

## How are you faring in LOVE?

### MEASURE with 1Cor.13



He decided to divorce his wife and leave his family. While leaving, he kissed the forehead of his son and told him, *"I love you."* Actually he was saying, *"I love you, but I love myself more."*

The Church at Corinth was the most problematic Church as revealed in the New Testament. There was division, growing immorality, bragging, and pride. They were suing each other...and yet boasting about their spiritual giftedness. It was in this context that St. Paul wrote 1 Cor.13, prophetically testifying that **LOVE is Foundational and is the real Measurement of one's spiritual maturity.** *"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal."*(1 Cor.13:1)

1Cor.13:4-8, for you and for me, is a thermometer to rate ourselves on the greatest commandment *'The Commandment of Love'*.

#### **LOVE IS PATIENT**

He was supposed to fly to Bicol. He asked his wife, *"What is the schedule of our flight?"* She told him the time. On their way to the airport, he repeated the question to the wife, *"What is the departure time of the flight?"* When the wife checked the ticket again, she discovered to her horror that the time she had told him earlier was actually the arrival time and the departure time was much before it! Now no matter how fast they drove, it was already too late!

When they arrived at the airport, they told him, *"Sir, Sorry, the flight left long ago!"* Now this man had every right to get mad at his wife...**but, LOVE IS PATIENT!** He gave up his legitimate right to preach a lecture. He simply asked the counter, *"Is there another flight to the same vicinity area?"* Praise God, there was another flight, but he had to pay extra as the destination was different. He called up the person who was going to fetch them from the previous destination and informed him about the change. Remember, **PATIENCE is not our reaction to circumstances or things, PATIENCE describes our relationship with other human beings.**

#### **LOVE IS KIND**

Romans 2:4: *"Do you think lightly of the riches of His KINDNESS and restraint and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"* Many people have been attracted to the Kingdom of God because of the kindness, patience and love of God's people and not because of theological arguments, theories or doctrines.

#### **LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS**

When someone gets promoted or appreciated, do we truly feel happy for them? Romans 12:15 says, *"Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn."* Which one is harder? We don't mind weeping with those who weep, but it's harder for us to rejoice with those who rejoice.

#### **LOVE IS NOT BOASTFUL, PROUD OR RUDE**

You will notice, many politicians, after they build a bridge or a park, they name it after their own name, though they used peoples' money. They do so for recognition. True followers of Jesus do not seek after recognition. They know that whatever they have or accomplish, it's all by the grace of God. So, they give all glory and credit to God.

## **LOVE DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EVIL BUT REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH**

Everyone has his or her good and bad side. Love accentuates the positive and minimizes the negative. It asks us to stop broadcasting the failures of others and rejoice in their goodness, as they say, *“Love covers a multitude of sins.”*

**LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS** (*with patience*), **BELIEVES ALL THINGS** (*gives benefit of doubt*), **HOPES ALL THINGS** (*never gives up on people*), **ENDURES ALL THINGS** (*passes the test*). **LOVE NEVER FAILS.**

Do you know how pearls are formed inside oysters? An oyster is soft, tender, and vulnerable. Without the sanctuary of its shell it cannot survive. But oysters must open their shells in order to "breathe" water. Sometimes while an oyster is breathing, a grain of sand will enter its shell and become a part of its life from then on. Such grains of sand cause severe pain, but an oyster does not alter its soft nature because of this. It does not become hard and leathery in order not to feel. It continues to entrust itself to the ocean, to open and breathe in order to live. But it does respond.

Instead of ejecting the object or irritant out (*as most humans would try to do*), slowly and patiently, the oyster wraps the grain of sand in thin translucent layers of a substance secreted from its own body, until, over time, it has created something of great value in the place where it was most vulnerable to its pain. **A pearl might be thought of as an oyster's response to its suffering.** Not every oyster can do this. Oysters that do are far more valuable than oysters that do not. Sand is a way of life for an oyster. If you are soft and tender and must live on the sandy floor of the ocean, making pearls becomes a necessity if you are to live well.

The longer the pearl stays in the oyster the more valuable it becomes. **The Pearl to me is just one more analogy of how LOVE can take an irritant and turn it into something priceless.**

Friends, as we celebrate the Valentine's Day this year, let's resolve to grow in 'TRUE LOVE' that 1Cor.13 speaks about, and let's endure all that irritates us in our relationships, until it becomes a 'PRICELESS PEARL'. May we all taste the 'GOSPEL LOVE' that never fails and that has the power to transform our lives, to bless our relationships and to bring God the greatest honor! **HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY 2022!**



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