

## The Church of the Servant King

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### Survey of the Bible Series – Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians

(SB\_1Cor13\_Agape Love)

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and **know** [*eido* – Gr. εἶδω from *oida* – Gr. οἶδα] all mysteries and all **knowledge** [*gnosis* – Gr. γνῶσις]; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], I am nothing. 3 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** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], it profits me nothing. 4 **Love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] is patient, **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] is kind and is not jealous; **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 **Love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] 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** [*gnosis* – Gr. γνῶσις], it will be done away. 9 For **we know** [*ginosko* – Gr. γινώσκω] in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 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. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I **know** [*ginosko* – Gr. γινώσκω] in part, but then I will know [*epiginosko* – Gr. ἐπιγινώσκω] fully just as I also have been fully **known** [*epiginosko* – Gr. ἐπιγινώσκω]. 13 But now faith, hope, **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], abide these three; but the greatest of these is **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη]. (1 Cor 13:1-13)

#### GREATER CONTEXT

Paul’s brief, but powerful and profound discussion of “love” in chapter 13 is set within a context – a context that will be helpful to consider at the outset of our analysis of this passage.

You may recall that the bulk of Paul’s letter to this point has been devoted to addressing various examples of behavior that was rooted in the carnal or fleshly thinking of the new believers in Corinth. Carnal thinking (and the belief systems that develop therefrom) do not automatically get eradicated at the point of salvation – contrary to what may be implied or perceived to be the case when we hear such statements as – “when you are born again, you are given a new nature and the old nature has been crucified with Christ.”

There is certainly truth in that type of statement; however, the truth in that type of statement is related to **phase 1 positional reality versus phase 2 experiential practicality**.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For those who may be unfamiliar with this terminology and those who may not have studied with me previously, I have adopted the terms “phase 1,” “phase 2,” and “phase 3” from other pastors and theologians (e.g. Robert B. Thieme, Jr. in this case). The terms refer to the three phases of the believer’s existence. “Phase 1” refers to the believer’s existence prior to acceptance of the gift of Christ’s death and trust in the work of Christ alone for eternal life. This is pre-salvation existence – the portion of the believer’s life prior to salvation. “Phase 2” refers to the believer’s existence from the point of salvation to the point of physical death. “Phase 3” refers to the believer in the eternal state after physical death. There are Biblical truths related to each “phase” of the believer’s existence.

Phase 1 positional realities are not automatically a phase 2 experiential practicality in the believer's life. When a person becomes a believer, there is fleshly based (i.e. sin nature influenced) thought patterns and belief systems (i.e. paradigms) that are carried forward into the believer's new Christian experience.<sup>2</sup>

This highlights the importance of the believer bringing his or her thoughts into subjection to Christ (2 Cor 10:5) through exposure to Scripture that is explained and taught by a pastor-teacher – hopefully, one who is a man of character and deep understanding of the Word. Furthermore, in order for the Christian to grow and become Christ-like in character and deed, the Christian must be *yielded* (Rom 6:13), be *objective* (vs. subjective) in thought, and possess *humility* (teach-ability). (You may recognize these as foundational components of the divine power sphere – a phrase used to describe a conceptual framework for understanding the qualities that will characterize a believer who is living in God's sphere of empowerment versus a system of empowerment that is rooted in the world and the flesh).<sup>3</sup>

The Corinthian believers had yet to be transformed by the renewing of their minds (Rom 12:2). Paul's letter addresses issues in that local assembly that were symptomatic of their phase 2 spiritual status.<sup>4</sup> So far, Paul has dealt at length with the following:

- Sectarianism (chps. 1-4).
- Failure to protect the witness of the church by allowing sexual immorality (i.e. incest) to continue within the ranks of the local church members (chp. 5).
- Lawsuits in public court amongst believers (chp. 6).
- Ascetic practices by married believers involving the denial of sexual relations between husband and wife that, in reality, promoted self-righteousness (chp. 7).
- Abuse of Christian liberty (chps. 8-10).
- Distraction through focus upon the individual in church services, e.g. the cultural implications of women in public without a head covering (chp. 11A).
- Abuse and neglect due to a party atmosphere at the Lord's memorial observance (chp. 11B).
- The need for orderly conduct within the local assembly meetings:
  - Improper motivations (i.e. approbation lust) underlying the use and abuse of spiritual gifts in the local church (chp. 12).
  - **The necessary ingredient of love in the exercise of all gifts (13:1-13).**
  - The priority of prophecy over tongues & rules for their exercise (14:1-25).
  - All church worship should be done decently and in order (14:26-40).

So, chapter 13 is set in the heart of this context and is designed to provide contrast for the reader. It is as if Paul realizes that he has spent so much of his letter addressing the

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<sup>2</sup> See excellent article written by Pastor Al Rosenblum as Appendix A to this set of notes in which he develops the concept of belief systems that arise from the influence of the fallen nature (a.k.a. sin nature) of every human since Adam with the exception of Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> The components of the divine power sphere that have been addressed in a separate series include: yielding, objectivity, humility, momentum, personal love for God, agape love for man, momentum testing and sharing God's happiness or joy. Each of these components have been addressed in some detail in prior series. Like any attempt to systemize and organize Biblical concepts, they are not Scripture or even the equivalent of Scripture. They merely represent an attempt to explain a concept or concepts found in Scripture – a teaching aide in other words.

<sup>4</sup> A believer's phase 1 "spiritual status" is a positional reality of eternal life and eternal security. However, the same believer's practical spiritual experience in phase 2 may not be aligned with his or her positional reality. The phase 2 walk of the believer has sometimes been referred to as the believer's "spiritual life" – a description used by me in the past as well as many pastors, teachers, and others. In an attempt to better articulate the distinctions, I try to use the phrase "spiritual walk" when referring to the phase 2 experiential practice by the believer – a practice or experience that should reflect the phase 1 positional realities that are true of every believer.

symptoms of carnal or fleshly minded thinking that he needs to pause for a moment and provide the readers with a vision of what will be manifest in a believer's life when transformation has occurred – i.e. theoretical knowledge of positional truth has been **internalized** and is being **actualized** in the believer's life.<sup>5</sup>

**Principle:** When the believer has properly *internalized* the truth and the truth is *actualized*, the manifestation is Agape love becoming the practical, experiential reality in the believer's walk.

### BRIEF DEFINITION OF AGAPE LOVE

Without elaborating on the various Greek words for love and their distinctions, I will simply pose the following definition of Biblical "Agape" love. (This definition is my own definition that attempts to synthesize the collective body of knowledge on the subject to which I have been exposed through teaching, literature, and personal study).

*Definition:* Biblical agape love is a sympathetic and empathetic affection for the object of those affections (i.e. a human or humans) based upon the character and integrity of the subject of those affections (i.e. God or a certain category of believers).

*Illustration of "object" vs. "subject:"* "I [*subject – God or certain category of believers*] **love** [*agape type*] **you** [*object*]."

*Important Distinctions Inherent in the Definition:* Note that agape love is based upon the character or integrity of the subject – not necessarily the object.<sup>6</sup>

Note also that the definition does not embrace the unbeliever and any capacity that the unbeliever may possess to "relax" toward others based upon the integrity or character possessed by that unbeliever. The Greek word agape was relatively rarely used in Greek culture and society. However, in the Bible, it is always associated with the believer or God. So, while the unbeliever may be capable of having relaxed attitude and/or respecting the freedom of others, the unbeliever will not profit in eternity as a result of manifesting these agape-like qualities in his or her life. Biblical agape love as described by Paul is much more expansive than, while at the same time embracing, respect for another person's freedom.

*Important Distinction Between Active and Passive:* Note that Biblical agape love is inherently active. The "subject" is the one performing the action of agape love. As such, agape love is not equivalent to a relaxed mental attitude nor is it mutually exclusive of a relaxed mental attitude. The fact that agape love is more than a static set of qualities and is inherently active in nature is highlighted by Paul in the descriptors he uses as we will see.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF AGAPE LOVE FOUND IN 1 CORINTHIANS 13

Paul provides a substantial list of the identifying characteristics of agape love in our passage – 1 Corinthians 13.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix B for a diagram explaining the terms "internalization" and "actualization."

<sup>6</sup> In 1 John 2:5, we seem to find an example of the believer's love for God being described using the Greek word *agape*. The word *agape* is found in 1 John 2:5 in the genitive case and the construction in this verse could be an example of an *objective genitive*, i.e. the word in the genitive case (i.e. *tou theou*) receives the action of the noun (i.e. *agape*). If so, the translation of 1 John 2:5 would read – "*But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love for God [reciprocal love] perfected [completed]: hereby know we that we are in him.*" In other words, this is a description of our love for God in response to His love for us – a reciprocation. A passage that references this same principle is 1 John 4:19 – "*We love, because He first loved us.*"

### **Not Synonymous with Prominent Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor 13:1-2)**

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and **know** [*eido* – Gr. εἶδω from *oida* – Gr. οἶδα] all mysteries and all **knowledge** [*gnosis* – Gr. γνῶσις]; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], I am nothing.

Eloquence of speech was a highly valued and admired characteristic of Greek culture during the centuries leading up to and including the first century A.D. While there is nothing wrong with eloquence of speech and clarity of communication, when it is valued above content and its effect within the lives of the hearers, then the desire for eloquence of speech is based upon carnal and worldly standards rooted in approbation lust. As a matter of fact, Paul's own speaking abilities was at odds with this carnal standard by his own admission.

1 And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. (1 Cor 2:1)

4 And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. (1 Cor 2:4)

10 For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his personal presence is unimpressive and his speech contemptible." (2 Cor 10:10)

This may explain the Corinthian's fascination with the gift of "tongues." By using the personal pronoun "I" in verse 2 (*"If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith..."*), Paul is alluding to the fact that he had personal, first hand knowledge of the "mysteries" of God kept secret since prior to the foundation of the world (Rom 16:25 – *"Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past..."*).

Those "mysteries" or "secrets" – previously undisclosed revelation – was given to Paul. Paul was transported to heaven and while there, he heard the voices of angels (2 Cor 12:4 – *"was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak"*). Paul had also spoken in "tongues" (1 Cor 14:18 – *"I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all"*). So, Paul is using his own superior experience in these areas to set up a straw man that he will eventually destroy in his argument.

Paul uses some hyperbole when he sets up the conditional clause – *"if I could speak with the tongues of men and angels."* In other words, Paul is simply saying that if he could speak with every imaginable form of language, it would be worthless if he did not have *agape*. It might be momentarily exciting or it might momentarily generate interest similar to the clash of a gong, but the effects would quickly vanish. To the contrary, *agape* produces lasting effects in the lives of others.

*The distinction between **eido** or **oida** (Gr. εἶδω from *oida* – Gr. οἶδα) and **gnosis** (Gr. γνῶσις) in this passage* – Although the two Greek words for knowing or knowledge are virtually synonymous, Paul's use of them highlights a distinction that is worthy of note. The Greek word *oida* seems to be used here in reference to a strategic or overarching understanding of God's plan and purpose in human history, i.e. Paul's reference to "mysteries" in association with the use of *oida*. This, of course, is an allusion to the special revelation given to Paul as the Apostle of the intercalated, Gentile-centric dispensation during which the body of Christ is being formed.

The Greek word *oida* is thus distinguished from *gnosis*. *Gnosis* seems to be simply an understanding of various truths – understanding that has yet to be *internalized* and *actualized* into the believer's experience. However, Paul uses **oida** in the phrase – “*If I have the gift of prophecy, and **know** all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith...*” Thus, the distinction between **gnosis** and **oida** is noteworthy.

So, Paul is essentially saying that even if the believer (Paul uses himself as an example) were to possess supernatural revelation from God of a strategic nature, speak with supernatural eloquence in all imaginable languages, and had an understanding (*gnosis*) of a variety of truths, the believer would be worthless without *agape* – an active love manifest toward others based upon the character and integrity of the subject.

Biblical *agape* results from the *internalization* and *actualization* of truth by the believer. Biblical *agape* is not synonymous with human good since human good is (among other things) motivated in part by the desire for approbation from other humans. Carnal thinking as manifested through human good activities also seeks God's approval based upon one's own terms – not God's terms. However, God's understanding of us extends beyond our actions. It encompasses our innermost thoughts and motives.

12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Heb 4:12)

### ***Agape Love is Not Synonymous With Good Deeds Performed in the Energy of the Flesh (1 Cor 13:3)***

3 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** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], it profits me nothing.

The Corinthians were empowered in their motives and actions by carnal thinking – thinking that is always oriented toward self-promotion and the desire to build or validate one's own sense of self-esteem. Scripture is clear on this principle in numerous passages. Examples include:

"Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. 2 "So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 3 "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. (Matt 6:1-4)

"But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. (Matt 23:5)

Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another. (Gal 5:26)

### ***What Agape “Is” or “Does” & What Agape “Is Not” or “Does Not Do” (1 Cor 13:4-8)***

4 **Love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] is patient, **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] is kind and is not jealous; **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all

things. **8 Love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη] 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 [*gnosis* – Gr. γνῶσις], it will be done away.

Verse	Agape “Is” or “Does”	Agape “Is Not” or “Does Not”
4	Patient	Jealous
	Kind	Brag
		Arrogant
5		Act unbecomingly
		Seek its own
		Provoked
		Take into account a wrong suffered
6	Rejoices in the Truth	Rejoice in unrighteousness
7	Bears all things	
	Believes all things	
	Hopes all things	
	Endures all things	
8	Never fails	

*Patient* – the Greek word *makrothumeo* (Gr. μακροθυμew) is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative. This is a *verb*, not a noun. Agape love is active. The agape that Paul is describing is the *actualization* by the believer into his or her experience of the truths that have been *internalized*. *Makrothumeo* is a Greek word that embraces the capacity to be wronged or unjustly by-passed and not retaliate. The Corinthian church had many members who had been wronged (e.g. lawsuits per 1 Cor 6:8 or discrimination at the Lord’s memorial celebratory observance per 1 Cor 11:21-22). Patience in such treatment would be indicative of *agape* love.

*Kind & Not Jealous* – the Greek word translated “kind” is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, middle, indicative of *chresteuomai* (Gr. χρηστευομαι) and the Greek word translated “not jealous” is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative of *dzeloo* (Gr. ζηλωω). Again, note that Paul describes agape by using verbs, not nouns.

Instead of retaliation, the believer manifesting *agape* responds with “kindness” and not “jealousy.” “Bragging” and “boasting” (one manifestation or result of jealousy) seemed to be a problem among the Corinthians. It promoted divisions and sectarianism – the subject of chapters 1-4. It promoted the abuse of the spiritual gifts, especially the gift of tongues – the subject of 1 Corinthians 12:14-25.

10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Cor 1:10)

21 So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you. (1 Cor 3:21)

14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. 19 If they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now there are many members, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; 23 and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we

bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, 24 whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, 25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. (1 Cor 12:14-25)

Jealousy is the outward manifestation of carnal thinking. When there is jealousy in the life of a believer, the believer has begun to rely upon his or her own power system instead of resting in God's power sphere – the divine power sphere.

3 For you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking [*phase 2 experiential reality*] like mere men? (1 Cor 3:3)

*Does not brag and is not arrogant* – the word translated “does not brag” is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, middle, indicative of *perpereuomai* (Gr. περιπερευομαι) and the word translated “is not arrogant” is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, passive, indicative of *phusioo* (Gr. φυσιωω). **Again, note Paul's use of verbs, not nouns, to describe agape.** The latter verb, *phusioo*, occurs only seven times in the New Testament – six of which are found in 1 Corinthians.

These two verbs highlight a tendency among believers, who, when under the influence of old-man thinking, operate in the energy of the flesh or a human power sphere versus a divine sphere of power. The components of the divine sphere of power (see earlier footnote) are as follows:

- Yieldedness
- Objectivity
- Humility
- Momentum
- Personal love for God
- Agape toward others
- Momentum testing
- Sharing God's happiness and contentment

The believer who is perpetually (i.e. exhibits a pattern) empowered by a human system of thought and action will enter into reversionism and one of the two cosmic systems of empowerment.<sup>7</sup>

*Act unbecomingly* – this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative of *aschemoneo* (Gr. ασχημονεω). It refers to being rude and inconsiderate of others. It was illustrated among the Corinthians by women who openly and perhaps defiantly disrupted the assembly with violations of cultural norms by gathering with their heads uncovered (11:2-16). It may have also been manifest through the disorders at the Lord's Supper (11:17-22). Agape love is not rude.

*Not Self-Seeking* – the believer has liberty to enjoy and participate in much that this world offers; however, the believer's exercise of personal liberty should be subjected to the weaker conscience of fellow believers. Paul had to address this tendency among the Corinthians in regards to the subject of eating meat that was associated with the worship of idols (8:9; 10:23-24). When the believer possesses agape, the believer will on occasion set aside personal freedom to exercise his Christian liberty in the interest of others.

*Not provoked and does not take into account a wrong suffered* – People who are easily provoked are quick to initiate lawsuits as was the case with the Corinthians (6:1-11). However,

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<sup>7</sup> See special series from August 2006 entitled *Reversionism* and the most recent series on the spiritual life and walk of the believer for an examination of the two cosmic power spheres.

the believer who possesses Christian character and integrity will be more interested in the corporate goals and purpose of the local and universal church and will be more interested in properly representing Christ than he or she is interested preserving self-interests. As we have seen, this is not to indicate that there are not occasions in which the believer will need to go to the courts, but before such action is taken, the believer will objectively evaluate the matter in view of his or her greater purpose in life.

*Rejoices in the Truth & does not rejoice in unrighteousness* – The Corinthians had seemingly rejoiced in unrighteousness when they not only allowed, but evidently joked or laughed about the incest that had occurred between a son and his step-mother. To allow such error and gross public sin to exist in the local church manifested a lack of vision, perspective, and purpose in the lives of these believers. When we share crude and off-color jokes as believers, we can easily be “rejoicing” in the practice of unrighteousness, thus promoting the same.

*Bears all things* – This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative of *stego* (Gr. σΤΕΓΩ). This Greek word carries the idea of providing cover so as to keep water out, to protect, to ward off, to hold back, to resist, to support. It can also mean to keep secret, to keep silent or to keep a confidence. Paul is the only New Testament writer to use this word. This Greek word captures the *modus Vivendi* of the believer who lives with a greater strategic purpose that governs his or her actions – a life in which the whole realm of Biblical doctrine, concepts and principles are being *actualized* by the believer as a result of having been *internalized*. Compare Paul's teaching here to that found in Galatians 6:1-5.

1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens [*i.e. something beyond the normal capacity to carry*], and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one will bear his own load [*i.e. that which every believer is expected to carry on his or her own*]. (Gal 6:1-5)

*Believes all things* – This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative of *pisteuo* (Gr. ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ). Of course, Paul is not promoting the idea that believers are to be undiscerning. Rather than being distrustful of everyone and living in a fortress, believers are to reach out to others in ministry by trusting in the Lord. *Pisteuo* is virtually synonymous with trust.

*Hopes all things* – This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative of *elpidzo* (Gr. ΕΛΠΙΖΩ). We see a strong correlation here in Paul's descriptors used in these verses to the descriptors of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Biblical hope can be defined as confident expectation or assurance (cf. Rom 8:24).

24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? (Rom 8:24)

*Endures all things* – This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative of *hupomeno* (Gr. ὑΠΟΜΕΝΩ). This verb carries the idea of remaining steadfast in the presence of unpleasant circumstances such as illustrated in Paul's ministry.

22 Are they Hebrews? So am I Are they Israelites? So am I Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they servants of Christ?--I speak as if insane--I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I

have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. 28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern? (2 Cor 11:22-29)

11 Persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! (2 Tim 3:11)

*Never fails* – This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular, present, active, indicative of *pipto* (Gr. πλπτω). Paul is expressing the idea that agape never fails to have an effect, a positive effect, in others – the objects of agape love having been expressed. The effects of agape are eternal whereas the highly sought spiritual gifts being sought by the Corinthians who were motivated by personal approbation were temporal and would cease.

**“WHEN THE PERFECT COMES, THE PARTIAL WILL BE DONE AWAY.”**

9 For we know [*ginosko* – Gr. γινώσκω] in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 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. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know [*ginosko* – Gr. γινώσκω] in part, but then I will know [*epiginosko* – Gr. ἐπιγινώσκω] fully just as I also have been fully known [*epiginosko* – Gr. ἐπιγινώσκω]. 13 But now faith, hope, **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη], abide these three; but the greatest of these is **love** [*agape* – Gr. ἀγάπη].

There are various interpretations of this phrase and what Paul may have meant. Briefly, they are as follows:

- ❖ The completion of the canon of Scripture.
- ❖ A reference to the new heavens and new earth when believers are in the eternal state.
- ❖ The end of the church age dispensation with the Rapture.

At present, it seems to me that the best interpretation of this passage is expressed by Charles Baker in his *A Dispensational Theology*. I will provide a relevant excerpt below.

1 Corinthians 13:8-13 is the central passage in Paul's epistles indicating the transitional nature of the latter half of the Acts period. Here Paul uses the illustration of the transition that occurs in the process of maturing from childhood to adulthood. He says, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." He equates the miraculous sign gifts as things which characterized the childhood of the new dispensation. These things were to pass away when the mature or perfect state of the dispensation comes. (The word *perfect* in this context, Greek *teleion*, means mature or full age: it is translated men in 14:20 in contrast to children.) The things which are to characterize the grown-up stage of the dispensation are faith, hope, and love. Most commentators completely miss Paul's meaning here and represent him as saying that this whole dispensation of nearly two-thousand years is to be kept in the state of infancy, and at death or at

the rapture we will suddenly be changed into adulthood. This interpretation logically keeps us in the mixed religious program of the book of Acts to the present time, and teaches that the heavenly state will be characterized by faith, hope, and love. But it is evident that faith and hope will not be the chief characteristics of heaven. Heaven is the realization of all of God's promises, and Paul would ask: "what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" (Romans 8:24). In heaven, all hopes will be realized. We will no longer walk by faith (2 Corinthian 5:7): faith will be turned into sight there. The only one of this trilogy which will endure in the heavenly state is love. No, Paul is not talking about dying and going to heaven in I Corinthians 13:10. He is talking about the transition from the babyhood stage to the adult stage of the dispensation.

The transition involves two things: the completion of revelation concerning the dispensation, resulting from the writing of Paul's final epistles, and the passing away of those things which characterized the Pentecostal dispensation which are mentioned in the Corinthian letter. Until the Scriptures for the Body of Christ were completed there was need in each assembly for those with the gift of prophecy to receive and transmit to the congregation revelations from God (1 Corinthians 14:24-33). This gift was to pass away when the dispensation came to maturity.

During the transition period God in His longsuffering was giving a special witness to the nation of Israel before executing His judgment in the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. The sign gifts were designed for this witness to Israel, for "the Jews require a sign" (1 Corinthians 1:22), and tongues were for a sign (1 Corinthians 14:22). After Paul had been sent to bear witness to Israel in the dispersion and Israel everywhere had as a whole rejected and blasphemed, God sent the armies of Rome to destroy Jerusalem and disperse the Jews. After that there was no need or place for a manifestation of the sign gifts.<sup>8</sup>

#### **APPLICATION IN THE FORM OF PRINCIPLES OF AGAPE LOVE**

❖ General Principles of Agape Love (in no particular order):

1. Agape love is not empowered by approbation, flattery, patronage, recognition, or attention from others.
2. Only agape love insures justice for all, sensitivity toward all, and respect for the freedom of others.
3. Agape disregards malice, hatred, hostility, and antagonism.
4. Due to the attendant and inherent quality of objectivity, agape love responds based upon the overarching strategic perspective possessed only by the believer grounded and rooted in Truth.
5. Agape cannot be destroyed or neutralized by reaction, hatred, antagonism, or animosity.
6. Agape is unprejudiced, tolerant, courteous toward all, considerate, thoughtful, and sensitive no matter how great the stress or antagonism from the object.
7. Agape is not sustained by the object; agape is sustained in the yielded believer who has internalized Truth and who is actualizing it in life situations.
8. Agape love toward all mankind is the Christian way of life while personal love toward people is optional.
9. The superiority of character manifested by agape love is a great equalizer – IQ, worldly position, and power and acclaim is no match when juxtaposed with the power source for and eternity of agape love. (Eph 1:3-12 esp. v. 4b cf. 1 Cor 13:13).

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<sup>8</sup> Charles F. Baker, *A Dispensational Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Grace Publications, 1994), 517-8.

10. Agape love allows the believer to forgive as he/she has been forgiven.
11. Agape love is the antidote to bitterness in life that results from disappointment with other humans and disappointment with God.<sup>9</sup>
12. Agape is counter to old-man, human viewpoint thinking and belief systems.
13. Personal love toward man is normal, but not virtuous since it is not dependent upon the subject, but the object of personal love. In other words, in personal love toward a person, it is the person (the subject) that possesses the admirable virtue and even someone without virtue can personally love someone with virtue to a degree. However, that case of personal love will be unstable because it is not built upon a foundation of personal love for God and impersonal love for mankind, i.e. virtue love.
14. Agape love and self-centeredness are incompatible. Agape love respects the freedom of others and is self-sacrificial toward that end whereas self-centeredness is only concerned with one's own freedom, maximization of personal pleasure and avoidance of pain in life.

❖ Relation of Agape Love to the Components of the Divine Power Sphere

1. Agape love is developed in the believer who is consistently yielded (component 1), exercises humility (component 2), and develops objectivity (component 3) through the internalization of Truth that results in transformation of the mind and soul.
2. Agape love toward mankind (component 6) results from personal love toward God (component 5).<sup>10</sup>
3. Agape love inspires and motivates the believer to maintain momentum (component 4) in his/her spiritual walk and endure and pass momentum tests (component 7).
4. Agape love is integral and foundational to the believer's contentment in whatsoever state they find themselves and sharing the happiness of God (component 8).
5. Agape love is incompatible with the cosmic power spheres, i.e. the arrogance complex (cosmic power sphere #1) and the hatred complex (cosmic power sphere #2).

❖ To interpersonal relations between believers and other humans (believers and unbelievers)

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God

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<sup>9</sup> Bitterness has been described in a number of ways. It is like eating rat poison and expecting the rat to die. It is like the pin of a fragmentation grenade that when activated, the fragments of hatred, jealousy, vindictiveness, revenge, maligning, cruelty, self-pity, revenge modus operandi, inordinate ambition and inordinate competition scatter and impact the lives of others.

<sup>10</sup> See prior footnote 6 for examples of passages where the believer is described as responding (i.e. reciprocating) the agape love of God. Footnote 6 information repeated here for ease of reference - In 1 John 2:5, we seem to find an example of the believer's love for God being described using the Greek word *agape*. The word *agape* is found in 1 John 2:5 in the genitive case and the construction in this verse could be an example of an *objective genitive*, i.e. the word in the genitive case (i.e. *tou theou*) receives the action of the noun (i.e. *agape*). If so, the translation of 1 John 2:5 would read – “*But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love for God [reciprocal love] perfected [completed]: hereby know we that we are in him.*” In other words, this is a description of our love for God in response to His love for us – a reciprocation. A passage that references this same principle is 1 John 4:19 – “*We love, because He first loved us.*” Other passages include 1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Peter 1:8; and Romans 8:28 where we find this concept expressed. In 1 Corinthians 16:22, the word *philos* is used of the believer's love for God – “*If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed...*”

has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 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. (1 Jn 4:7-12)

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. 17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. 19 We love, because He first loved us. 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. 21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also. (1 Jn 4:16-21)

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. (Jn 3:16)

1. Agape is tantamount to our function as ambassadors in this world.
2. Agape is unprejudiced, tolerant, courteous toward all, considerate, thoughtful, and sensitive no matter how great the stress or antagonism from the object.
3. Agape is not asocial or anti-social.
4. Agape love has realistic expectations of others.
5. The arrogance of disillusionment (iconoclastic arrogance) is basically the misdirection of confidence toward people versus confidence in God.
6. Agape love releases others from the burden of sorrow that is carried in association with the loss of a loved one.

❖ To relations within the family (e.g. parents, children, spouses)

1. Without honor, integrity, and virtue, there is no such thing as successful romantic love or friendship.
2. Agape love is counter to human viewpoint or fleshly defense mechanisms (e.g. compensation, deflection, denial, transference, isolation, projection, rationalization, repression, suppression, etc.).
3. Agape love in marriage is essential to the long term viability and vitality of the marriage.
4. Agape love recognizes that marriage is an institution that facilitates and provides a corporate testimony in the world.
5. Agape love is foundational to the parent's potential to receive respect from children.
6. Agape love will not provoke children to frustration and anger as a pattern of behavior.
7. The function of agape love in the family unit provides children with the environment where mistakes and wrong thinking can be corrected in a loving and secure environment thus increasing the potential for the development of virtue and character.
8. The effects of a lack of agape love in family settings becomes exponentially magnified and exaggerated in those societies and cultures where divine establishment principles have been ignored.
9. **Point of speculation:** Could many of the problems in Christian marriage today be related to a lack of virtue love in Christians? (If a child never learns basic principles of humility in a spiritually dysfunctional family setting, the self-centered thought patterns will be destructive to any future marriage by that person. Even a mature believer spouse can't substitute for the early failure of the parents of the other

spouse – failures that have been parlayed into “strongholds” in the soul and left unaddressed or uncorrected).

10. The husband is commanded in Ephesians 5:25 to love his wife with agape love and not be embittered toward her.

❖ To relations at work:

Believers will be tested in organizations and work is the organization outside of the home where believers spend the majority of their time. How is agape love manifested when the believer faces the momentum challenges of organization and people testing?

✓ Testing associated with three characteristics of an organization:

- Testing associated with organizational authority.
  - Unjust treatment from the person in charge.
  - Playing favorites within the organization.
  - Personality conflicts.
- Testing associated with organizational policy.
  - Organizational policy that is unreasonable.
  - Organizational policy that conflicts with normal living.
  - Organizational policy that conflicts with norms and standards.
- Testing associated with the organization’s purpose.
  - unreasonable objectives impossible to execute.
  - lack of ability to fulfill the organization’s objectives.
  - conflict with personal life in fulfilling the organization’s objective.

Principles:

1. Agape love does not complain under testing.
2. Agape love does not become involved in organizational conspiracy.
3. If you are in management, you should provide what is right and fair for your employees because you know that you have your own Manager in heaven.
4. The person who has developed Agape love has the power to accept authority in a system without becoming arrogant.
5. The person who has developed Agape love has the power to handle unjust and unfair treatment or any authority problem.
6. The person who has developed Agape love carries out the policy of management without becoming bitter, or discouraged, or conspiratorial.
7. The person who has developed Agape love fulfills the objective of the organization no matter how incompetent, inefficient, or unreasonable others in the organization may be.
8. Any organization to which one is attached provides a major source of peer pressure.
9. The person who has developed Agape love has the power to put the matter in the Lord’s hands and carry on without reacting.
10. Operating under the principle that Jesus Christ controls history, whatever circumstance God does not remove from our daily life, He intends for us to bear.
11. The person who has developed Agape love has the power to put the case before the Supreme Court of Heaven and leave it there.

## APPENDIX A – ARTICLE BY PASTOR AL ROSENBLUM<sup>11</sup>

### [Credibility 2 Old Man Relating](#)

Al Rosenblum on December 4th, 2008

The church of Jesus Christ in the US has a credibility gap. This gap is between the message the church proclaims and the way its members live. Not every believer in the church falls into this category, but I believe that most of us do. In order for the church to enjoy an effective ministry in this generation, its individual members must allow the Lord to purify their hearts to be like Christ. In this article we will continue the discussion of the reasons why all Christians need to be purified through spiritual growth. We will examine the sin nature and the relationship beliefs we all build as unbelievers who are born separated from God. The repetition in this article is intentional to drive home specific concepts.

### **Sin nature**

Before we look at our old relationship approach, let us first discuss the sin nature. Our natural tendency to sin is an inherited characteristic that has passed down from Adam. The sin nature is passed down genetically through the father's sperm to the body of the new person (Rom 5:12). The sin nature, whatever it really is, comes to us in our bodies and stays with us as long as we remain in our human bodies. We keep it all of our lives and are free of it only when we die and leave our bodies behind. The sin nature goes to the grave with the human body while the soul and spirit return to God who sends the soul to its final abode. The point is that we retain our corrupted nature throughout this life and we will be tempted by its selfish influence until we pass into the next life.

### **Belief Systems**

We retain the sin nature all of our lives but the nature to sin is not our biggest problem. The bigger problem is the corrupting influence the sin nature has had on our belief system. Every normal human being, beginning after birth, builds a system of beliefs that guides them and determines the way they view everything in life. This system is developed over time as we grow through the normal stages of development. Our beliefs are built by individual choice (responsibility) as we interpret our human experiences and are influenced by the beliefs of others in our environment (modeling).

God designed the heart to use the belief system to control what we think and how we behave in relationships. Whatever we choose to believe becomes part of the system and we automatically form behaviors that are compatible with our beliefs.

### **Sin nature Influence**

As we grow up from infancy and pass through the normal stages of human development, the sin nature influences us to build self-centered and self-serving beliefs. We see ourselves as the central figure in the universe. Born without knowledge and having to build our own ideas, our selfish nature confuses us about who really is the central figure in the universe. These self-centered ideas form our viewpoints about others and ourselves and out of these ideas we build our personal strategies for relating. Before salvation, because we cannot process the truth of God, every idea we build is human viewpoint and is contrary to the will of God. It is these human viewpoint beliefs built from the influence of our selfish nature that God calls upon us to lay aside.

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These ideas were formed without God and the truth of God's word. They place self instead of God at the center and serve self rather than serve God. These old man ideas have to be purged from our hearts for us to become servants of God rather than servants of sin. In the following paragraphs I would like to describe how these old man beliefs corrupt the way we conduct ourselves in relationships. It is in personal relationships that old man beliefs are best exposed so that they can be identified and then discarded.

### **Supply for Human Needs**

Human beings are born with the primal instincts to **pursue pleasure and prevent pain**. These two basic directives give us a working outline to understand the beliefs we built and the behaviors we must tear down. The drive to pursue pleasure is the instinct to find ways to supply our divinely designed needs. God designed the human soul with needs and designed us to need someone else to supply what we need. He made us so that we are incapable of meeting our own needs. By divine design, each of us is born with the need to be loved, the need to belong, the need to make a significant contribution to others and the need to be recognized for our contributions. God offers a plan to meet these needs to all and provides for these needs to all who will trust in Him.

God made some of our needs (marriage) to be met by other humans. Our core needs (spiritual needs) He designed to be supplied only by Him. God made us to need both the human and divine supply of our needs for our souls to be completely fulfilled. We especially need what He supplies. All of us need His love, need to belong to Him, need to contribute to other believers and need to receive His approval. The bible offers us God's love (Rom 5:5), belonging (Eph 1:13), power to contribute (Eph 1:18-20) and approval (Mt 25:21), as the great motivators of the Christian life. Only when we allow God to meet our core needs can the human soul be happy. In the garden, Adam and Eve were able to attach the right needs to the right person. They had each other for their human needs and they had God to meet their spiritual needs. After they fell from the garden, their sin has caused all of us to be born separated from God. Now that we are all born separated from God, the only option is for us to attach all of our needs to man. We are born with needs and born with the instinctive drive to have them met and because we are born without God, we build a core belief that man can meet all of our needs. As babies we don't even know about God but we do know about mommy and we attach all of our needs to her. We believe that attaching all of our needs to other humans is the right thing to do and that if we can make it work, we can find happiness with this approach to life.

At the core, fallen man believes that all of our needs can be met through relationships with other humans. After they sinned, Adam and Eve turned to each other to resolve their problem rather than God (Gen 3:7). Man has been looking to man ever since to meet the needs that only God can supply. Believing in and depending on man for what only God can supply is idolatry and instead of resolving problems, it actually multiplies our problems.

### **Idolatry & the Pain of Unmet Needs – Pursuing Pleasure**

Idolatry can be defined as believing in and depending upon anyone or anything to provide what only God can and is meant to provide. Idolatry not only insults God but it causes deep disappointment in those who practice it. All of mankind practices idolatry by believing that man can provide for the needs that only God is designed to supply. One of the most tragic results of looking to man for these needs is the inevitable disappointment that occurs when these needs go unmet. Man cannot provide for needs that were designed to be met by God, he is unable. Man cannot even be consistent in meeting needs that he was meant to supply. Looking to man leaves us empty, needy and hungry for love. The desire for love when unmet or unsatisfied turns into a frantic demand for love. Frantic demand motivates us to manipulate others to give us the love we need. Attaching needs to man results in certain failure and frustrated desire, which turns into deep disappointment, which turns into frantic demand, which motivates manipulation and blame. As our efforts to find love fail and our frustration grows we begin to fear that we will never be

loved and that we are not worthy to be loved. We assign blame and trade partners. We move from person to person using the same strategy. We implement self-improvement to increase conditional worthiness by looking better or thinner. When man looks to man to meet core love needs, the result will always be the same, emptiness. It is the pain of repeated failure in these relationships that eventually causes people to despair, become depressed and give up hope of ever finding love. Some finally commit suicide.

The core belief that man can meet our needs creates an idolatrous approach to relationships. The pursuit of pleasure by seeking to meet our needs through man always ends badly because it never works. It cannot work because man doesn't have what only God was intended to supply. The old saying, "you can't get blood from a turnip" applies to this situation. Also, it cannot work because God won't allow it to work. He hates idolatry and allows all who practice it suffer the inevitable heartache of unmet needs. This is the story of man's relationships.

### **Defense Mechanisms – Preventing Pain**

When we pursue pleasure by looking to man to meet our needs we end up with pain. It is the inevitable pain of failed idolatrous relationships that evokes the second primal instinct, the drive to prevent pain. Born without God, our only alternative is to look to man to meet our needs. This pursuit of pleasure is man's attempt to meet his needs without God and preventing pain is his attempt to deal with the pain of life without Him. Looking to man eventuates in the pain of disappointment, feelings of emptiness and the conclusion that we are not worthy to be loved. We follow this pattern over and over again starting with parents, then peers, then a partner in marriage and then followed by our children. Every relationship seems to end up the same way - painful. In order to manage pain, which we hate, we instinctively implement defensive strategies that are meant to prevent pain. Freud noticed these strategies while counseling his patients and named them "defense mechanisms". Defense mechanisms are instinctive mental tricks that we use to minimize feelings of pain. There are too many to list in this article so I will list the two most common.

### **Repression**

The first and most common is emotional repression. Repression is an instinctive move to numb ourselves so that we don't feel emotional pain. We simply tell ourselves to stop feeling so that the feeling of pain will ease. Repressing our emotions is effective in easing pain but it also has an unfortunate side effect. When we stop feeling pain, we stop feeling anything. The numbing of pain becomes the numbing of joy, the numbing of pleasure, love and happiness. Emotional repression is the defense mechanism most often used by abused children. Paul describes it in his letter to the Colossians:

***Col 3:21 Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.***

The word discouraged is the Greek word **athumos** meaning without passion. **Thumos** is a word for anger, emotion or passion of any kind. When a parent abuses a child, the child is unable to resolve the pain of abuse by thinking it through with biblical principles. Instead, the child will use **athumos** to ease the feelings of emotional pain. All of us have used this defense to some degree and all of us are numb inside to some degree. The pain of many unsatisfying relationships beginning with parents on to those in adulthood has motivated us to become numb in order to just function. In fact, going numb and then moving on without truly resolving the cause of the pain with God's word is what most of us call dealing with it. The biblical solution is to reject the idolatrous approach to relationships altogether and look to God to meet our needs rather than man.

### **Denial**

Another very common defense mechanism is called denial. Denial is not a river in Egypt goes the old joke. Denial works by simply pretending something is not what it is. It is a form of

self-deception where we pretend the painful situation does not exist. Scarlet Ohara in *Gone with the Wind* with her famous, "I'll think about that tomorrow" phrase was a master of denial. John discusses this mechanism when describing the enemies of truth:

***1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us***

Denial is self-deception. Rather than face the fact that we inherited a sin nature from Adam, we will just pretend that we didn't and make the problem go away. Many Christians that I know pretend that they are spiritually successful because they have amassed a great deal of bible knowledge. The fact that they are filled with pain, anger, self-hatred, self righteousness and guilt is denied by pretending that knowledge is synonymous with spiritual maturity.

### **Invisible Lie**

When we operate from the idea that relating to one another is God's plan for giving us happiness and fulfillment, our relationships will always be a source of disappointment and pain. You would think that after being hurt so many times, that we would wise up and abandon our idolatrous approach to relationships. You would think, but you would think wrong. The belief that man can meet our needs was one of the first ideas we adopted. We built it from the feeling of security we felt with our parents as infants. Even those who had a horrible childhood believe it. Everyone believes it because when we were born without God, man was our only option to believe in. It is the terrible plight of all of Adam's children. Some, having been hurt have given up hope of ever achieving this kind of love, but still believe that a love relationship with man is what creates happiness. This lie is so deeply ingrained and so core to the system that it is almost impossible to see it for what it is.

### **Credibility at Last**

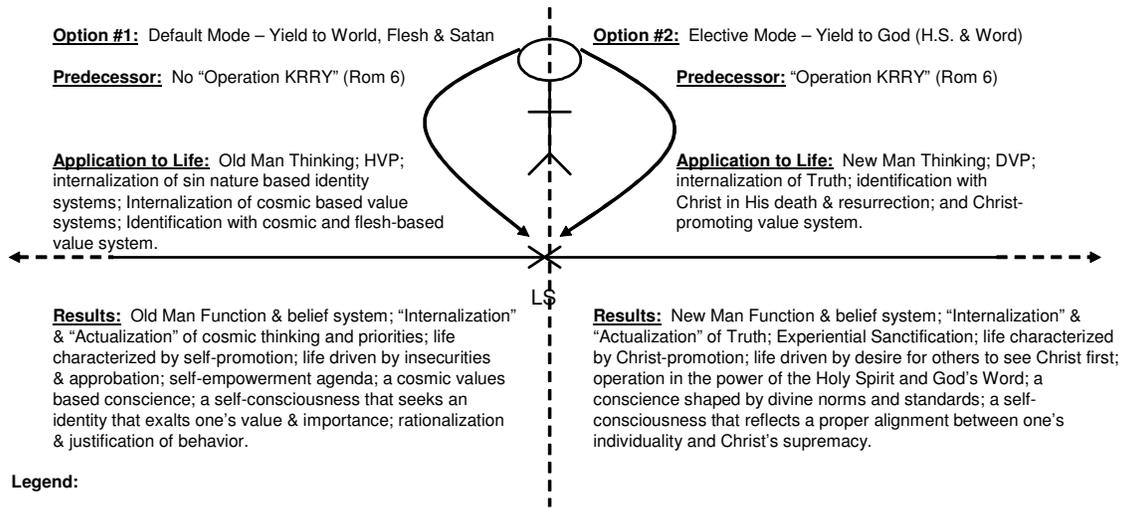
Now, if you have stuck it out and followed the logic of this discussion this far, don't miss the real point I am trying to make. I know you must be asking what any of this has to do with building credibility for the church. The answer is that it has everything to do with building credibility for the church. When a believer is still operating from the lie that people can meet his needs, then he is still relating to others to gratify self and still relating to others conditionally. This believer, saved by grace is still involving himself with others for one reason, to meet his own needs. Everything he says, everything he does is still for self. He is still hungry for love, for approval, for recognition, for acceptance and everyone he relates with feels it and knows it. His whole life strategy contradicts the message that he has delivered, that God will meet all of our needs through a grace relationship with Christ.

If and when a believer learns to detach his neediness from people and reattach his neediness to God, only then can God meet the core needs He designed in the man. God can never meet the core emotional needs of a believer who is seeking to be fulfilled through idolatrous means. God will refuse to meet the needs of anyone seeking fulfillment through idolatry. It is only when we have allowed God to fulfill our hearts that we gain the capacity to give in grace and love without conditions. It is only when we have gained the capacity to give without strings and love without conditions that what oozes from our hearts can be consistent with the message of the gospel. It is a love relationship with God through Christ that fulfills the human heart and overflows to those around him. The overflow is the ministry to others. When you have enough love from God for yourself, He keeps pouring so that your cup runneth over to others. When you finally "get it" that He loves you because He chose to love you based on the merits of Christ and is looking for nothing from you to evoke it from Him, then you are able to stop trying to earn it from Him.

Fellow believers, this capacity to receive grace and then give it and receive love until it overflows and spills out onto others, is what creates credibility for the message. It is what fulfills your heart and what others see that they want for themselves.

## APPENDIX B – INTERNALIZATION & ACTUALIZATION

### Two Options for Phase 2 of the Believer’s Existence



**LS** – Life Situation; a decision point in life regarding how one will respond with thought and action in relation to other people, circumstances, etc.

**HVP** – Human ViewPoint.

**DVP** – Divine ViewPoint.

**KRRY** – the concept of “knowing,” “reckoning” ourselves as having died with Christ, “reckoning” ourselves as having been resurrected with Christ, and “yielding” to the Holy Spirit and Truth. Obtained from Romans 6 (esp. 6:6, 11, 13) and terms used in the KJV. This acronym captures the essence of Paul’s instruction regarding the process or mechanics of the believer “working out” his or her salvation in Phase 2 – i.e. the “spiritual” life or walk of faith.

**Internalization** – a term used to describe the resulting effects upon the believer’s soul of having applied Operation KRRY (or not). Internalization is defined as follows - “to make internal, personal or subjective ... to take in and make an integral part of one’s belief. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*, retrieved July 20, 2008.

from Dictionary.com website – [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com).

**Actualization** - a term used to describe the visible effects in the believer’s life of having applied Operation KRRY (or not). Actualization is defined as follows – “to realize in action or make real” and “to describe or portray realistically.” *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*, retrieved July 20, 2008 from Dictionary.com website – [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com).