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples that obeying His command to love one another as He had loved them is the pathway to experiencing fellowship with Him, being productive for God and sharing His joy.
419. **John 15:1, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser."**
420. **John 15:2, "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit."**
421. **John 15:3, "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."**
422. **John 15:4, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me."**
423. **John 15:5, "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."**
424. **John 15:6, "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned."**
425. **John 15:7, "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."**
426. **John 15:8, "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."**
427. **John 15:9, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love."**
428. **John 15:10, "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."**
429. **John 15:11, "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."**
- a. Joy is the passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good; that excitement of pleasurable feelings which is caused by success, good fortune, the gratification of desire or some good possessed, or by a rational prospect of possessing what we love or desire; gladness; exultation; exhilaration of spirits.
 - b. Joy is a delight of the mind, from the consideration of the present or assured approaching possession of a good.
 - c. **"My joy"** refers to the joy that the Lord Jesus Christ possessed in His soul as a result of being consciously aware of His union and fellowship with the Father and was also the result of His obedience to the Father's will to love and serve all men.

- d. **Heb 12:2, “Begin concentrating upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, disregarding the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**
 - e. The believer who abides in Christ’s love will experience the joy of the Lord and this is accomplished by obedience to the Lord’s command to love one another as He has loved all men, which the Lord describes as “abiding in My love.”
 - f. Just as the Lord experienced joy from doing the Father’s will by fulfilling the command to love one another so the believer will experience that same joy by doing the same.
430. **John 15:11, “These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”**
- a. “**May be made full**” is the 3rd person singular aorist passive subjunctive form of the verb *pleroo* (πληρόω), which is *plerothe* (πληρωθῆ) and should be translated “might become a reality.”
 - b. This is an ingressive aorist denoting “entrance into the state” of experiencing the joy of the Lord.
 - c. The passive voice is used without an expressed agency but it is implied that if the disciples put into practice our Lord’s teaching to abide in His love, our Lord’s joy will become a reality in their lives.
 - d. The subjunctive mood of the verb *pleroo* is employed with the conjunction *hina* to express the purpose for the Lord teaching His disciples the importance of abiding in Him and obeying His commandment to love one another as He loved them, which is, sharing the joy of the Lord.
431. **John 15:12, “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”**
432. John 15:1-12 teaches that sharing the joy of the Lord is contingent upon the believer obeying the Lord’s command to love his fellow believer just as our Lord was obedient to the Father’s commands and loved the believer.
433. Love for others is motivated by our love for the Lord and our love for the Lord is demonstrated by our obedience to His commands to love one another and our obedience to His commands is the response in our souls to the love, which He demonstrated on behalf of us at the Cross.
434. The greater the obedience by the believer to the Lord Jesus Christ’s command to love and serve his fellow believer, the greater the joy of the Lord in the life of the believer.
435. The production of the joy of the Lord in the believer by the Holy Spirit is in direct proportion to the degree that the believer is obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ’s command to love and serve his fellow believer.
436. The Holy Spirit produces the joy of the Lord in the believer who obeys the command to love one another and this is called in Scripture, “the fruit of the Spirit.”
437. **Gal 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”**
438. The believer is commanded in the Word of God to rejoice because God wants to bless the believer and for them to share and experience His joy.
439. **1 Thess 5:16, “Rejoice always.”**
440. The believer is commanded to serve the Lord with joy.

441. **Psalm 100:1, “Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.”**
442. **Psalm 100:2, “Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing.”**
443. If we are not experiencing the joy of the Lord it is because we are disobedient.
444. If we don’t serve the Lord with joy then we will be under divine discipline.
445. **Deuteronomy 28:45, “So all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the LORD your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.”**
446. **Deuteronomy 28:46, “They shall become a sign and a wonder on you and your descendants forever.”**
447. **Deuteronomy 28:47, “Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things.”**
448. The believer is to rejoice because the Lord Jesus Christ has delivered him from the following:
- a. Personal sins (1 Jn. 2:2).
 - b. Old sin nature (Rm. 6:6).
 - c. Satan and his cosmic system (Gal. 6:14).
 - d. Self (Gal. 2:20).
449. Believers are to rejoice because of their eternal relationship and union with the sovereign ruler of the cosmos, the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:26-28).
450. They are to rejoice to rejoice because they have been called into fellowship with the Lord (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Jn. 1:1-4).
451. Believers are to rejoice to rejoice because of what the Lord did for them at the cross resulting in the forgiveness of their sins (Col. 1:14; Eph. 1:7).
452. Believers are to rejoice to rejoice because the Lord Jesus will give them a resurrection body (Phlp. 3:20-21).
453. They are to rejoice because the Lord Jesus will reward them for their faithfulness to Him in time (Col. 3:23-24).
454. Believers are to rejoice because of the honor of undergoing undeserved suffering and persecution because of their identification with Christ and because of the rewards they will receive as a result of doing so (Acts 5:41; 2 Cor. 7:4; Phlp. 1:12-18; 1:27-30; Col. 1:24; 1 Th. 3:6-9; 1 Pt. 1:6-9; 4:13).
455. Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun reciprocation, “a mutual exchange, a return in kind or of like value; alternating motion.”
456. They define the verb reciprocate, “to give and take mutually; to return in kind or degree, compliment gracefully; to make a return for something.”
457. If we paraphrase these definitions and give them a spiritual application, we could say the following:
458. With reference to the believer’s relationship with God there is to be a mutual exchange, a give and take between the believer and God in the sense of the believer obeying, honoring, respecting, revering and being dedicated and devoted to God, even to the point of self-sacrifice.
459. This exchange between the believer and God is the proper, appropriate, obedient and obligatory response by the believer to God’s revelation of Himself since the believer has been created and redeemed for God’s purpose and good pleasure.

460. With reference to the believer's relationship with other believers there is to be a mutual exchange, a give and take between believers in the sense of the believer honoring and respecting his fellow believer, being dedicated and devoted to his fellow believer, even to the point of self-sacrifice.
461. This exchange between the believer and his fellow believer is the proper, appropriate, obedient and obligatory response by the believer to his fellow believer since both he and his fellow believer were created by God, according to His image of God, redeemed at the Cross and fellow members of the body of Christ.
462. Reciprocation is an essential aspect of divine-love since it encompasses both the vertical aspect (directed towards God) and horizontal aspect (directed towards other believers and unbelievers) of divine-love.
- a. Vertical: **Mark 12:30, "AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH."**
 - b. Horizontal: **Mark 12:31, "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."**
463. Therefore, there is to be reciprocation between the believer and God and the believer towards his fellow believer.
464. To focus our attention to the concept of reciprocation, the Holy Spirit used a special Greek word, a reciprocal pronoun, *allelon* (ἀλλήλων) meaning "one another."
465. *Allelon* means "the quality or state by which there is a mutual exchange between others and ourselves."
466. The term "reciprocal" means "mutual, shared, shown or felt alike by both sides; united in feelings, actions, responsibilities, and attitudes."
467. Reciprocal implies a return in due measure by each side in the matter discussed.
468. This reciprocal pronoun denotes the concept of reciprocation and is frequently used in statements and injunctions to Christians regarding the responsibilities that believers are to engage in for the mutual help and blessing of one another.
469. In John 13, our Lord taught His disciples the principle of reciprocation in His washing of His disciples' feet and in His command to love one another as He had loved them.
470. Love for others is motivated by our love for the Lord and our love for the Lord is demonstrated by our obedience to His commands to love one another and our obedience to His commands is the response in our souls to the love, which He demonstrated on behalf of us at the Cross.
471. In 1 John 4:7-21, the apostle John teaches the principle of reciprocation in his command to love one another as the Lord had loved.
472. Paul taught that love and care for one's fellow believer involves reciprocation.
473. In divine love, there is to be reciprocation between believers in the sense that there is to be a mutual exchange of care and concern among believers for one another.
474. Believers are to compliment one another gracefully and return love for one another.
475. Divine love involves a reciprocal relationship among believers in the sense of there being a mutual sharing of feelings, actions, responsibilities and attitudes between believers.

476. It involves reciprocation among believers in the sense that believers are to share together as partners in the needs, burdens, concerns, joys, and blessings for the purpose of encouragement, comfort, challenge or exhortation, praise, prayer and physical help according to the needs and ability (cf. Phil. 1:5 with 1:19; and 2:4 with 1:27; also 4:3; Rom. 12:15; and 1 Thess. 5:11,14,15; Heb. 10:33).
477. Divine love involves reciprocation among believers because believers share the same eternal life through regeneration and thus the same eternal “relationship” and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-28).
478. It involves reciprocation among believers because they entered into an “active partnership” with each other and through their prayers, friendship and financial support they are to support the communication of the gospel of Christ’s enterprise on earth.
479. **Philippians 1:3-5, “I continue giving thanks to my God (the Father) based upon my entire remembrance of all of you, always by means of my every specific detailed request on behalf of each and every one of you. I make it my habit to offer this specific detailed request with joy because of your fellowship with respect to the proclamation of the gospel from the first day up to this present moment.”**
480. **Philippians 1:6, “I am confident of this very same thing, namely that, the One (God the Holy Spirit) who began in all of you a good work that is divine in character, will bring it to completion up to the day of Christ who is Jesus.”**
481. **Philippians 1:7, “Correspondingly, it is appropriate, as far as I am concerned, to continue to possess this attitude concerning each and every one of you because all of you continue to have me in your heart both in my imprisonment and in the confirmed defense for the gospel. Each and every one of you, all of you without exception as a result continue to be my joint-partners concerning this grace!”**
482. Divine love involves reciprocation among believers because they are fellow members of the body of Christ and are responsible to encourage each other and to share each others burdens, needs, concerns, and joy.
483. **Gal 6:2, “Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”**
484. Divine love involves reciprocation among believers in the sense that believers are to be good stewards of their time (they are to be dedicated and devoted to promoting the gospel of Christ and aiding the body of Christ), talent (they are to operate in their spiritual gifts), treasure (they are to financially support each other when necessary) and truth (they are to apply the Word of God in their relationships with each other).
- a. Time: **Galatians 6:9-10, “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”**
 - b. Talent: **1 Peter 4:10, “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”**
 - c. Treasure: **Luke 6:38, “Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure -- pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”**
 - d. Truth: **Col 4:5-6, “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”**

485. Reciprocation is an essential aspect of divine-love since it encompasses both the vertical aspect (directed towards God) and horizontal aspect (directed towards other believers and unbelievers) of divine-love.
486. With reference to the believer's relationship with God there is to be a mutual exchange, a give and take between the believer and God in the sense of the believer obeying, honoring, respecting, revering and being dedicated and devoted to God, even to the point of self-sacrifice.
487. With reference to the believer's relationship with other believers there is to be a mutual exchange, a give and take between believers in the sense of the believer honoring and respecting his fellow believer, being dedicated and devoted to his fellow believer, even to the point of self-sacrifice.
488. Connected with the concept of reciprocation are the one another commands in Scripture.
489. Repeatedly the New Testament commands us to love and care for one another as fellow members of the body of Christ.
490. In fact, the Lord Jesus desires all believers to be functioning effectively as joint-partners/fellow-members of His body, the church.
491. This "one another" care is to be the result of our fellowship with other believers.
492. This reciprocal pronoun *allelon* is frequently used in statements and injunctions to Christians regarding the responsibilities that believers are to engage in for the mutual help and blessing of one another.
493. The frequency of these injunctions indicates the importance of this truth to the growth, health, and ministry of the body of Christ.
494. The basic and primary command for believers is to love one another.
495. All together these One Another passages may be grouped together into 18 or more specific categories of responsibility where Christians are to be ministering in the lives of fellow members of the body of Christ.
496. Just a brief look at these passages will quickly reveal two things:
- a. The need we each have of the ministry and aid of others, and
 - b. Our responsibility to serve to others.
497. The One Another passages and injunctions remind us:
- a. That no man is an island—no individual believer can function effectively by himself. We need the help and love of other members of the body. We need encouragement, counsel, prayer, or physical help, depending on our particular needs at any given moment.
 - b. That every believer is important and essential to the proper function of the church—the body of Christ. While this will vary in one's life, still, each believer needs help in some way, but also each has something to contribute to the well-being, growth, and ministry of the body of Christ.
498. A study of these One Another passages yield a number of principles that lay the foundation and set forth the reasons why God has given us these exhortations in the New Testament.
499. The following is a list of why we should love one another:
- a. We are God's children (Eph. 5:1).
 - b. We are brethren (Rm. 15:14).
 - c. We are members of one another (1 Cor. 12:25).

- d. We are taught by God to love one another (1 Thess. 4:9).
 - e. God loves us (1 John 4:7).
 - f. It is the expression and fulfillment of God's will (Mt. 22:35-40).
 - g. We want to glorify Him (1 Pet. 4:10-11).
 - h. We have a responsibility to love one another (Rm. 13:8-10).
500. The Objectives in Loving One Another:
- a. For a testimony to the world of the reality of God's love in Christ: **John 13:35: "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."**
 - b. For loves continues to increase:
 - (1) Increase: **"and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you"** (1 Thess. 3:12); and
 - (2) Intensity and Spiritual Source: **"Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart"** (1 Pet. 1:22). **"Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins"** (1 Pet. 4:8).
 - c. For ministry and service to others: Ultimately, ministry and service summarize all the One Another injunctions that follow as expressions of God's love for others.
501. Obedience to the following prohibitions will enable us to fulfill the mandate to love one another as the Lord loved us:
- a. Do Not Judge One Another: **Romans 14:13, "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way."**
 - b. Do Not have Lawsuits With One Another: **1 Cor. 6:7, "Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?"**
 - c. Do Not Bite and Devour One Another: **Gal. 5:15, "But if you bite and devour one another, take care lest you be consumed by one another."**
 - d. Do Not Challenge and Envy One Another: **Gal. 5:26, "Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another."**
 - e. Do Not Speak Evil or Complain Against One Another: **James 4:11, "Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against the law, and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge of it."** **James 5:9, "Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door."**
 - f. Do Not Seek Glory from One Another: **John 5:44, "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?"**
502. Obedience to the following commands will enable us to fulfill the mandate to love one another as the Lord loved us:
- a. Devoted to One Another: **Rom 12:10, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor."**
 - b. The Same Mind Toward One Another: **Rom 12:16, "Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation."**

- c. Build One Another Up: **Rom 14:19**, “So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.”
 - d. Accept One Another: **Rom 15:7**, “Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.”
 - e. Wait For One Another: **1 Cor 11:33**, “So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.”
 - f. Tolerate One Another: **Eph 4:2**, “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love.”
 - g. Kind, Tender-hearted and Forgiving to One Another: **Eph 4:32**, “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”
 - h. Speak to One Another with Spiritual Songs: **Eph 5:19**, “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.”
 - i. Be Subject to One Another: **Eph 5:21**, “and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”
 - j. Regard One Another as More Important than Yourself: **Phil 2:3**, “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.”
 - k. Bear with One Another: **Col 3:13**, “bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”
 - l. Comfort One Another: **1 Thess 4:18**, “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”
 - m. Encourage One Another: **1 Thess 5:11**, “Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”
 - n. Stimulate One Another to the Performance of Divine Good: **Heb 10:24**, “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.”
 - o. Pray for One Another: **James 5:16**, “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”
 - p. Hospitable to One Another: **1 Peter 4:9**, “Be hospitable to one another without complaint.”
 - q. Serve One Another: **1 Peter 4:10**, “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”
 - r. Humble toward One Another: **1 Peter 5:5**, “You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for **GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**”
503. Loving and caring for one another is not an option for the Christian but rather it is a mandate, or in other words, a command.
504. The Lord Jesus Christ issued a command to His disciples to love their enemies, which shocked those who heard Him but this was the manner in which the Father and He loved the entire human race.
505. **Matthew 5:43**, “You have heard that it was said, ‘**YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.**’

506. **Matthew 5:44, “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”**
507. **Matthew 5:45, “so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”**
508. **Matthew 5:46, “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”**
509. **Matthew 5:47, “If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”**
510. **Matthew 5:48, “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”**
511. The Lord Jesus Christ explains in Matthew 5:44-48 that there is no virtue in loving those who love you but rather His disciples were to imitate God who loves His enemies, those who are obnoxious sinners to Him.
512. God loved all of us while we were yet sinners and antagonistic to Him.
513. **Rom 5:8, “But God demonstrates His own divine love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died as a substitute for all of us.”**
514. God treated us in grace and mercy because of His great love meaning that because of His great love He withheld judgment and bestowed on all of us unmerited blessings because of our faith in Christ.
515. **Ephesians 2:4-5, “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).”**
516. It is impossible for anyone to obey the command to love one’s enemies unless one is a believer meaning he has responded to God’s love for him in the Person and Work of Christ by obeying the command to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in order to receive eternal salvation.
517. **John 3:16, “For God loved the world so much, that He gave His only uniquely born Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”**
518. Only those who have responded to God’s love for them in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ have the capacity to love their enemies, their neighbor as themselves and to love one another as Christ loved.
519. The believer who comprehends and acknowledges and is conscious that he is the object of God’s love and was treated in grace and unconditional love while yet an enemy of God will receive the capacity to obey the command to love his enemies.
520. In both the Old and New Testaments believers are commanded to love both God and their fellow human being as themselves.
521. **Matthew 22:34, “But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together.”**
522. **Matthew 22:35, “One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him.”**
523. **Matthew 22:36, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”**
524. Comparative passage: **Mark 12:28, “One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, ‘What commandment is the foremost of all?’”**

525. **Mark 12:29, “Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD.’”**
- a. The scribes had determined that the Jews were obligated to obey 613 precepts in the Mosaic Law, 365 negative precepts and 248 positive.
 - b. Regarding these 613 precepts, there was constant debate over which was the most important.
 - c. Some claimed it was the positive commands and others said the negative prohibitions were more important.
 - d. As a result, the Pharisees were always describing the law in terms of light and heavy, and small and great.
 - e. The idea was that if your good deeds outweighed the bad, God would accept you, but if not, well, there was no way to get rid of the bad, no way to truly experience God’s forgiveness.
 - f. As a result, they taught that people needed to keep the weightier commandments because with obedience to these they would get more points with God.
526. **Matthew 22:37, “And He said to him, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’”**
527. Comparative passage: **Mark 12:30, “AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.”**
528. **Matthew 22:38, “This is the great and foremost commandment.”**
529. **Matthew 22:39, “The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’”**
530. Comparative passage: **Mark 12:31, “The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”**
531. **Matthew 22:40, “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”**
532. The Lord Jesus made love the most important issue because according to Romans 13:8-10 because love is the fulfillment of the Law.
533. **Romans 13:10, “Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”**
534. The believer who comprehends and acknowledges that he is the object of God’s love and was treated in grace and unconditional love while yet an enemy of God will receive the capacity to obey the command to love God and his neighbor as himself.
535. In John 13:34, the Lord Jesus Christ took the command of Leviticus 19:18, which is quoted in Matthew 22:39 and Mark 12:31, and elevated it, giving it a new meaning in the sense that He commanded His disciples to love one another “as He loved them” since He fulfilled the command perfectly during His 1st Advent as the Lamb without spot or blemish.
536. **John 13:33, “Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’”**
537. **John 13:34, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”**

538. Corrected translation: **John 13:34, “A new commandment in character and quality and example I give to all of you, that all of you love one another, even as I have loved all of you, that all of you also love one another.”**
539. When our Lord says I give you a new commandment, He does not mean “new in time” since Old Testament saints were told to love their neighbor in Leviticus 19:18 but here the Lord is saying that the commandment to love one another is new in “quality, character” and “example” since love would take on a new meaning when our Lord would self-sacrificially offer Himself up to the Father as our Substitute for the propitiation for our sins.
540. The Old Testament demanded that the believer love not only God but also his neighbor as himself, thus, the commandment was old.
541. Christ not only commanded His disciples to love but to do so as He had loved them.
542. The latter part is new.
543. Under the old commandment in Leviticus 19:18, which is quoted in Mark 12:28-31 and Matthew 22:34-40 the test of love for one’s neighbor was love for oneself but the test under the new commandment was to love as Christ had loved them.
544. It is impossible for a believer to fulfill the mandate to love one another as Christ loved him until he comprehends and acknowledges and is conscious that he is the object of Christ’s love.
545. **1 John 3:1, “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”**
546. The fact that the believer is an object of God’s love provides him with the capacity to love others and execute the command to love his fellow believer as Christ loved.
547. **1 John 4:19, “We love, because He first loved us.”**
548. God’s love for the believer serves as the power and motivation to obey the command to love one another as Christ loved all men.
549. The believer must acknowledge his own sinfulness and unworthiness before God before he attempts to love others in the manner that the Lord has commanded.
550. **1 John 3:16, “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”**
551. The believer must experience God’s love for him before he can obey the command to love as Christ has loved all men.
552. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to experience the love of God in his own life and the Spirit accomplishes this through prayer and the Word of God.
553. The Holy Spirit in the pages of Scripture enlightens the believer as to the love that God the Father has exercised towards him as manifested in the Person and Work of Christ at the Cross.
554. **Rom 5:5, “and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”**
555. The Holy Spirit reproduces the love of God in the believer who is obedient to the command to love one another.
556. **Gal 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”**

557. Obedience to the command to love one another as Christ loved is the positive response by the believer to the Spirit's revelation in the Word of God to the Father and the Son's love that has been directed toward them through the death of Christ.
558. **Gal 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."**
559. The love that loves like Christ is the sign of true discipleship.
560. As conformity to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ must be the chief mark of the believer's Christian walk, so love must be the chief mark of that conformity.
561. **Eph 5:1-2, "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."**
562. Divine love must be accompanied by discernment.
563. Discernment refers "to the capacity to perceive clearly and hence to understand the real nature of something."
564. It is concerned with practical matters like speaking (10:14; 11:9; 12:23; 22:12) and general prudence and discernment concerning how to live rightly in relationships.
565. Discernment can be referred to as "tact" and the ability to understand relationships and situations with a view to practical action.
566. Tact is a keen sense of what to say or do to avoid giving offense and is the skill in dealing with difficult or delicate situations.
567. Discernment refers to the faculty to discern, discriminate, and have acuteness of judgment and understanding in any given situation.
568. We must learn discernment from the Holy Spirit who teaches us discernment by making the Word of God understandable and guiding us in its application.
569. Spiritual discernment refers to the ability to separate, distinguish between what is God's will and what is evil in any given situation.
570. **Hebrews 5:12, "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food."**
571. **Hebrews 5:13, "For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant."**
572. **Hebrews 5:14, "But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil."**
573. Spiritual discernment refers to the power or ability to grasp and comprehend what is obscure to the soulish man.
574. It stresses accuracy in reading character or motives and the Holy Spirit provides the believer with this ability as the believer obeys the Spirit and follows His guidance and direction that appears in the Word of God.
575. **Heb. 4:12, "The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart."**
576. The Lord Jesus Christ provides us a perfect example of an individual with perfect discernment.
577. The impeccable human nature of Christ in hypostatic union was perfectly accurate in reading the character and motives of people in His life not because He was always

utilizing His divine omniscience but rather it was because He was always obedient to the guidance and direction of the Spirit.

578. In the Gospel of Matthew the Lord Jesus Christ's demonstrates perfect discernment in handling a difficult and delicate situation with the Pharisees.

579. **Matt 22:15-22, "Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, 'Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any. Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?' But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, 'Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax.' And they brought Him a denarius. And He said to them, 'Whose likeness and inscription is this?' They said to Him, 'Caesar's.' Then He said to them, 'Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's.' And hearing this, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away."**

- a. In Matthew 22:15-22, the Lord Jesus Christ in His impeccable human nature demonstrated perfect discernment in that He tactfully handled this difficult confrontation with the Pharisees.
- b. The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated the keen sense of what to say to the Pharisees and what not to say to them so that He would not give offense to the Roman civil authorities that were occupying Judea at this particular time.
- c. The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated the ability to understand the real nature of the Pharisees' question, which was designed to trap Him.
- d. The Lord Jesus Christ accurately read the character and motive of the Pharisees' question and the Holy Spirit provided Him with this ability since He always obeyed the Spirit and followed His guidance and direction, which was in accordance with the Word of God.
- e. The Lord Jesus Christ exercised the faculty to discern, discriminate, and had acuteness of judgment and understanding of the character and motives of the Pharisees.
- f. The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated the ability to grasp and comprehend and the power to understand what was obscure to the soulish mind of His audience that were witnesses to this confrontation with the Pharisees.
- g. The Lord Jesus Christ loved the Pharisees with the love of God but He was not gullible and He taught His disciples not to be gullible and therefore, we too as Christians are not to be gullible as we go into the world proclaiming the Gospel.
- h. **Matt 10:16, "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves."**
- i. Christians must exercise discernment for not everyone is a sheep and some people are dogs or hogs and some are wolves in sheep's clothing.
- j. We Christians are the Lord's sheep but this does not mean we should let people pull the wool over our eyes.
- k. As God's people, we Christians are privileged to handle the "holy" things of the Lord.
- l. He has entrusted to us precious truths of the Word of God and we must regard them carefully.
- m. Only a fool would give pearls to a pig.

- n. **Matt 7:6, “Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.”**
 - o. While it is true that we are to present the Gospel to every creature, it is also true that we must not cheapen the Gospel by a ministry that lacks discernment.
 - p. Even Jesus refused to talk to Herod (Lk. 23:9) and Paul refused to argue with people who resisted the Word (Acts 13:44-49).
 - q. We as Christians must be able to judge the character and motives of people in our lives as our Lord did, but not to condemn them but to minister to them.
 - r. The reason for judgment, then, is not that we condemn others, but that we might be able to minister to them.
 - s. **1 Peter 4:7, “The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.”**
580. One of the most foolish statements I have ever read is, “Love is blind.”
581. Love is not blind but rather is discerning and does not close its eyes to the truth, to reality, to sin (Heb. 12:6).
582. **Heb 12:6, “FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”**
583. Rev 3:19, “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.”
584. What a horrible thing it would be if love truly were blind and had no discernment.
585. Christian love must operate according to truth.
586. Love is discerning.
587. The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated His discerning love for the Pharisees by rebuking severely (Mt. 23:13-16).
588. **Matthew 23:13, “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.”**
589. **Matthew 23:14, “[“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater condemnation.”]**
590. **Matthew 23:15, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”**
591. His rebuke was designed to bring them to repentance and to believe in Him for eternal salvation.
592. He did not want them to go to the Lake of Fire, just as the Lord does not want any one to go there.
593. Paul showed his discerning love for Peter by rebuking him for his hypocrisy in Galatians 2:11-16).
594. Discerning love has its eyes wide open to how things are, as well as to how things ought to be.
595. As we noted in our study of Philippians 1:9, Paul prayed that the Philippians divine love might be accompanied by discernment.

596. **Philippians 1:9, “Now, this I make it a habit to pray that your divine-love might continue to flourish yet more and more by means of a total discerning experiential knowledge.”**
- “**Experiential knowledge**” is the noun *epignosis* (ἐπίγνωσις) which refers to personally encountering the *agape*, “divine love” of the Lord Jesus as it is revealed by the Spirit in the pages of Scripture through the process of fellowship and being affected by that revelation in the sense that it conforms us to the image of Christ.
 - We know this is an experiential knowledge of God’s love in and through Christ since the believer’s *agape*, “divine love” for God and people originates from God’s self-sacrificial love for us as expressed by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Cross.
 - 1 John 4:19, “We love, because He first loved us.”**
 - “**Discerning**” is the noun *aisthesis* (αἴσθησις), which refers to the capacity to understand the real nature of any given situation and to apply accurately *agape*, “divine-love” to that situation.
 - The noun *aisthesis* (αἴσθησις), “discerning” refers to the ability to separate, distinguish and choose between what is God’s will and what is evil.
 - It refers to the faculty to discern, discriminate, and have acuteness of judgment and understanding of the character and motives of people.
 - The word refers to the ability to grasp and comprehend and have the power to understand what is obscure to the soulish man.
597. Intercessory prayer for both believers and unbelievers is an expression of the love of God in our lives.
598. If we love our fellow believer, we will pray for the spiritual growth and temporal needs of members of the royal family of God (Eph. 6:18; Col. 1:9-10; 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 1:11; James 5:16; 3 John 2; 2 Cor. 13:9; Rom. 15:30-31).
599. **Ephesians 1:18, “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know (*oida*, “know without a doubt”) what is the hope (*elpis*, “confident assurance”) of His calling (election), what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.”**
600. In Ephesians 1:18, Paul expresses his love for the Ephesian believers by praying that the Holy Spirit would enlighten them so that they will know without a doubt what is the confident assurance of their election to privilege and their eternal inheritance that they possess because of their eternal union with Christ.
601. **Ephesians 1:19, “and what is the surpassing greatness of His power (*dunamis*, “inherent power”) toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working (*energeia*, “operative power”) of the strength (*ischus*, “possession of power to overcome”) of His might (*kratos*, “manifested power”).”**
- In Ephesians 1:19, Paul expresses his love for the Ephesian believers by praying that the Holy Spirit would enlighten them regarding the omnipotence of God and the exercise of that omnipotence through the resurrection, ascension and session of Christ that has been made available to them through their union with Christ, which gives them the capacity to overcome the devil, and the sin nature.
 - “**Power**” is the noun *dunamis*, which refers the inherent power of God and thus it refers to God’s attribute called omnipotence.

- c. **“Working”** is the noun *energeia*, which means, “operative power” and is a reference to the exercise of God’s omnipotence through the resurrection, ascension and session of Christ.
 - d. **“Strength”** is the noun *ischus*, which means, “possession of power to overcome” and refers to the 100% availability of divine omnipotence that has been made available to every church age believer because of their union with the Lord Jesus Christ that provides them “the power to overcome” Satan and the kingdom of darkness and the old Adamic sin nature.
 - e. **“Might”** is the noun *kratos*, which means, “manifested power” and refers to the omnipotence of God that has been “manifested” in history through the resurrection, ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ.
602. **Ephesians 1:20, “which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.”**
- a. **“In Christ”** indicates that the Ephesian believer’s confidence, election, eternal inheritance and power to experience victory over the devil and the flesh are all found in their eternal union and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
603. **Ephesians 1:21, “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”**
604. In Ephesians 3, Paul again expresses his great love for the Ephesian believers by praying for them.
605. **Ephesians 3:14, “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father.”**
606. **Ephesians 3:15, “from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.”**
607. **Ephesians 3:16, “that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.”**
608. **Ephesians 3:17, “so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love.”**
609. **Ephesians 3:18, “may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth.”**
610. **Ephesians 3:19, “and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.”**
611. By the Holy Spirit strengthening the Ephesian believers in the new Christ nature through the Word of God, they would be able to comprehend spiritually the love of Christ, which surpasses human knowledge and as a result they would grow up spiritually and be conformed to the image of Christ who is God.
612. **Philippians 1:9, “Now, this I make it a habit to pray that your divine-love might continue to flourish yet more and more by means of a total discerning experiential knowledge.”**
613. In Philippians 1:9, Paul demonstrated his love for the Philippians by praying that their love would grow by means of an experiential knowledge in the sense of personally encountering through the process of fellowship, the love of God in Christ as it is revealed by the Holy Spirit in prayerful meditation upon Word of God and being affected by this encounter resulting in the gaining of practical spiritual wisdom and more of the character of Christ.
614. **Philippians 1:10, “So that all of you might continue to choose the essentials in order that all of you might be sincere and without offense for the day of Christ.”**

- a. The result of the Philippians' divine-love continuing to grow is that they might continue to have the capacity to choose the essentials or what is of the utmost importance in life, thus having right priorities in life.
 - b. **"The essentials"** refers to experiencing identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, which is the means to executing the Father's will.
615. **Philippians 3:10, "that I come to know Him experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death."**
616. **Philippians 3:11, "If somehow (by becoming like Him with respect to His death), I may attain to the exit-resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones."**
617. **Colossians 1:9, "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding."**
- a. **"Knowledge"** refers to an "experiential knowledge" of the Father's will in the sense of personally encountering through the process of fellowship, the Father's will as it is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the pages of Scripture and prayer and being affected by this encounter with the Father's will resulting in the gaining of practical spiritual wisdom and more of the character of Christ.
618. **Colossians 1:10, "so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."**
619. **Colossians 1:11, "strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously."**
620. **Colossians 1:12, "giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light."**
621. Believers are to offer up intercessory prayers for all men since God desires all men to be saved and to come to an experiential knowledge of the Truth (fellowship), which is resident in the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 2:2; 1 Tm. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9; Jn. 3:16-17).
622. If we love the unbeliever, we will pray that God would bring in people and circumstances that would cause the unbeliever to have the humility to give the Gospel a hearing and that they would be "exposed" to the Gospel so that they can make a decision to either accept or reject Jesus Christ as Savior.
623. Nowhere do the Scriptures sanction or command believers to pray that God would save the unbeliever since God, because He is just and righteous, cannot coerce or make the unbeliever do anything against his will, thus God cannot save the unbeliever unless the unbeliever makes a decision to accept Christ as Savior.
624. Although God's will is that all men be saved, God cannot force any human being to believe in His Son Jesus Christ against their will, thus people go to the Lake of Fire forever and ever not because God desires it but because they choose to.
625. If we operate in the love of God, we will pray for our enemies.
626. **Matt 5:43-44, "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."**

627. The believer receives the capacity to pray for his enemies, when he accepts by faith Christ's love for him and responds in obedience to Christ's love for him, and which love, the Spirit reveals in the Word of God.
628. The Lord Jesus Christ expressed His divine love for those who mocked, scourged, vilified and crucified Him by interceding for them before the Father (Lk. 23:33-34) and Stephen expressed the love of God at his death.
629. **Luke 23:33-34, "When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. But Jesus was saying, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.' And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves."**
630. **Acts 7:59-60, "They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!' Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them!' Having said this, he fell asleep."**
631. The believer must obey the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one another as He has loved in order for his Christian service to be productive and rewarded by the Lord at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church.
632. **John 13:34, "A new commandment in character and quality and example I give to all of you, that all of you divinely love one another, even as I have divinely loved all of you, that all of you also divinely love one another."**
633. Obedience to the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved us is the response in our soul to the manner in which the Lord loved us at the Cross.
634. **1 John 3:16, "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."**
635. **1 John 4:19, "We love, because He first loved us."**
636. Therefore, productive Christian service is motivated by our love for the Lord and our love for the Lord is the response of our entire being to the manner in which He loved us and is expressed by our obedience to His command to love one another as He has loved us at the Cross.
637. **Deut 10:12, "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul."**
638. Productive Christian service demands proper motivation.
639. Motivation is that which prompts a person to act in a certain way, the goal of one's actions.
640. Motivation for Christian service begins with the believer prayerfully meditating upon the Spirit's revelation in the Word of God of the Lord Jesus Christ's self-sacrificial love and service for him at the Cross.
641. Then the believer must accept by faith the Spirit's revelation of the Lord's self-sacrificial love and service for him, and which faith expresses itself in obedience to the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved him.
642. This acceptance by faith of the Spirit's revelation of the Lord's love, which expresses itself in obedience to the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved, constitutes serving by means of the Spirit.
643. **Philippians 3:2-3, "Beware of those dogs, beware of those evil workers, beware of the mutilation because we are the circumcision, those who are serving**

(God the Father) by means of the Spirit of God, who are priding themselves in the nature and doctrine of Christ Jesus, who have no confidence in the flesh.”

644. Service for the Lord and other believers is inextricably tied together since we love the Lord who we can't see in our fellow believer who we can see.
645. **1 John 4:20, “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.”**
646. **1 John 4:21, “And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.”**
647. So it is through love that we are to serve one another.
648. **Gal 5:13, “For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”**
649. Every believer has been given a spiritual gift for the purpose of serving other members of the body of Christ.
650. The proper function of one's spiritual gift demands obedience to the Lord's command to love one another as He loved.
651. **1 Peter 4:10, “As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”**
652. **1 Cor 12:7, “But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”**
653. The believer's faith in the Spirit's revelation of the Lord's love and service for him, which expresses itself in obedience to the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved, enables the believer to imitate the example of love and service by the Lord Jesus Christ.
654. The Lord Jesus Christ provided His disciples with a visual illustration and example regarding the responsibility to serve each other through love (Jn. 13:1-17).
655. The believer's faith in the Spirit's revelation of the Lord's love and service for him, which expresses itself in obedience to the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved, produces humility in the believer.
656. Humility expresses itself in putting others ahead of yourself.
657. Paul commanded the Philippians to put each other ahead of themselves as Christ did.
658. **Philippians 2:3, “All of you continue thinking the one thing. Never (thinking) according to inordinate ambition nor according to self-deception but with humility. All of you continue regarding each other as better than yourselves.”**
659. **Philippians 2:4, “Each stop being occupied with your own interests but rather the interests of others.”**
660. In the same way that our Lord Jesus Christ was rewarded for His service so too will our Christian service be rewarded by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church if it has been properly motivated by our love for the Lord, which expresses itself in obedience to His command to love one another as He has loved (1 Cor. 3:11-14; 2 Cor. 5:10).
661. Divine discipline is an expression of God's love for His children.
662. The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ becomes a child of God at the moment he exercised faith alone in Christ alone.

663. **John 1:12-13, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”**
664. God the Father expressed His great love for us by making us His children at the moment of salvation.
665. **1 John 3:1, “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”**
666. There are two categories of divine discipline that are an expression of God’s love:
- a. Negative: God expresses His love for His children by disciplining them in the sense that He “punishes” them when they are disobedient to His will.
 - b. Positive: God expresses His love for His children by disciplining them in the sense of “training” them when they are obedient to His will and in fellowship.
667. Both categories of divine discipline are designed to keep the believer on track in executing the Father’s will by becoming like Christ.
668. The Word of God is employed in both positive and negative categories of discipline.
669. **Heb. 4:12, “The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart.”**
670. **2 Timothy 3:16-17, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”**
671. The Holy Spirit disciplines the disobedient child of God by rebuking them with the Word of God as it is communicated by the pastor-teacher in the local assembly and the purpose of such rebuke is to conform the believer to the will of his heavenly Father, which results in blessing and true happiness.
672. **Jeremiah 32:33, “They have turned their back to Me and not their face; though I taught them, teaching again and again, they would not listen and receive instruction.”**
673. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the pastor-teacher who is the delegated authority in the local assembly, to reprove and rebuke the children of God from the pulpit with the Word of God as an expression of His love.
674. **2 Timothy 4:1, “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom.”**
675. **2 Timothy 4:2, “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.”**
676. **2 Timothy 4:3, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires.”**
677. **2 Timothy 4:4, “and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.”**
678. God disciplines His disobedient children by permitting adversity, trials, and irritations to come into their lives that are beyond their capacity to handle in order to get

their attention and to focus upon their number one priority in life as children of God, which is to conformity to the Father's will.

679. God disciplines His disobedient children by permitting them to reap the fruits of their bad decisions so that they might learn that conformity to His will is the only way to true joy and happiness and blessing in life (Ezek. 16:43; Gal. 6:7-8).
680. There are three categories of divine discipline (punishment) for the disobedient child of God:
- a. Warning (Rev. 3:20; James 5:9)
 - b. Intense (Ps. 38:1; 2 Th. 2:11).
 - c. Dying (Jer. 9:16; 44:12; Phlp. 3:18-19; Re. 3:16; Ps. 118:17-18; 1 Jo. 5:16).
681. God disciplines His "obedient" children through adversity and underserved suffering in order to build the believer's confidence in his relationship with God and to get him to depend on God for his security and protection rather than money and human relationships.
682. God disciplines His "obedient" children through adversity and underserved suffering in order to demonstrate to the believer the sufficiency of God's Word in handling any problem or difficulty in life.
683. For the believer who is obedient, there are 3 categories of underserved suffering, which God the Father employs to discipline or train the obedient believer:
- a. Providential preventive suffering: Experienced by the believer at the 1st stage of spiritual adulthood, spiritual self-esteem and is designed to advance the believer to the 2nd stage of spiritual adulthood, spiritual autonomy (2 Cor. 12:7-10).
 - b. Momentum testing: Experienced by the believer in the 2nd stage of spiritual adulthood, spiritual autonomy and is designed to advance the believer to the 3rd stage of spiritual adulthood, spiritual maturity.
 - c. Evidence Testing: Experienced by the believer in the 3rd stage of spiritual adulthood, spiritual maturity and is the privilege of the believer to become a witness for the Prosecution in the rebuttal phase of Satan's appeal trial (Job).
684. The Lord Jesus Christ disciplines the believer in the sense that He rebukes, punishes and trains the believer because He personally and affectionately loves the believer.
685. **Revelation 3:14, "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this."**
686. **Revelation 3:15, "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot."**
687. **Revelation 3:16, "So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."**
688. **Revelation 3:17, "Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."**
689. **Revelation 3:18, "I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see."**
690. **Revelation 3:19, "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent."**

- a. **“Love”** is the verb *phileo* (φιλέω), which means, “to personally and affectionately love someone” and expresses the Lord Jesus Christ’s personal affection, care and concern for the believer by disciplining him whether for training when obedient or punishment when disobedient.
 - b. **“Reprove”** is the verb *elencho* (ἐλέγχω), “to reprove, chasten” and “convict” of sin in order to “instruct” the believer and restore him to fellowship.
 - c. **“Discipline”** is the verb *paideuo* (παιδεύω) and was commonly used in Greek literature to mean the “upbringing” and “teaching” and “disciplining” of children.
 - d. Such “upbringing” consisted of teaching general knowledge and various kinds of training aimed at developing discipline and character.
 - e. The Lord reproves us because He is trying to develop His character in us.
691. **Revelation 3:20, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”**
 692. **Revelation 3:21, “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”**
 693. **Revelation 3:22, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”**
 694. Revelation 3:20-22 teaches that the Lord disciplines us not only because He loves us and but also because He wants to reward us.
 695. Just as any good father disciplines his children because he loves them, so God the Father disciplines His children because He loves them.
 696. If God did not train us when we are obedient and punishes us when we are disobedient, then we would be illegitimate children, thus divine discipline in the sense of punishment and training is the mark of a child of God.
 697. **Hebrews 12:5, “and you have forgotten the exhortation, which is addressed to you as sons, ‘MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM.’”**
 698. **Hebrews 12:6, “FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”**
 699. **Hebrews 12:7, “It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?”**
 700. **Hebrews 12:8, “But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.”**
 701. **Hebrews 12:9, “Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?”**
 702. **Hebrews 12:10, “For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.”**
 703. **Hebrews 12:11, “All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”**
 704. **Hebrews 12:12, “Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble.”**
 705. **Hebrews 12:13, “and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.”**

706. Hebrews 12:10 teaches us that ultimately, God disciplines us because He wants us to share in His character and integrity, which is meant by the phrase “share His holiness.”
707. We are not to get angry or bitter when God disciplines us through the Word, or adversity and underserved suffering but rather we are to listen to what God is trying to say to us and to learn the lesson that He is teaching us so that we might acquire the character of our heavenly Father.
708. **Eccl 7:14, “In the day of prosperity be happy, but in the day of adversity consider -- God has made the one as well as the other so that man will not discover anything that will be after him.”**
709. In order to receive discipline without getting bitter and complaining, the believer must recognize and submit to the authority of the Word of God, the delegated authority of the pastor-teacher and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ who controls history and therefore our circumstances.
- a. **Prov 3:11-12, “My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD or loathe His reproof, for whom the LORD loves He reproveth, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.”**
 - b. **Job 5:17-18, “Behold, how happy is the man whom God reproveth, so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. For He inflicts pain, and gives relief; He wounds, and His hands also heal.”**
 - c. **Prov 15:32-33, “He who neglects discipline despises himself, but he who listens to reproof acquires understanding. The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility.”**
710. Love for the Lord expresses itself by worshipping Him.
711. The believer received the forgiveness of all his sins-past, present and future, the moment he exercised faith alone in Christ alone, which should in turn cause the believer to respond in love for who the Lord is and what He accomplished for him at the Cross, and which love expresses itself by worshipping Him.
712. Worship is adoring contemplation of the Lord and is the act of paying honor and reverence to Him and affection for Him and flows from love and where there is little love, there is little worship.
713. Worship is the loving ascription of praise to the Lord in gratitude and appreciation for who and what He is, both in Himself and in His ways and in His work on the Cross for us.
714. Worship is the bowing of the soul and spirit in deep humility and reverence before the Lord.
715. **Luke 7:36, “Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.”**
716. **Luke 7:37, “And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume.”**
- a. This particular woman was a prostitute in the city, which is indicated by the following:
 - b. The first factor that indicates that this woman is a prostitute is the qualitative relative pronoun *hostis* (ὅστις), “who,” which emphasizes the character or reputation of this particular woman.

- c. The second factor that indicates that this woman is a prostitute is the adjective *hamartolos* (α(μ)αρτωλός), “sinner” which indicates that this woman lived a flagrantly immoral life and possessed a dishonorable vocation.
 - d. Together these 2 words clearly indicate that this particular woman was considered a woman of bad reputation in the city because she had a dishonorable job.
 - e. Lastly, her appearance signified that she was a prostitute in that her hair was unbound and we know her hair was unbound because she wiped her tears from the Lord’s feet with hair.
 - f. The Pharisee and this prostitute come from totally opposite segments of society.
 - g. The Pharisee was well-respected and rich whereas this woman was of a bad reputation and considered the scum of the earth.
717. **Luke 7:37, “And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume.”**
- a. This gesture of devotion by this woman came at considerable cost because the ointment was very expensive.
 - b. The alabaster box was also costly because it was made of a fine, translucent stone.
 - c. Now, you might be wondering as to why is she was a prostitute allowed to enter the banquet of a Pharisee.
 - d. It was customary in the ancient world for outsiders to stand or sit against the wall during banquets so that they could watch the so-called “important people” and hear their conversations.
 - e. These people were not invited but allowed to join the feast and it was not uncommon for these outsiders to engage in conversation with those who were eating.
 - f. Those who were invited sat on couches around a table.
 - g. In the East the door of the dining room was left open so the uninvited could pass in and out during the festivities.
 - h. They were allowed to take seats by the wall, listening to the conversation between the host and guests.
 - i. Jewish rabbis did not speak to women in public, nor did they eat with them in public but the Gospels record that the Lord Jesus who was a rabbi was well-known as being a friend to tax-collectors and prostitutes (Mk. 2:15-17) and that they believed in Him (Mt. 21:32).
718. **Luke 7:38, “and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.”**
719. **Luke 7:39, “Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner.”**
720. **Luke 7:40, “And Jesus answered him, ‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he replied, ‘Say it, Teacher.’”**
721. **Luke 7:41, “A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii (\$200 equaled to 2 years wages), and the other fifty (\$22 equaled to 2 months wages).”**
722. **Luke 7:42, “When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?”**

723. **Luke 7:43, “Simon answered and said, ‘I suppose the one whom he forgave more.’ And He said to him, ‘You have judged correctly.’”**
- Simon could not mistake the logic of the Lord because a man forgiven a \$220 debt would certainly have greater gratitude than one forgiven a debt 10 times less.
 - If the cancelled debt was greater, this meant the gift of the creditor was greater.
 - The point the Lord Jesus wanted to make with Simon was that Simon owed God the lesser debt and the woman owed the greater.
 - This parable does not deal with the amount of sin in a person’s life but rather the “awareness” of sin in his life.
 - Simon and this woman were both sinners in the eyes of God but Simon does not acknowledge that he is because he thinks he is better than her because her sins are so shocking.
 - He has a distorted view of himself because he does not agree with God that he is a sinner (Rm. 3:10, 23).
 - Rom 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”**
 - Rom 3:10, “as it is written, ‘THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE.’”**
 - This prostitute’s sins were well known but Simon’s were hidden to everyone except God but both of them were bankrupt before God and could not repay their sin debt and were therefore both in need of a Savior.
 - Simon was just as much a sinner and spiritually bankrupt as this prostitute yet he fails to acknowledge it.
 - He has rejected Christ as His Savior but she has accepted and this is demonstrated by the fact that she publicly worships the Lord.
724. **Luke 7:44, “Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.’”**
725. **Luke 7:45, “You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.”**
726. **Luke 7:46, “You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.”**
727. **Luke 7:47, “For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.”**
- Luke 7:47 is incorrectly translated and should say: **Luke 7:47, “For this reason, I say to you (Simon) her sins, which are many, have been forgiven with the result that they remain forgiven forever as demonstrated by the intensity of her love that is characterized by reverence, honor and respect.”**
 - This passage is incorrectly translated in the NASU since it makes it sound as if the woman was forgiven “because” she loved the Lord, but that would be works.
 - This woman wasn’t forgiven because she loved much, but rather she loved much because she recognized that she had been forgiven much.
 - This woman wasn’t forgiven because of her actions but rather she is simply responding to having already been forgiven.
 - In fact, Luke 7:50 states that this woman received the forgiveness of sins because she exercised faith in Christ (Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9; Col. 1:14; 2:13).
 - Luke 7:50, “And He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”**

- g. **Eph 2:8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”**
- h. This prostitute’s tears were tears of joy and happiness because her sins were forgiven and her sins were forgiven because she trusted in the Lord Jesus as her Savior.
- i. **Eph 1:7, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.”**
- j. This is clearly not the first time that the Lord and this woman met because if you check the harmony of the Gospels, you will discover that just before this event, Jesus had given the following gracious invitation: **Matt 11:28-30, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”**
- 728. **Luke 7:48, “Then He said to her, ‘Your sins have been forgiven.’”**
- 729. **Luke 7:49, “Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, ‘Who is this man who even forgives sins?’”**
- 730. **Luke 7:50, “And He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”**
- 731. This woman is obeying the Great Commandment by loving the Lord with her entire being.
- 732. **Mark 12:30, “AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.”**
 - a. “Love” is the verb *agapao* (ἀγαπάω), which refers to the act of honoring, respecting, revering the Lord and being dedicated and devoted to Him to the point of self-sacrifice.
 - b. This act is the proper, appropriate, obedient and obligatory response by the believer since the Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed him and is correspondingly an act of worship.
- 733. Mark 12:30 indicates that the believer is to love the Lord:
 - a. With the mentality of his soul in meditating upon Him
 - b. Through the function of his volition in obedience to Him
 - c. Through his emotions in response to Him
 - d. With his physical body in serving Him.
- 734. This woman in Luke 7:36-50 loved the Lord with the mentality of her soul by meditating upon what He did for in forgiving all her sins.
- 735. She loved the Lord through the function of her volition by obeying His command to come to Him in faith for salvation.
- 736. This woman loved the Lord affected her emotions as manifested by her tears of joy, which were in response to the forgiveness of her sins.
- 737. She loved the Lord with her physical body as manifested by her bowing at His feet and serving Him by pouring the expensive perfume on His feet.
- 738. This woman’s love for the Lord caused her to sacrifice for the Lord and to forget herself and to be consumed by Him.
- 739. Sometimes when we love the Lord it will result in us being publicly ridiculed, as was the case with the woman being publicly ridiculed by Simon.

740. Love for the Lord manifests itself in giving to the Lord, as was the case with this woman who bought a very expensive alabaster vial of perfume for the Lord that was beyond her means.
741. Grace giving is a demonstration and expression of the love of God in our lives.
742. God demonstrated His love for us by “giving” His Son.
743. **John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”**
744. **Gal 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”**
745. God is the Greatest Giver because He is Greatest Lover (Eph. 2:8-9; John 3:16; Rom. 8:32; 1 Tim. 6:13; James 1:5).
746. God gives to mankind on the basis of His grace policy, which means that no one earns or deserves blessing from God, it is on a non-meritorious basis (Eph. 2:8-9).
747. Grace is God giving of Himself and His provision of the Person, Work and Life of His Son Jesus Christ.
748. We are to demonstrate our love by giving as well.
749. If we love the Lord we will give to members of the body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head.
750. Remember this principle: We are to love the Lord in our fellow believer.
751. **Matt 25:39-40, “When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’”**
752. The Lord Jesus Christ commanded believers to give generously (Matt. 5:42; 10:8; Luke 6:30, 38).
753. The apostle Paul taught that the church age believer is to contribute to the needs of the royal family of God (Rom. 12:13).
754. The apostle Paul reminded pastor-teacher’s at Pastor’s conference to help members of the royal family of God in need and then reminds them of our Lord’s doctrinal teaching on the subject of giving (Acts 20:35).
755. The Macedonians obeyed the command to give generously and therefore, demonstrated their divine love for the Body of Christ and thus for the Lord since He is the Head of the Body (2 Cor. 8:1-6).
756. Robert Rodenmayer said, “There are 3 kinds of giving: grudge giving, duty giving, and thanksgiving. Grudge giving says, “I hate to,” duty giving says, “I ought to,” thanksgiving says, “I want to.” The first comes from constraint, the second from a sense of obligation, the third from a full heart. Nothing much is conveyed in grudge giving since “the gift without the giver is bare.” Something more happens in duty giving, but there is no song in it. Thanksgiving is an open gate into the love of God.”
757. We are to give purposefully from careful and prayerful planning. **“Let each one do just as he has purposed (planned beforehand) in his heart”** (2 Cor. 9:7).
758. Scripture has a tremendous amount to say about money or material possessions.
759. Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables of Jesus deal with money.
760. One out of every ten verses in the New Testament deal with this subject.
761. Scripture has 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith, but over 2,000 verses on the subject of money.

762. Money is an extremely important issue because a person's attitude toward it is so determinative of his relationship with God, on fulfilling his purpose in this life, and on his character.
763. The apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:2 instructs the believers in Corinth in the manner in which they were to give.
764. **1 Cor 16:2, "On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come."**
- a. Regularly: "**On the first day of every week**" helps promote diligence and disciplined giving. This creates a consistency and regularity that translates good intentions into actions (1 Cor. 16:2).
 - b. Personally: "**Let each one of you**" brings out the need for every believer to take giving as a personal responsibility for which God holds us each responsible (1 Cor. 16:2).
 - c. Systematically: "**Put aside and save**" brings out the need to have a method or system whereby money for the Lord's work is specifically set aside, stored up for giving, so that it is not used for other things (1 Cor. 16:2).
 - d. Proportionately: In the New Testament, giving is to be in proportion to how God has prospered you (1 Cor. 16:2).
765. Who do we give to so that we can demonstrate the love of God in our lives?
- a. The Local Church: "**And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches**" (Gal. 6:6; cf. also 1 Tim. 5:17-18).
 - b. **1 Cor 9:14, "So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel."**
 - c. If the local church is to form a solid home base for other ministries of outreach, it is only logical that it should become a first priority for our giving.
 - d. Other Organizations and Individuals: This would include missions, para-church groups and individuals who are involved in these ministries (3 John 5-8).
 - e. Fellow Believers in Need: Those unable to support themselves or who have faced serious problems are to be helped as we are able. Those who refuse to work are not to be supported (1 John 3:17; Jam. 2:15-16; Gal. 6:10; Heb. 10:33-34; 13:1-3 with 2 Thess. 3:6-10).
 - f. Unbelievers in Need: Our first priority is to those who are of the household of faith, but we are also to reach out to others in need as we are able (Gal. 6:10).