

Madison and Reagan are our seven year old golden retriever dogs who seem to believe that they're human. Daily, without fail, they communicate with loving howls, low purrs, (yes, dogs purr); clumsy, joyful pirouettes and the big brown puppy dog eyes that can melt the most resistant heart. I love both of them dearly, but Madison believes that he is my dog exclusively! Nearly every morning when I sit down at my computer desk, he manages to wiggle around my rolling chair and posture himself with his back nearly scratching the underside of my desk. Then, without fail, he begins his habitual attention getting, goofy rumba of the day! It's absolutely hysterical. He repeatedly scoots back and forth rubbing his back on the wood, his tongue flopping out the side of his mouth, bearing a ridiculous grin, as his tail simultaneously wags sharply pounding the corners of the desk and panting and groaning as if to say, notice me!!! Most mornings it's a tradition I enjoy. But then there are other times I have so much work to do that his cavorting is annoying, loud and I don't have time for it. Several months back we were going through this normal routine but I was too focused to notice. He kept smacking into me, I'm sure intentionally, and shedding very visible clingy reddish golden hair on my clothes while making louder than usual growling purrs. Annoyed, I kept working when abruptly he froze into a sitting position, tail at a stand still, and exhibited the most disgusted look I'd ever seen on a dog's face followed by the most pained bark I'd ever heard. He intended to enlighten me that he was not pleased and sought some of what he believed to be deserved affection. I couldn't help but laugh, and, of course, yielded to his "demand". I know, I know. I'm supposed to be the Alpha leader. But at the same time I thought how many times do annoying people make demands of me wanting what they label as love and I'm either too busy to give them what they want, or don't know how to respond to their sometimes bottomless pit of a life-sucking drain? How is one to know when and when not to yield? Is it wrong to forebear giving people what they want when they think it's loving? Have you ever wondered about such things? I have! Thankfully I've discovered that the Bible has a lot to say about when and how to love! Love is, therefore, not stupid!

Matt 24:12 And the love of the great body of people will grow cold because of the multiplied lawlessness and iniquity,¹³ But he who endures to the end will be saved.AMP



LOVE IS NOT STUPID!

(HAVE WE FORGOTTEN HOW TO LOVE?)
PART TWO

By Dr. Tamara Winslow



In the last issue of this article I explained how that love isn't generally a feeling. It is first a choice. We then considered that the key Hebrew and Greek words reveal a much different definition for love than what has been defined in contemporary culture and Christianity. *Love, whether used of God or man, is an earnest and anxious desire for, and an active and beneficent interest in the well-being of the one loved.*¹ Spiros Zohdiates writes in his Lexical aids in the *Hebrew Greek Key study Bible*, that agape is best defined as a love which is given not according to what the one being loved desires, but which is given according to what the one giving love deems as needed by the one loved. Additionally, love indicates a direction of will! It is not just an emotion. Agape love isn't given just because someone desires something from someone. It's granted because of the genuine need perceived by the one loving the receiver. Consequently, no one can say to you, "If you love me, than you have to do this for me, because love gives without conditions." Love is consequential in its thinking and expression! It doesn't react. It responds!

Jesus stated that in the times before His return love would grow cold, or refrigerate, as various Greek Lexicons define it. We also learned that because of something called "the mystery of lawlessness", identified in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12, the parameters for all things true, including love's definitions, would be gradually removed and replaced with something contrary to what God designed. Therefore, we don't

¹ The *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*

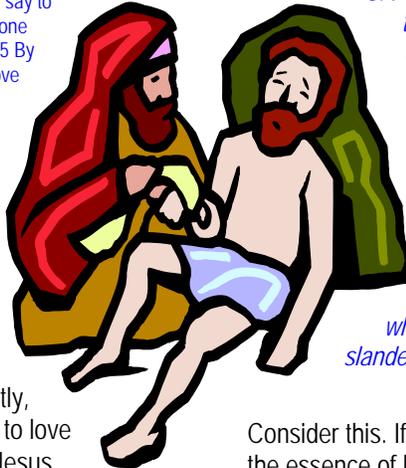
only need to reestablish the definitions for love. We must also rediscover its parameters of operation. Regrettably, we live in a time where a predominant unwitting ignorance exists concerning love's definitions and the condition of absent boundaries has produced a naivety affecting the very practice of loving. As a result, some very disturbing misplaced expectations and unhealthy behaviors have emerged that make love, especially Christian love, look stupid! Let me say it again: Love is not stupid! Love is responsible, and as a result, consequential in its delivery if it is a love born of God!

We saw that because of the New Birth love for God is possible. It is not based on works or fulfilling all the laws of the Old Testament. What most believers are unaware of is that genuine love for God will inevitably foster a love for fellow believers and people in general. In fact, some of the most obvious results of being born again are love for God and the Body of Christ, although love for people follows very closely behind. Sadly, in practice, this is often not the case. This is not a new problem. Otherwise there would probably not be so many reminders charging us to love. Lets take a closer look at this!

John 13:33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come: so now I say to you.³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.³⁵ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. KJV

Jesus repeatedly emphasized the importance of loving God and others. He introduced what He said was a new commandment to His disciples telling them to love one another in the same manner as he had loved them. He didn't make it an option! Furthermore, he indicated that this behavior would prove to all people who his followers were. (John 13:33-35; 15:17, 1 John 3:23, 2 John 5-6) Subsequently, it makes sense that in order to understand how to love we have to look at how he loved the disciples. Jesus was not without boundaries in how he expressed love. In fact, he did some things that we might think aren't loving. For example, was he unloving when he initially refused to minister deliverance to the Syrophenician's sick daughter? Or, did Jesus understand that love has different parameters than we've learned? Is God unloving because He doesn't meet every human need and crisis? Or are there different factors affecting His actions then we have previously understood? We need to take a serious look at this. I believe if you consider the whole canon of Scripture you'll find God seldom responds to *need* exclusively. What I believe you'll discover is that He always responds to faith. Moreover, a great number of the needs that do get met are done so through His mercy, which is another topic entirely, although connected to compassionate love. So if we're commanded to love like He loves we have a big job on our hands. In some cases we need to re-learn what we've come to believe what is and isn't love?

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.²⁰ If a man say, I love God, and hate his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?²¹ And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.KJV



One thing is certain and non-negotiable. If you say you love God but hate your fellow Christian you're living a contradiction! You cannot love God and hate your brother and call yourself a follower of Christ. The two just don't go together. Hate is a strong emotion and according to Scripture, exhibits a wide assortment of expressions and behaviors, a few of which I have listed below.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HATE

1. *Hate is divisive. It causes believers to separate for a variety of reasons, most often because of differences of opinion or disagreement over ideologies and interpretations of the Scriptures that cause tension. Hate is intentionally hurtful to the one it afflicts without being concerned as to how much pain is caused. Luke 6:22-23, Prov. 26:24*
2. *Hatred murders the vision, gifting, provision, will, personality and life of the one who is hated. 1 John 3:15*
3. *Hatred is fueled by jealousy, offense, and religious legalism. Real love isn't concerned about laws and do's or don'ts. Love is concerned about genuinely seeing people as God sees them. Matt 24:9-10, Rom 13:8-10*
4. *An enemy is someone who hates. The concept of hatred involves someone who is in opposition to you, hostile in attitude, words, emotion and action.*
5. *Hatred brings persecution, shame and rejection. Luke 6:22-23*
6. *People who hate are in darkness and can't see that what they're doing to others is wrong. They lack revelation in how each specific relationship is to be conducted. Their expectations are built around the flesh and emotional demands. When one's demands aren't submitted to the Cross, then disappointment breeds offense and hate begins its cruel activity. 1 John 2:9-11*
7. *Scoffers hate those who reprove or correct them. Prov. 9:8*
8. *In many cases biblically hateful people do not speak evil about you to your face. They are whisperers who quietly plot your downfall, curse you and slander while secretly attempting to destroy your life. Ps. 41:7, Prov. 26:24*

Consider this. If hatred is the epitome of cruelty, then love has to be the essence of kindness. God, of course, is love, and love originates from God. So, does this mean love is reckless and without direction? Who does the Bible indicate we are supposed to love? That's easy, right? We're created to love God, commanded to love the brethren, charged to love all people and love ourselves in the manner that makes us reflect Jesus and be thankful for what He's given to us. But who are these undesigned group of people that God says we're to love? One of the big questions posed a man who challenged Jesus was: Who is my neighbor?

Luke 10:25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"²⁷ So he answered and said, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind;" and 'your neighbor as yourself.'²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."²⁹ But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"³⁰ Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.³¹ Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.³² Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion.³⁴ So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.³⁵ On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'³⁶ So which of these three do you think

was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." NKJV

An unnamed lawyer confronted Jesus by asking him which works or behaviors were necessary to receive eternal life. Without flinching, and seeing behind the man's query, Jesus retorted, "What does the law say? How do you interpret it?" The lawyer responded with an appropriate answer, however, wanting to look righteous he asked the age-old question per the moment. "Who is my neighbor?" What followed was Jesus' wonderful account of the Good Samaritan and the revelation that your neighbor could be any person in need who crosses your path, not dependent on whether you like them or not.

I believe one of the finest biblical examples of genuine love is depicted in this story. Moreover, I want to specifically bring to your attention how the Samaritan meted out love to the half-dead wounded man.

First and foremost, the Samaritan noticed the need of a dying man on the road. He didn't turn away in disgust, and was moved by compassion to take action even when more "religious" individuals turned away. Religiosity has a way of blinding the eyes to recognizing people's real needs so love can't be expressed. Furthermore, it's important to note that he understood how much he should and could do when caring for the man. After having bound up the man's wounds with that day's medicinal oil and wine combo, the Samaritan settled the stranger on the donkey and took him to an inn. One might presume that the Samaritan would have remained until the man was completely well, because, isn't that what love should do? However, take a closer look. He only took care of the man for the one day and only stayed with him overnight. Were his actions unloving or selfish? Not at all! Staying longer would have created an unhealthy dependence and familiarity that later could have backfired. The Samaritan was aware of exactly how much assistance was enough. So the morning after their arrival, the Samaritan paid the inn owner two denarii, equivalent to two days wages, and gave instructions to care for the man until he was well enough to leave. Additionally, the Samaritan committed to cover any further costs if necessary. Do you see how he handled this? Love meets the needs, but at the same time, assesses the full gamut of the situation so it isn't taken advantage of and wrongly used. Wrongful expectations tend to develop when these boundaries aren't applied. This wise Samaritan showed spiritually responsible love with insight. Love is not stupid! Jesus closed the conversation with the lawyer by admonishing him that one's neighbor is the wounded man on the roadside!

The closer we come to the time of the Lord's return the greater the conflicts in relationships will be. Love will "chill" because iniquity has removed its parameters. People will be increasingly offended. Is there a solution to this escalating clash?

I've noticed that the great majority of messages I hear about "love" all center around 1 Corinthians 13, and understandably so. If every Christian would practice the characteristics describing love in those verses many problems would be solved. Nonetheless, this general description of love can be taken wrongly if several fundamental boundaries are ignored. To remedy this I want to bring a passage from Philippians to your attention.

THE PARAMETERS FOR LOVE!

Phil 1:9-And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; **10** That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; **11** Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. (KJV)

Phil 1:9 And this I pray: that your love may abound yet more and more and extend to its fullest development in knowledge and all keen insight [that your love may display itself in greater depth of acquaintance and more comprehensive discernment], **10** So that you may surely learn to sense what is vital, and approve and prize what is excellent and of real value [recognizing the highest and the best, and distinguishing the moral differences], and that you may be untainted and pure and unerring and blameless [so that with hearts sincere and certain and unsullied, you may approach] the day of Christ [not stumbling nor causing others to stumble]. **11** May you abound in and be filled with the fruits of righteousness (of right standing with God and right doing) which come through Jesus Christ (the Anointed one), to the honor and praise of God [that His glory may be both manifested and recognized]. AMP

Paul's letter to the church of Philippi provides insightful instructions in the management of Christian love!

3 FUNDAMENTAL PROTOCOLS

1. Knowledge
2. Judgment- (The Amplified transliteration says, keen insight as in a depth of acquaintance & comprehensive discernment.)
3. Approve things that are excellent- (Learning to sense what is vital and prize what is excellent & of real value [recognizing the highest and the best, & distinguishing the moral differences AMP])

He sites what I believe could be described as protocols for a love that is healthy and maturing.

Yes, love should mature! Paul's prayer for the saints was that their love would abound, extending to its fullest development. That suggests maturation. In fact, the believer who practices these skills will express a love that is genuine/ sincere, free from offense, and always demonstrating the fruits of righteousness. This abounding love, according to, *perisseuo*², the Greek word translated abound, depicts an overflowing, perpetual flood of love, "yet more and more" but with necessary limitations like river banks, "in knowledge". Can you imagine what could happen if all believers understood these principles? They might not fall prey to the wiles of Satan in the last day's attack of lawlessness, offense, frozen love and betrayal! Wow, what an option! The question is: How do these protocols work? We'll take a look at each protocol individually according to the Greek word and definition used.

LOVE ABOUNDS AND MATURES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Love matures through the practice and possession of full knowledge. This dismisses the dangerous notion that love is blind. The Greek word translated knowledge is *epignosis*. It refers to recognition, a full discernment known through various senses. In some ways it refers to perception and understanding. Therefore, when mature abounding love manifests it does so with a complete knowledge about what it has fully discerned as to what is going on around it and how love should be expressed. It understands what, when, how and why to love. Just like the concept of riverbanks channeling a river's water, so love has to have 5 different "parameters" of knowledge if it is to abound and mature.

1. Loving out of or through the character of God- Romans 1:28; 10:2; Eph 1:17; 4:13; Col 1:9-10, 2 Peter 1:2-3,8; 2:20

Christians who lack an accurate understanding and practical knowledge of the character and nature of God, His Spirit and Jesus will find it very

² Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft & Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament. Copyright (c) 1985 by Broadman Press

difficult to grow in love. In recent years I've become increasingly disturbed at this problematic deficit. The profundity of the influences of ungodly post modern ideologies, the infiltration of new age philosophies, and an unsettling acceptance of Hellenistic beliefs have corrupted the biblical truths of who God is and have set up invisible traps for unwitting saints. If one misunderstands who and how God is, then inevitably, love's expressions will be twisted. Yes God is love, but when considering that, the entirety of His character and nature must subsequently be what defines how love is walked out. I am personally very weary of listening to empty human reasoning that makes excuses and blames God for the bad things happening in life! On the other hand, God is judge, holy, wise and much more. Sin does have consequences and God in the fullness of His character won't blink at it forever.

2. Love because of the full knowledge of His truth, or His Word- 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Timothy 2:25; 2 Timothy 3:7; Hebrews 10:26; Titus 1:1

Lasting and fruitful love operates through the recognition of truth, specifically the truths in God's word, His character, His Spirit, Law, Ways, His Works, doctrine, the person of Jesus, the message of the Gospel, the anointing, and Character truth. Consequently, these distinct categories of truth take precedence over human "so-called" truths falsely deemed true in circumstances, experience, feelings, and facts etc. Regrettably, truth has gone through a wicked, gradual modification because post modernist views have marked the generations with the notion that all ideas possess truth. So then there is no absolute truth or right or wrong. Furthermore, the list below reveals the categories for truth that determines biblical protocols for God's way in love. Human truth generally contradicts His basis for truth, and therefore, believes that feelings, circumstances, religious tradition, cultural variety and even myths and fantasy are true and satisfactory to build one's love upon. When you don't know what you believe to be truth you will follow what your heart considers right even if it isn't truth especially during times of crisis!

(ALMOST ALWAYS PRECEDED BY MERCY)

- a. *Truth of God in His Character- Ex. 34:6; Jer 10:10*
- b. *Truth of God in His Word- John 17:17; Ps 119:160; 1 Thess. 2:13*
- c. *Truth of God in His Spirit- John 16:13; 1 John 4:6*
- d. *Truth of God in His Law- Ps 119:142*
- e. *God's Truth in our Lives, His Ways- Way of Truth- Ps. 119:130; 2 Pet. 2:2*
- f. *Truth of God in His works- Dan 4:37*
- g. *Spiritual truths in doctrines-Gal. 5:7; 3:1*
- h. *Jesus is- John 14:6*
- i. *The message of the gospel-Col 1:5*
- j. *The anointing- 1 John 2:27*
- k. *Character Truth- Way of righteousness Theologians call this "moral truth" but biblically it can best be related to a life of righteousness.*

Therefore, the expression of mature love is subject to your belief system. We need to make sure that we call truth is in fact, actually truth!

WHAT ARE THE FILTERS YOU HAVE THAT AFFECT HOW YOU SEE & INTERPRET LOVE?



3. Love because of a knowledge of the affects of the New Birth- Colossians 3:10

Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. KJV

Do you really understand what has happened to you in the New Birth? A great majority of believers do not! The New Birth affects more than your eternal destiny! It's more than being saved, although the word "saved" has been abused, and therefore, misunderstood by human beings for ages. Being born again affects every area of your life, including your spirit, mind, will, emotions, flesh, health, relationships, and intellectual abilities, to name a few. Regrettably when we don't understand the amazing breadth of potential and the changes made available and legally ours in the New Birth we limit our own capacity to live as God intended. This includes how we love! You can only love fully when you realize that the Holy Spirit in the New Creation granted you a deposit of love.

Therefore, to love people isn't dependent upon behavioral modification. It's established by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. For that reason, racism and prejudice must never find place in the heart of a Christian because discrimination is contrary to the new real you who loves through the love of God! He is love and we've been born into that likeness so we can love like He loves if we yield to that deposit within.

Finally, the kind of mature love we need, as expressed through the boundaries of truth, is being strained in ways many Christians aren't prepared for. In past decades a frightening shift in thinking has occurred concerning what is being touted and demanded as "tolerance". Over the past century many denominations gradually embraced what was called the ecumenical movement designed to create a sort of church unity without doctrinal conflict. Eventually this movement evolved into religious pluralism and syncretism where the tenants of Christian faith were laid down in favor of and toward the goal of the merging of all religions. Post modernism reinforced this by emphasizing that all religions had truth in them so there could be no absolute truth any longer, especially the Bible, and Jesus being God's son! To declare these things as absolute would then be intolerable. When truth, especially the truths vital to Christian faith, is no longer the absolute truth, then lawlessness has full sway to influence people to believe whatever they want to believe because everything is relevant. In recent years tolerance has become the big issue and word. Sadly, I have not encountered very many people who have really researched what tolerance actually involves, means and requires. This bothers me because now to love, one has to be tolerant, in the sense of what modern definitions have made tolerance to be. This is totally contrary to Christian faith and if we don't understand what we're fighting we will be deemed unloving and bigoted. Our witness could easily be cancelled out because of these twisted views.

I could spend a lot of time writing about this issue and maybe in the future will devote an entire article to dissect the concept of modern tolerance. The word itself has quite a heritage of evolution unfamiliar to most people living today. Nevertheless, I'd like to make a few points about this to help you distinguish between what is love and

what is currently called tolerance. Having done quite a bit of research on the subject, I would recommend that you check out this YouTube link with Don Carson teaching on the issue of tolerance. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PVJlnvVeSM>.

In this video Mr. Carson states that today's tolerance ideology isn't tolerant at all. It is in fact inconsistent with what true tolerance is and could even be described as being incoherent. To be tolerant, according to *modernist* ideology, one must disagree with the philosophy or purported teaching and then choose to respect the individual but have room for debate concerning the disagreement. Today's *postmodern* concept of tolerance no longer allows room for a different opinion and takes any challenge of that philosophy as a personal affront. Therefore, to be tolerant in today's arena of discourse one cannot disagree and to do so is considered bigotry. According to Mr. Carson that is not only inaccurate in definition, it is inconsistent because it denies the premise to differ, which is the essence of what tolerance requires. Instead, he says that rather than tolerance we're contending with a type of totalitarianism! If so, we are in a frightening time because like the ancient Assyrian empire of old, ruled by the evil Sennacherib, anyone who opposed the will of this cruel king faced enormous repression. As a result, the enemy worked to break the will of the resisters, forbidding them to express themselves. Because this warped view on tolerance affects how we view love, and since there can be no disagreement, lawlessness will have a free hand to do whatever it wants. We must pray for wisdom in how to communicate the truths of the Gospel without coming across as inconsiderate and unloving. In fact, we need a new vocabulary that can't be twisted. That is a major challenge!

4. Love because of a knowledge of how God sees people when sin has caused problems in their lives. When you look at someone you consider sinful, do you judge them, condemn them, behave rudely, or does your heart break? - Romans 3:20, 10:1-3

I was conducting a meeting with some fellow believers at our local Starbucks a number of years ago. While we sat there drinking our beverages a young man walked in and stood next to us waiting his turn to be served. He was impossible not to notice because he was dressed in a black T-shirt printed with a white picture of the devil on front. He wore a black baseball cap that had horns on the sides. He sported a black goatee, and heavy spiked chains hung around his neck and belted around his black jeans. He was a sight to see. To my shock those people with me sneered and showed obvious disgust at his presence. At the same time I felt a deep compassion surge in my heart for him because I realized he didn't even know what he was doing. He didn't know the Jesus I love nor did he have an understanding of what God could do for him through the new birth. I realized then and there that many believers have lost perspective and judge the lost instead of love them. It broke my heart. Mature, abounding love sees through eyes of mercy. It doesn't condemn, judge, behave rudely or criticize. You acquire this type of vision by growing in the knowledge of how God sees people. So many "pre-saved" people are simply waiting for someone to love them. They're tired of religious rheto-

ric and they genuinely want to change but don't have the foggiest idea how to get there. Through a personal prayer life and knowledge of God's character you can develop this loving vision.

5. Love because of the knowledge of His Will- Is it His will for you to do that? There are some people who you shouldn't give to or do things for- Colossians 1:9

Col 1:9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; KJV

This may shock you but you don't have to give away everything when someone asks you to just to express love. Mature love seeks the will of the Lord for when and when not to do something. I'm not suggesting that you make excuses to be selfish and unkind, but there are times that love refrains from helping someone, so to keep people responsible for their own lives. We'll look at this in more detail later.

LOVE MATURES AND ABOUNDS THROUGH JUDGMENT

The word and concept of judgment provokes a wide variety of opinion and mixed feelings in contemporary Christian interpretation. In fact, I've observed that when believers begin to discuss judgment all sorts of reactions can erupt depending on the theological bent of the individuals conversing. In the case of love, however, judgment must be present to prevent unhealthy and unwise expressions.

Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. KJV

The Greek word, *aesthesis*, is translated judgment in the King James Version of Phil. 1:9, and is defined as perception and discernment. It uses both the senses and the intellect to determine what is right and wrong and is critical to spiritual expression. ³This type of judgment is only mentioned once in the New Testament, and is related to the same concept of discernment referred to by Paul in Hebrews 5:14. In Hebrews, Paul states that this type of judgment develops through the habitual practice of disciplined observation and spiritual awareness. In many ways this type of judgment could be best defined as spiritual common sense. Through living we learn. Your love will abound when you pay attention to what's going on around you and make your decisions based on what is morally right or wrong.

Prov 22:3 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished. KJV

Proverbs 22:3 reveals an excellent principle depicting this type of judgment. The prudent, or without doing any injustice to the Hebrew rendition of this word, we could say morally discerning individual, considers his or her environment, the morality of the matters, hidden agendas and whatever other conditions that need to be judged and takes action accordingly. Therefore, when evil approaches the prudent hides from the danger and as a result is protected. The simple person, however, naively goes about living without thought of consequence, never discerning the potential threat and as a result suffers needlessly. Once again the mystery and operation of lawlessness is at work because the various Hebrew and Greek words translated as

³ (from Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft & Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament. Copyright (c) 1985 by Broadman Press)



simple all imply a life in which all boundaries and parameters are gone. The simple person is open to anything and prone to constant attack all because simplicity resists discernment and prefers naivety and open-mindedness to a fault. On the other hand, when mature love is expressed with judgment, an individual takes everything into account because of the knowledge he or she possesses. Doesn't this remind you of the Good Samaritan? He considered the cost and how far he could go in helping the wounded stranger without developing an unhealthy dependence and setting the stage for wrong expectations. Had he been simple, things might have been very different. Regrettably, simple individuals are vulnerable to offense because the protections offered through a love that discerns are not in place. This is the platform for an end time's battle foretold by Jesus. Therefore, to love according to judgment, you need to put the pieces together from the various types of knowledge you have mixed with some good ol' fashioned common sense. Otherwise what and how you do things will be either misinterpreted or taken advantage of.

LOVE ABOUNDS AND MATURES AS YOU LEARN TO DISCERN WHAT IS GENUINE AND VALUABLE

Some time back I toured a mining museum near our home. One of the exhibits demonstrated how the assayers would determine the purity of the ore. An assayer is an official who tested the quality and the value of the gold dust and nuggets brought in by the prospectors. It was quite an interesting display as we learned how the lengthy process was handled. The ore went through several chemical and fiery tests until eventually the real gold would be extracted from all the dross. Once the value of the samples was determined, the prospector would be informed as to whether his potential mine was worth the effort and money he would have to invest. Comparatively abounding love goes through a similar process.

1 Cor 13:4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, KJV

People who love genuinely learn to evaluate and examine the circumstances, the people and the needs according to how they should be ministered to and helped. They look for what is most valuable and will make the greatest impact for God's Kingdom and the people's lives. Their kindness, or also defined as gentle usefulness, implying helpfulness, is measured by patience. Sometimes we are in too much of a rush to do things because we haven't discerned what's really going on behind the scenes or how our actions will be interpreted. You can be too nice and your attempt to love may backfire. Let me explain.

Prov 29:21 He who pampers his servant from childhood will have him expecting the rights of a son afterward. AMP

Proverbs 29:21 reveals the dangers of being too kind, too loving, and too giving. When you indulge the people you're in authority over at work, or unwisely pamper individuals who are needy, they will inevitably develop unrighteous and demanding expectations. Then, if they develop feelings of entitlement aimed at you and you don't fulfill those demands, the once faithful and innocent souls will turn on you, offended. They may even take on an assumed



and unrighteous posture of authority over you simply because your misplaced benevolent love dishonored you in their sight. Furthermore, when expectations go wrong or presumptuous familiarity comes into a relationship, the fruitfulness and health of the relationship will eventually break down. For example, I love to teach and share what I know. Nonetheless, I have over done it at times and given away too much without encouraging the people to study on their own. Because of my lack of wisdom those people developed an expectation that I had to give them what they wanted. When I didn't do that they would become upset. Furthermore, once a familiarity of this type takes root dishonor follows shortly behind.

Have you ever wanted to kick yourself because you gave too much and this happened? And then you did it again? Truthfully, you didn't love, even though that was your intention. You were just naive. Wake up! You must learn to determine how to love people in the way that best helps them. Sometimes a restrained love is the best love because it creates an atmosphere where responsibility can grow. But you must always test the waters to see what's best for each person and situation. There is no set formula. Furthermore, we as the Church often do a disservice to the poor and needy. We give them a fish when we should be teaching them how to fish! At times we enable poverty rather than release the poor into a healthy life. In saying all this, love is responsible and encourages responsibility. How then are we to handle these things?

Eph 4:1 I THEREFORE, the prisoner for the Lord, appeal to and beg you to walk (lead a life) worthy of the [divine] calling to which you have been called [with behavior that is a credit to the summons to God's service, 2 Living as becomes you] with complete lowliness of mind (humility) and meekness (unselfishness, gentleness, mildness), with patience, bearing with one another and making allowances because you love one another. AMP
Eph 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;KJV

Ephesians 4:1-2 encourages us to walk worthy of whatever calling God has called us to. The verses go on to say that we are to live humbly, unselfishly and bearing with one another in love. It goes without saying that people make mistakes. Genuine love recognizes that people will fail and disappoint you. 1 Corinthians 13 draws out the basic behaviors needed to live such a love. Therefore, we need to take these weaknesses into consideration by forgiving and leaving the issues on the cross. On occasion, however, we may get caught into a relationship conflict where irresponsibility has repeatedly occurred and assumptions have been made. People who expect you to always make allowances for their incompetence and irresponsibility have corrupted the definition of biblical love and have become lawless, disrespecting others needs. Love is not blind!

Gal 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. 4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For every man shall bear his own burdenKJV

We've all probably heard how we're to bear one another's burdens. But does that mean every burden? No it doesn't!!! There are several different Greek words translated as "burden" and when we don't understand their different meanings we can be made to think we have to do anything someone asks us to because we have to bear their burdens with them. Then, if you follow through that thinking process,

people who abuse this will say that you don't love if you don't do what they want. How awful! What is the answer for this dilemma?

Galatians 6 verse 2 states that we are to bear one another's burdens and doing so we fulfill the law of Christ, love one another. The word for burdens in this verse is defined as a burden that is overwhelming. It's a weight that one person alone cannot carry. "Boundaries" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend compares this burden to a boulder. People have situations in their lives that are overwhelming and they need help with. These are the heavy loads that we need to help others shoulder, and in doing so, we exhibit the love of God. All too often, though, this principle gets abused. The key for you, when learning to live a mature abounding love, is to know *when* to help. Consequently, Paul continued in verse 5 and challenged each individual to bear her or his own burden. The Greek word, *phortion*, translated for this word burden means something totally different. This burden is referring to one's daily load, or personal responsibility. Can you see there is a major distinction? Therefore, when someone is irresponsible and demands that others carry his or her daily load, problems occur. It is not wrong to say no to such demands. Love is not stupid. However, when anyone is overwhelmed by huge burdens the loving thing to do is to help. There are even times when daily loads can become a boulder burden. It's during these moments that we must discern the real need.

As you can see we don't need to be victimized by the demands placed upon us through people's expectations. Neither do we have to condemn ourselves when we need to say no! Mature love is knowledgeable to God's ways and word. It is discerning and sensitive to the issues at hand. It is also looking to produce fruitful results in people's lives so that they in turn will grow and demonstrate the kind of love Jesus called us to. Love is not stupid and neither are you!



UPCOMING SCHEDULE

August 13th-20th Recording the new CD, "Such Power" a collection of original and loved original songs by Dr. Winslow at New Wine Recording Studio, Apple Valley, California.

Please be praying with us for this event. If you have questions as to how you can help please contact us at [info@tamarawinslow.com!](mailto:info@tamarawinslow.com)

When Dr. Winslow is not traveling she is writing books, researching and practicing music!

If you want to schedule Dr. Tamara Winslow to speak for your group contact her at info@tamarawinslow.com.

NEXT MONTH'S ARTICLE Biblical Etiquette in Love

CURRENT PROJECTS

BOOK PROJECTS

Dr. Winslow is working on several book projects this month! Titles- In the End What Must We Do?" "Exposing the Spirit of Slothfulness" and others. She is currently editing the Praise and Worship Compendium: Volume One and "The Song of the Lord" for Ebook distribution.

UPCOMING CD/DVD TEACHINGS

Recordings of teachings on "The Revival of Honor and Unity", "Common Sense for Confusing Times: Understanding Boundaries" and edited versions of numerous teachings are being currently worked on and edited.

NEW PRAISE AND WORSHIP RECORDING "SUCH POWER"

"Many years ago while Mike and I were going to an evening dinner meeting I had a vision about Praise and Worship in God's throne room. In that vision the Lord commanded me to train people in praise and worship in the manner that I'd been privileged to witness. I have developed the Praise and Worship aspect of my ministry for many years, including composing numerous praise and worship songs that I regularly use in my meetings. I've recently sought the Lord, and gotten numerous confirmations that I need to record a group of those praise and worship songs, some of the most loved and related to, when I minister in conferences, churches and the Institute. I've scheduled to do that recording with the same kind of quality of musicianship we did in the previous recording for August 14th-18th. I'm estimating the cost of the recording, travel expenses and production will be about \$4200 total. "

There will be approximately 20 songs on the recording with the possibilities listed below.

BEAR THE WORD FATHER, FATHER DANCING KING REVIVE ME AGAIN SALVATION BELONGS TO ME EVERY DAY
I'M ABOVE AND NOT BENEATH WE ARE VICTORS IN CHRIST JESUS ON THE CROSS MY OLD LIFE IS DEAD HEM OF YOUR GARMENT
I CHOOSE TO LOVE THE TRUTH YOU ARE MY FRIEND POUR OUT YOUR GLORY WE HAVE CONFIDENCE SUCH POWER
TEACH US THE FEAR OF THE LORD I WILL WALK WITH YOU JUST TO SEE YOU SMILE I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST
I BELIEVE IN THE ANOINTING IN YOU YOU TOOK MY SIN DECLARE HIM AS LORD YOU ARE FAITHFUL MY GOD IS FAITHFUL- DUET