

*<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. <sup>28</sup> And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup> But eagerly desire the greater gifts.*

*And now I will show you the most excellent way.*

*<sup>1</sup> If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

*<sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup> It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup> Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

*<sup>8</sup> Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. <sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. <sup>12</sup> Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.*

*<sup>13</sup> And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*  
(NIV84)

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**Jesus is Revealed ... AS LOVE**

The first live international satellite TV program to hit the airwaves was a 2 ½ hour long production called *Our World*. It aired on June 25, 1967, which, if you know your history, was in the heart of the Vietnam War. There were 14 different countries asked to participate and the show was broadcast in all of the participating countries and 17 different ones as well. There were 31 different countries that aired the show and a conservative estimate says that over 550 million people watched the show that night.

Most of the contributors were quickly forgotten, but one act stuck out and was remembered. The United Kingdom gave the privilege of participating on behalf of their country to a little old band called the Beatles. John Lennon was commissioned to write a song fitting of the occasion, simple to understand and moving to people in many parts of the world. And what he came up with is one of the most famous songs that's ever been written. *"All You Need is Love! All You Need is Love! All You Need is Love, Love, Love is All Need!"*

It was mission accomplished for John and the Beatles. They put together the most memorable part of the evening and one of their most memorable and endearing songs! So the song was and is a success, but is it true? Is Love Really All You Need?

I guess it depends on how you look at it! What did he mean? If he meant the love that friends share with one another, that common ground that brings two people together, he was way off base. If he meant between a man and a woman, well. That's a nice thing to have, but is it absolutely necessary? Is

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it all you need? I think we'd say probably not. Studies have shown that children crave and you could say "need" the love of a parent, but even that's not totally accurate.

Today in his Word God sings us a love song. We read some pretty popular words about love. As we read them I hope that you were thinking about more than weddings and Valentines. Those words are really about Christian love and even more specifically than that, they're about Christ's love for us. If that's what John Lennon was singing about, then he'd be exactly right. All we need is love, the saving love of a Savior-God. Today we are going to see our Savior in that love. We're going to see him how **Jesus is Revealed to us as Love.**

The first thing that we should look at when we look at love is that love is an action. It's not really a state of being or an abstract thing that happens in a person's mind. It's an action. There's a popular Christian band named "DC Talk" that has an entire song dedicated to that concept. It's called *Luv is a Verb.* Love requires action.

In this section of Paul's first letter to the Corinthian congregation Paul is talking about spiritual gifts. It's pretty clear that the church was gifted, but it seems they weren't quite sure how to use those gifts. Their gifts were being ignored, or abused, or used selfishly. Paul confronts those sinful attitudes and reminds them that gifts without love are of no use.

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The Corinthian church was a gifted group, but they were more concerned about comparing themselves with one another, than loving and helping one another. They were very concerned with who had the better gifts and the most gifts. That's why Paul brings up the subject. That's why he encourages them ***eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.***

Love is important, Paul said. Without it, you cannot serve one another. Without it, your gifts are worthless. And without love for one another, you cannot have real love for God. ***Faith without works is dead*** (James 2:10). If you aren't moved to love each other and perform works of service, it shows that there is something wrong with your faith – it may even be gone. And without God's love for you and you reflecting love in return, you can't have even life.

So Paul plays a bit of "Love Doctor" here today. He's going to teach us a thing or two about love.

***Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.***

It seems like a simple list. Not too terribly difficult to accomplish. But I want you to try something. I want you to try and replace the word "love" with your first name. Now read it again and tell me if you are comfortable with those descriptions of your life. ***Brian is patient, Brian is kind. He***

***does not envy, he does not boast, he is not proud. Brian is not rude, he is not self-seeking, he is not easily angered, he keeps no record of wrongs. Brian does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. Brian always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Brian never fails.***

How does that make you feel? When you put your name in the place of love is it an accurate description of your life. Tell you what, I'll make a deal with you. If you promise not to ask Tricia's response to my name being in there, I promise to not ask your loved ones about your name being there.

We can't live up to what looks at first like a relatively easy standard! We are self-seeking – looking always to how something will impact us first and then others. We aren't as patient with others as we should be and we get mad when other people are as short tempered with us as we often are with others. Love keeps no record of wrongs might be the biggest one in there. Have I forgiven that person for wronging me, or am I holding a grudge? Have I convinced myself that I have forgiven them, but because of the pain that they caused me I will never give them the benefit of the doubt again? Do I question motives and assume the worst as a result of someone sinning against me? Those are all records of wrongs. It is true that those actions prove a lack of love.

We can't do it, can we? We can't forgive the way we should! We can't be always trusting and never-failing. We can't stay level headed and perfectly humble. We can't be perfect the way that God demands.

And for those failures, for the ways and the times that we fail to love others and fail to love God we deserve to have a lack of love returned to us. We deserve to have strain and stress in all our relationships and we deserve worse from God. For our unfaithfulness to him, for the times we love everything except him, we deserve to be kicked out of his house, his family. We deserve to be separated from God and divorced from him forever in hell.

That's what we deserve from God, but instead we have peace and forgiveness. We have peace and forgiveness because this chapter is really about Jesus' love. The patient, kind, self-sacrificing love that he showed to us. I want you to do the same exercise as before, but put Jesus' name in place of love.

***Jesus is patient, Jesus is kind. Jesus does not envy, he does not boast, he is not proud. Jesus is not rude, he is not self-seeking, he is not easily angered, Jesus keeps no record of wrongs.*** (Thank God on that one right!!) ***Jesus does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Jesus always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Jesus never fails.***

Truer words have never been spoken. Jesus is Revealed as Love. Jesus is everything that we are not and can never be. Jesus is Love personified. Love was born in a manger that night. Love left his throne in heaven to die. Love patiently endured the scorn and the rejection and the nails. It's because he is Love that he willingly bled for you. It's because he's love that he humbly died in your place. It's because he is love that he forgives you again and again. Love promised you a place in his heaven and you can rejoice in knowing that ***Love Never Fails!!***

All his promises are rock-solid. All his life was lived for you. All his heart is yours and mine. ***Love Never Fails!!***

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And that's what Easter is all about too! Love! Love won a victory over sin and death. Love came to Earth to announce hope and peace. Love is All you Need!!

Jesus is Love! He came to earth to love us, to save us, to show us how to love. And now we can do just that. We can strive to reflect self-sacrificing love back to God. When following him calls us to sacrifice time or money or effort or comfort, we can do it. What would Love do? What did Love do?

We can love others the way that Jesus does. We can serve the souls that God has entrusted to us and surrounded us with. We can love them with deeds of love, acts of service, words of truth about our Savior God. We can tell others what the unknowing theologian sang 50 years ago! ***All You Need is Love!!*** All you need is Jesus. He has what you need to get you through this life, to get you to be with him in heavenly glory!! Following him means living in Love!! And you can do it! He's shown you the way!! Amen.