

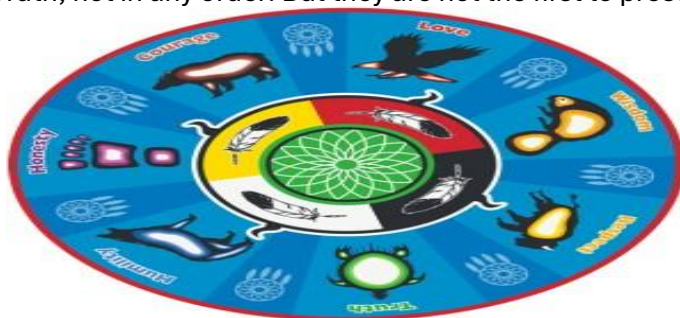


**“And now these three remain: Faith, Hope, and Love; but the greatest of these is LOVE.  
1Cor. 13:13 (BSB)**

**“But the greatest of these is LOVE”<sup>1</sup>**

Jesus declared, **“This is the first and greatest commandment”**, and Apostle Paul added his voice and stated, **“But the Greatest of these is Love; and so, did Apostle John the beloved, “By this we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandment. And His commandments are not burdensome””<sup>2</sup>** It must immediately be understood as we examine the Principles by which God directed us to live, and must be stated upfront, that the First Principle is LOVE. Why is it so? Many reasons, but I would just say that firstly, even though human beings have a lower concept of, and a misunderstanding of what true love means, all or almost all human beings like to be loved. When this is absent, people cannot survive for long. This explains why at a time when human beings have become more enlightened and sophisticated, but also isolated in their quest for individual freedom, that these same human beings have resorted to making robots or *things* their partners! **But the second reason is the most profound, and it is because the Creator, the Almighty God, is Love.<sup>3</sup> And this is the most important reason, because having made human beings in His Likeness and Image,<sup>4</sup> He also endowed human beings with the need to love, and be loved.** But it is not that God needs love to exist, survive, or function like human beings. **God’s Love is Sacrificial, Restorative, and hence His Redemption Plan was based on Love; “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son,”<sup>5</sup>** From this point of view it is possible to begin to have some glimpses of the nature of love in question. **This Love is Consummative, All-Embracing, It Is Compassionate, It Is Self-Giving, And Not Self-Seeking Or Self-Serving; Often Described As Agape – Undeserved By Its Recipients.** Apostle John tied Love to action **“By this we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments” – obedience and love for other people, repeating what His Lord and Master had taught them, as found in John 13:13-17, 34-35. He also made a distinction of how not to love, when he stated, “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”<sup>6</sup>** This is more than a mouth-full to chew. This is where the world, including the Church has failed. Not to love the world with all its glittering attractions and persuasions? Some would say that such is an empty proposition and even insane, because life for them is just about loving and acquiring the things of the world. And life has no meaning for them without loving the things of the world. **But if our life consists of our attraction to, and the acquisition of the things of this world, then we are miserable people. This explains the madness for things, the evils which proliferate, and the mental health challenges when we do not have them!<sup>7</sup> And this also where the separation comes, if you love the things of the world, the love of the Father, God Almighty, is not in you. You do not belong to HIM, pure and simple.**

To discuss Love from the perspective of God, who is the personification of Love, is to discuss the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and that is not the intention. Rather, it is to point our attention to it, and remind us of its great importance, as well as its grave consequences when we do not live by this principle. I shared with us last week that the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, represent love with the Eagle, which I take to mean that love is the highest of the Seven Values they teach. The others are, Wisdom, Humility, Courage, Respect, Honesty and Truth; not in any order. But they are not the first to present love as the highest of all virtues, the Almighty God is.



The progression of Creation, which brought human beings at the end of all other creatures, is the hallmark of God’s love for humanity. All the things that human beings will ever need for a happy and a successful living were provided before they were brought into existence. Also, it was love that made Him to provide a wife, Eve, for Adam.<sup>8</sup> God made an everlasting covenant not to destroy that whole world again, and gave the Sign of the Rainbow for its confirmation.<sup>9</sup> Again, God displayed His love when after what seemed like forever, He rescued His people from slavery and hardship of Egypt, with the

words, **“The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abused them. ... You must lead My people Israel out of Egypt.”<sup>10</sup>** But the greatest of the display of God’s love is the sacrifice of Himself in the person of Jesus Christ to save fallen and recalcitrant human beings. And this was actually done in the spiritual before the coming into existence of human beings, because of the love and fore-knowledge of God.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, the pages of the Bible are filled with teachings and the display of God’s love. But Apostle Paul provided a great exposition in the Book of 1Corinthians, chapter 13, and a wonderful summary in the Book of Galatians Chapter 5, I leave you to read those passages.

A distinguishing characteristic of the love of God, which also has great implications for its application and consequences, is that God’s love is a composite. It is not just one action, character, or quality. And Apostle Paul beautifully presented this perspective when by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote, **“But the fruit of the**



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Spirit is Love, and yet went to list in addition, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control.<sup>12</sup> I do not write as an academic or a specialist in English language, which is a second language to me. But I do not know that you use ‘is’ which is a singular verb when you are listing or talking about a number of things. It should be a plural one, such as, ‘are’ or ‘were’. The usage in the passage of reference means to me, that the main fruit, Love, is not a stand - alone one. Instead, it is something like this, Love-Joy, Love -Peace, etc. **One Big fruit with many succulent parts, that are all necessary for a fully satisfied life, because when you possess this fruit of the Spirit, then you are free from the condemnation of the law and sin.<sup>13</sup> That is what Love is, a Composite Quality, which is Comprehensive, cultivated and Practiced together.**

**So, Jesus told the Pharisees that Love for God and a fellow human being, is the First and the Greatest Commandment. And He also told His disciples, “A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”<sup>14</sup> By implication, these are the same things being said to human beings today, whether they believe or not believe in Jesus Christ. Someday, which has been established by the Creator of the whole Universe, everyone will be brought to give an account to Jesus, what they have done with Him and the commandment that He has given to humanity!<sup>15</sup> (to be continued).**

*Have A God Centred And Focussed 2026.*

**Further & Daily Readings: 1Cor.13; Gal. 5:14-26. 1. 1Cor..13:13; 2. Matt.22:37;1Cor.13:13; 1Jn.5:2-3; 3. 1Jn.4:8; 4. Gen.1:26-27; 5. Jn.3:16; 6. 1Jn.2:15; 7. Luke 12:15-21; 1Cor.15:19; 8. Gen.1; 2:7,18-24; 9. Gen.9:11-16; 10. Exd. 3:9-10; 11. Jn.3:16; Rev.13:8; 12. Gal.5:22-23; 13. Gal.5:23b; 14. Jn.13:34-35; 15. Acts 17:31; Rev.20:11-15.**