

5/19/97

The More Excellent Way
1Cor. 12:31b-13:13

The apostle Paul has declared the state of the Corinthians as carnal in contrast to spiritual, which was the reason for their many problems.

The very heart of a life of carnality is love for self above love for others, based on the human potential of sinful man.

1. They had quarrels and party divisions.
2. They were glorying in self, rather than the Lord.
3. They were acting like babes, choosing favorite teacher, thinking they were spiritually mature.
4. They were tolerating incest, lawsuits before the unbelievers and fornication with temple prostitutes in the church, thinking they were spiritual.
5. They were denying their mates their sexual rights and being legalistic in their views of single and married life.
6. They were stumbling the new believers, as they ate meats offered to idols out of love for self.
7. They did not think of denying themselves for others and were in danger of God's judgment.
8. They had become disorderly, in their public worship regarding woman, the Lord's Supper and the gifts acting as individuals, rather than

as members of the body.

*All of this can be attributed to not living, acting and yielding to God's agape love in their lives!

Paul just taught them the gifts are diverse, but magnify unity, as they work in harmony with each other for the edification of the body and the glory of God and should desire the best of the gifts.

* The section is a unit and should be studied as such! 1Cor. 12-14

Now Paul shows them the more excellent way to manifest the gifts through agape love, which is described from three vantage points. 1Cor. 12:31b-13:1-13

I. The preeminence of love. vs. 31b, 1-3

II. The potential of love. vs. 4-7

III. The permanence of love. vs. 8-1

I. The preeminence of love. vs. 31b, 1-3

A. The apostle Paul declared that all believers have the ability to manifest love. vs. 31b.

1. Paul declared that all believers should seek to be vessels of God's love.

* "And yet I show you a more excellent way."

- a. He stated this in contrast to their seeking of gifts through self-seeking motives, in the previous chapter.
 - 1) The chapter break should be in the middle of the previous verse of the last chapter. vs. 31b
 - 2) The phrase more excellent “huper bole,” means a throwing beyond and will be indicated to be “agape love.”
 - 3) The phrase is used to show a superiority, excellence or surpassing quality, in contrast to something else.
 - 4) The contrast often reveals the other thing to be inferior, but it should not be so in this case, for the gifts are God’s, the only distinction of greater excellence is two-fold.
 - a) That all of God’s people can possess and manifest agape love.
 - b) That all the gifts are recognized by God for reward only if they are motivated by love.
- b. He just stated he desired for all to earnestly desire the best gifts. vs. 31a
 - 1) The best gifts are those that edify the body, all except for tongues.
 - 2) The gift of tongues edifies the body only when it is interpreted.
 - 3) Not all desire the best gifts.

- 4) Not all have the same position in the body.
- 5) Not all get the position or gifts desired for God has placed the members and gifts as He pleases.
- 6) Not all have all the gifts.
- 7) Not all desire the more excellent way “hodos,” path or road.
- 2. Paul declared the preeminence of agape love.
 - a. He will mention the more excellent way “agape” nine times in the chapter.
 - 1) The word for love is “agape” that which expresses God’s love for sinful man without any merit or worth throughout the New Testament. Jn. 3:16
 - 2) It is not found in Classical Greek.
 - b. He uses agape love distinct from other Greek words.
 - 1) The Greek word “eros,” refers to the physical sexual love between a man and a woman.
 - 2) The Greek word “phileo” refers to the emotional and mental love of compatibility.
 - 3) The Greek word “storge” refers to family love, between husband, wife, children and extended family.

- c. He knew what the Corinthians were lacking was agape love.
 - 1) Agape love is coined in the New Testament for God's love, in various forms appearing 330 times.
 - 2) Agape love blossoms and gives full potential to the other three kinds of love.
 - 3) It was translated "charity" in the Old Kings James from the Latin Vulgate, having the idea of goodness, kindness and generosity.
 - * Without love all things are cheapened the gifts and cannot reach their full potential!

B. The apostle Paul declared the ability to speak words without love make a person mere noise. vs. 1

- * "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal."
 1. Paul indicated if he spoke with the various languages of men. vs. 1a
 - a. He uses himself as the primary example of exercising the gifts of the Spirit without agape love.
 - 1) Eight times Paul used the personal pronoun "I," in the first three verses, applying the teaching first to himself.

- 2) He will tell them he spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthians. 1Cor. 14: 18
- b. He probably spoke at least three human languages.
 - 1) Hebrew
 - 2) Aramaic
 - 3) Greek
2. Paul indicated a person speaking in the language of angels. vs. 1a
 - a. We have no idea if there be such a thing, the scriptures are silent on the matter, but there must be some form of communication in heaven.
 - b. He was caught up the third heaven and heard inexpressible thing not lawful to be uttered. 2Cor. 12:4
 - c. He is using the two as example to illustrate his point.
 - d. The context of this section is spiritual gifts, so we have to assume Paul is inferring to tongues indirectly!
 3. Paul pointed out that a person exercising these impressive languages without having agape love in his or her heart, as the motive and intent behind the words, becomes a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.
 - a. The word sounding "echeo" means a roaring and used for the sea.
 - b. The word clanging "alalazo" means to ring loudly, from the root "a shout,"

“alala,” as soldiers used to do on entering into battle.

- c. A sounding brass and clanging cymbal in the sense that the words have no affect on the person’s ears.
* Without love I say nothing!

C. The apostle Paul declared that the ability to exercise spiritual gifts without agape love makes a person nothing. vs. 2

- * “And though I have the gift at prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”
- 1. Paul indicated though a person may have the gift of prophecy, preaching or predicting by anointing and inspiration.
- 2. Paul indicated though a person has the ability by God's Spirit to understand all mysteries and all knowledge.
- 3. Paul indicated though a person has all faith, so that he could remove mountains.
* Notice the three superlatives “all!”
- 4. Paul indicated that a person exercising these spiritual gifts, without agape love in his or her heart, as the motive and intent becomes nothing.
 - a. Nothing in the sense of honoring God.
 - b. Nothing in the sense of pleasing God.

- c. Nothing in the sense of being rewarded by God.

* Without love I am nothing!

D. The apostle Paul declared that the ability to do works of great sacrifice, without agape love, profit a person nothing. vs. 3

- 1. Paul pointed out though a person gives all his money to feed the poor. vs. 3a
* “And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*.”
 - a. The word bestow “Psomiso,” means to feed by breaking off and putting a bit or crumb of food into the mouth.
 - b. The word in this form is found only two times in the New Testament, the other is, “If your enemy hunger, feed him.” Rom. 12:20
- 2. Paul pointed out though a person may give their body to be burnt. vs. 3b
* “and though I give my body to be burned.”
 - a. This is believed to be a sacrifice of a martyr.
 - b. There are others who believe that it refers to boasting, rather than literal burning.
 - 1) I believe the literal meaning of our text is the correct one.
 - 2) Linskie states, “The works of love are often imitated by those who

have no love and yet desire to enjoy the praise of love.”

3. Paul pointed out though a person exercises great works of sacrifice without love, as their motive and intent it profits nothing. vs. 3c-d
 - * “but have not love, it profits me nothing.”
 - a. God does not acknowledge it!
 - b. God does not honor it!
 - c. God will not reward it!
 - * *Without love I benefit from nothing!*

Illustration

Oswald Chambers said, “God’s battering always comes in commonplace ways and through commonplace people.”

Application

No person possesses agape love naturally.

1. Each of us has a sin nature, even after being born again. Eph. 2: 1-2, Rom. 6:6. 11
2. Each of us are naturally given to self-love and selfishness, we cater to our flesh. Eph. 5:29
3. Each of us does not know the depth of our hearts own depravity; we think we are better than we are.
4. Each of us will be brought to the end of ourselves without agape love. Jn. 15:5
- * Our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked. Jeremiah 17:9

The preeminence of love is God’s proclamation!

II. The potential of love. vs. 4-7

- A. The apostle Paul declared the positive characteristics of love. vs. 4a
 1. Paul does not use adjectives to describe agape love, but verbs, 15 of them, all in the present tense.
 - a. He shows love is active, never static.
 - b. He shows love is concerned with other, not self.
 - c. He shows agape love is not based on human potential, but God’s.
 - * The name of Jesus can be substituted for agape love and nothing will change, but when I place my name I can’t even start!
 2. Paul stated love suffers long.
 - a. The phrase suffers long “makrothumeo” is made up of two words.
 - 1) “makos” long.
 - 2) “thumos” passion.
 - b. The word means to be able to endure long, to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others, not circumstances.
 - c. The ability to control resentment in the face of provocation.
 - * David is a good example of this when Shimei cursed him and

through stones at him as he fled from Absalom and did not allow Job to kill him.

3. Paul stated love is kind.
 - a. The word kind “chresteuomai” means to be mild, gentle, tenderhearted and gracious.
 - 1) As powerful as God is, He wants to deal with man in kindness for his good.
 - 2) Kindness is one of God’s attributes.
 - b. The nature of God’s kindness is to bless, it is never inactive, but rather always active to benefit man.
 - 1) One of the manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit is kindness “chestotes” Gal. 5:22e
 - 2) The Good Samaritan is a good example of God's love through a man!

B. The apostle Paul declared the negative characteristics of love. vs. 4b-6

1. Paul stated love does not envy. vs. 4b
 - a. The word envy “zeloi” means to be zealous for a person or thing.
 - * The root word “zeo” means to boil, to be heated or to boil with envy.
 - b. The word is in the negative, God’s agape love does not envy people for what they have, are or do.

* The same word in the positive is good and used by Paul in the pursuit of the gifts. 1Cor. 12:31, 14: 1-39

- c. The love of God rejoices and celebrates with and for the person.
 - * John the Baptist is a good example when his disciples told him all were going to Jesus instead of him, he said that was his mission, to point them to Him!
2. Paul stated love does not parade itself. vs. 4c
 - a. The phrase parade itself “perpereuomai,” means to boast and brag ostentatiously.
 - b. The act of extolling oneself excessively and being insolent before others. 1Cor. 1:17.21
 - * Mordecai is a good example!
3. Paul stated love is not puffed up. vs. 4d
 - a. The phrase puffed up “phusioo,” means to blow or puff with the idea of being inflated with pride with the sense of one's importance. 1Cor. 8:1
 - b. The Corinthians were seeped in it. 1Cor. 4:6.18,19.5:2.8:1
 - c. The first things on God's lists of seven things that He hates is a proud look! Prov. 6: 17

- * Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar are a good example of puffed up pride!
4. Paul stated love does not behave rudely. vs. 5a
 - a. The phrase behave rudely “askeemoneo,” means disgraceful, improperly, dishonorable and indecent.
 - b. The agape love of God is courteous and honorable.

* A good example of this is Judas Iscariot in his betrayal of Jesus!
 5. Paul stated love does not seek its own. vs. 5b
 - a. The phrase seek its own “zeteo,” means to seek its own interest.

* Paul used the word telling them to not seek their own interest, but others well being. 1Cor. 10:24
 - b. The nature of God's love is not self-centered, pursuing personal happiness, welfare, safety, as the chief thing of life, but the benefit and good of others.

* Paul seeking the benefit of others is a good example!
 6. Paul stated love is not provoked. vs. 5c
 - a. The word provoked “paroxunomai,” means to stimulate, spur on, urge, to irritate, or to arouse.

- b. The act of exasperating, irritating or angering someone by the wrong done, the injury or insult.
 - c. The same word is used on the positive side, as the Holy Spirit stirred in Paul at Athens. Acts 17:16

* The Pharisees attempted to provoke Jesus as they struck Him!
7. Paul stated love thinks no evil. vs. 5d
 - a. The phrase think no evil “logizomai,” means to reckon or to take no account off something.
 - b. The agape love of God does not keep a ledger of wrong done.

* “And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” 1Peter 4:8
 - c. The confession and forgiveness covers and cancels the debt and is confirmed by genuine repentance.

* The parable of the evil servant is a case in point of keeping a record, while ignoring his own! Matthew 18:23-35
8. Paul stated love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth. vs. 6
 - a. The word iniquity “adkia,” means what is wrong or evil.
 - 1) Love does not rejoice in the sins of others.

- 2) Love does not rejoice in the calamity of others.
- 3) Love does not rejoice in the failures of others.
- 4) Love rejoices in the truth of the gospel.
- b. The action of agape love is for the good of people.
 - 1) In forgiveness for reconciliation.
 - 2) In restoration through obedience.
 - 3) In glorifying God in all things.
 - 4) Maybe he has the lawsuits in mind. 1Cor. 6
* Stephen is a good example, as he prayed for the forgiveness of those who stoned him! Acts 7

C. The apostle Paul declared the power of love. vs.7

- 1. Paul stated love bears all things. vs. 7a
 - a. The word bears “stego,” means to put up with, pass over in silence or to keep confidential. 1Pet. 4: 8
 - 1) Love conceals what is displeasing and endures what is unpleasant.
 - 2) Love is loyal and faithful to the person, as Christ uncomplaining.
 - 3) “Let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and

cover a multitude of sins.” James 5:20

- b. The qualifying adjective all “pas” each, any, every, always, distinguishing it from human love!
 - 1) Agape love is the nature of God working in and through a person.
 - 2) Agape love is beyond explanation.
* Paul in his sufferings for Christ is a good example!
- 2. Paul stated love believes all things. vs. 7b
 - a. The word believes “pistuo,” means to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in something or someone.
 - 1) Agape love is not gullible.
 - 2) Agape love is not naive.
 - 3) Agape love is not suspicious.
 - 4) Agape love accepts what it sees and hears as true and genuine, believing the best.
 - b. The qualifying adjective again is all “pas” each, any, every, always, distinguishing it from human love!
 - 1) Agape love is the nature of God working in and through a person.
 - 2) Agape love is beyond explanation.
* Noah is a good example!
- 3. Paul stated love hopes all things. vs. 7c

- a. The word hope “elpizo,” means to wait expectantly.
 - 1) The agape love of God never gives up expecting the best.
 - 2) Failure is not what it is hoping for as a final end.
 - 3) Optimism and steadfast confidence is its character.
 - b. The qualifying adjective all “pas”each, any, every, always, distinguishing it from human love!
 - 1) Agape love is the nature of God working in and through a person.
 - 2) Agape love is beyond explanation.
 - * Paul with the Corinthians.
4. Paul stated love endures all things. vs. 7d
- a. The word endures “hupomeno,” means to take patiently and remain under, steadfast.
 - 1) To stands one’s ground with the sense of great perseverance, while not loosing heart or courage.
 - 2) The word is used for those who endured a great trial of afflictions.
 - Hebrews 10:32
 - b. The qualifying adjective for the fourth time is “all,” distinguishing it from human love!
 - 1) Agape love is the nature of God working in and through a person.
 - 2) Agape love is beyond explanation.

Illustration

Love is like having the measles; you have to have them before you can give them!

Application

Every person can manifest God’s agape love.

- 1. By asking.
- 2. By yielding.
- 3. By dying to self.
- 4. By trusting God.
 - * “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” Gal. 5:22-23a

The potential of love is God's expectation!

III. The permanence of love. vs. 8-13

- A. The apostle Paul contrasted love to the gifts. vs.8
 - 1. Paul stated that the love of God does not fail. vs. 8a
 - * “Love never fails.”
 - a. The nature of God’s love is just like Him, ever dependable.
 - 1) The word never “oudepote,” means neither at any time.

- 2) The word fails “ekpipto,” means to fall powerless in potential or efficiency.
- 3) Agape love is God’s very nature.
1John 4:8b
* “for God is love.”
- b. God’s love was the motive of God to save lost man, through the provision of His Son for the forgiveness of sins.
* “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.” 1John 4:9
- c. God’s love will makes us more like Jesus.
* “Love has been perfected among in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.”
1John 4:17
- 2. Paul stated that the gifts will fail one day. vs.8b-g
* “But whether *there* are prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away.”
- a. Paul said, but “de,” which indicates a strong contrast. vs. 8b
 - 1) Agape love never, ever fails in its potential, power or efficiency.

- 2) The contrast applies to all the three gifts listed, which implies the same for all the gifts.
- b. Paul stated that prophecies will fail one day. vs. 8b-c
 - 1) Be it in the proclamation of the word of God.
 - 2) Be it in a predictive nature.
 - 3) But prophecies will fail “katargeo,” render idle, inactive or inoperative, future tense, being fulfilled.
- c. Paul stated tongues will cease one day. vs. 8d-e
 - 1) Tongues “glossa,” were imparted to believers in the early church on the day of Pentecost, but God miraculously allowed the people to understand in their own dialects.
 - 2) They are for the church age, they have not ceased as of yet.
 - 3) But tongues will cease “pauo,” means to desist, future tense, when Jesus comes.
- d. Paul stated knowledge will vanish away. vs. 8f-g
 - 1) The word knowledge “gnosis,” means general intelligence and understanding.
 - 2) We continued to increase in study, but one day it will vanish away, as the other two gifts.

- 3) The phrase vanish away “katargeo,” means to render idle, inactive or inoperative, future tense, at the Coming of Jesus.
 - 4) All the gifts are for the benefit of man, not God.
- B.** The apostle Paul declared the present imperfect state and contrasted it to the perfect state to come. vs. 9-10
1. Paul stated that man in the present state is imperfect. vs. 9
 - * “For we know in part and we prophesy in part.
 - a. All human beings know only in part, regardless of how much a person continues to learn and God’s word portions of progressive revelation.
 - b. All believers possessing the gift of prophecy exercise it with the potential of imperfection.
 2. Paul stated the reason, as well as the explanation for why the gifts will cease one day. vs. 10
 - * “But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”
 - a. The times of no more gifts and man’s imperfection will be when Christ returns for His church. vs. 10

- 1) The word perfect “telios,” mean what is complete or brought to an end.
 - 2) Vanish away “katageo,” means to render idle, inactive or inoperative, as in verse eight, future tense.
- b.** Some have attempted to interpret the word “perfect” as the closed and complete canon of Scripture, in order to prove that the gifts ended with the apostolic age.
- 1) The context rejects such dishonest interpretation; verse twelve refers to our presence before Jesus.
 - 2) Prior to the start of the 20th century all commentators understood and interpreted “that which is perfect,” as Jesus Christ and so do all the major Greek scholars.
 - 3) If it is speaking of the ceasing of the gifts, why hasn't knowledge vanished away with prophecy and tongues? All three stand or fall together!
 - 4) Why does Paul tell the Corinthians that the gifts are until Christ returns and to seek the gifts as a continuous habit? 1Cor. 1:7, 12:31
 - 5) Why does Paul close the letter with the command to not forbid to speak with tongues? 1Cor. 14:39

- C.** The apostle Paul declared the present state to be progressive, temporary and imperfect by way of an illustration. vs. 11
- 1.** Paul stated his life as a child governs the conduct of his life. vs. 11a-d
 - * “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child.”
 - a.** Paul said when he was a child; he was speaking as a child. vs. 11a-b
 - b.** Paul said, he was understood was being developed, so he needed to be taught. vs. 11c
 - c.** Paul said he was thinking and reasoning as a child, being immature. vs. 11d
 - 1)** The Corinthians were acting like children, rather than mature adults!
 - 2)** Spiritual child, in need of milk, care and instruction.
 - 2.** Paul stated his life as an adult governed the conduct of his life. vs. 11e-f
 - * “but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”
 - a.** Paul became an adult man at a point in time. vs. 11e
 - 1)** The word but “de” marks the sharp contrast of a child and adult state.
 - 2)** He became “ginomai,” came into existence, indicative perfect active.

- b.** Paul no longer conducted himself as a child, but a man. vs. 11f
 - 1)** He put away childish things.
 - 2)** The phrase put away “katageo,” means to render idle, inactive or inoperative, as in verse eight for all three gifts.
 - 3)** But the tense is not future, but indicative present active, in other words, he no longer acts as a child, but as an adult man.
 - 4)** The Corinthians were acting carnal, as babes in Christ.
1Cor. 3:1
- D.** The apostle Paul declared the application of the illustration to explain the present temporary spiritual state of imperfection. vs. 12
- 1.** Paul stated a parallel to the child and adult illustration by a second illustration, a mirror. vs. 12a-b
 - * “For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face.”
 - a.** The present state of all believers, regarding spiritual matters is like looking into a mirror dimly.
 - 1)** The mirrors of the day were made from polished metals, the Corinthian’s were known for their mirrors.

- 2) The idea is that the reflection is dimly, not with full clarity.
- 3) The word dimly “ainignati” means a riddle, suggesting an “enigma” or an obscure intimation of reflection at the present time.
- b. The contrast can not be missed, “but then face to face.” vs. 12c
 - 1) The present state imperfect, dimly or obscure.
 - 2) The future state perfect, fact to face.
- 2. Paul gives the interpretation to his illustration. vs. 12d-e
 - * “Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.”
 - a. He made the direct application to their present state, saying, “Now I know in part.” vs. 12d
 - 1) Paul says, regardless our age in Christ, our knowledge in the absence of Jesus is in part. vs. 12d
 - 2) Nevertheless, the believers’ spiritual state should always be in a process of growth and development with levels of maturity for each level.
 - 3) Remember, the context is spiritual gifts, exercised by agape love!

- b. He made the direct application to their future state, saying, “But then I shall know just as I am known. vs. 12e
 - 1) The presence of man with Jesus will transform him to know, as he is known! 2Cor. 3:18
 - 2) We will not need the gifts, at all and we will know in a more comprehensive and complete way!
- E. The apostle Paul declared the priority of love among the three prominent virtues. vs. 13.
 - * “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.
 - 1. Paul stated faith is essential for life and fellowship with God. vs. 13a
 - a. Faith speaks of the present, for our daily walk.
 - b. Faith abides “meno,” means to remain.
 - 2. Paul stated hope is essential for trust and expectation from God. vs. 13b
 - a. Hope speaks of the future.
 - b. Hope abides “meno,” remains also.
 - 3. Paul stated love is essential for quality of life with God and man. vs. 13c
 - a. Love holds and ties faith and hope together!
 - b. Love abides “meno”, remains also.

- c. A trinity of life for man in this imperfect state found many other places! Gal. 5:5-6, Col. 1:4-5, Rom. 5:1-5, 1Thess. 1:3, 5-8, Heb. 10:22-24
- 4. Paul stated love to be the superior one of the three virtues. vs. 13e-f
 - a. The first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, mind and soul.
 - b. The second is to love our neighbor as ourselves.
 - c. Jesus said, on these two hang all the Law and the prophets. Matt. 22:37-40
 - d. Agape love is the greater, due to the fact that it is the very nature of God and able to be manifested through us by His Holy Spirit!

Illustration

They say the world is round--and yet
 I often think it's square.
 So many little hurts we get
 from corners, here and there.
 But there's one truth in life I've found
 While journeying East and West:
 The only folks we really wound
 Are those we love the best.
 We flatter those we scarcely know;
 We please the fleeting guest,
 And deal full many a thoughtless blow
 To those we love the best. #3215

Application

1. Agape love is to be the distinguish mark Christ's disciples and the church. John 13:35
 2. Agape love must be preeminent and the priority, putting on the bond of perfection for my life! Col. 3:14
 3. Agape love is the glue for faith and hope that makes us more like Christ! 1John 4:17-18
- * "Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."

The permanence of love is God's perfection!

Conclusion

- Paul described the more excellent way "agape Love" to manifest the gifts from 3 vantage points:
- I. The preeminence of love is God's proclamation!
 - II. The potential of love is God's expectation!
 - III. The permanence of love is God's perfection!