



## I Will

My father-in-law used to quote this funny poem – “Love is a funny thing shaped like a lizard / Goes all around your heart and gobbles at your gizzard.” The interesting thing about this poem is that it carries some element of truth about love. Yet the truth it projects is limited to the emotional, feel-good side of love.

Now, I am certainly not against a warm, fuzzy feeling, and neither is God. After all, He created man as a spirit being with a soul, giving us tremendous capacity to respond to one another and to our environment. However, the problem develops when the soul (which is the mind, will, and emotions) dominates our lives. When the soul frames our decisions – that is, when we have everything “figured out” – we usually miss the will of God. If we believe all is well because we “feel so good,” we might also compromise God’s plan.

Far beyond these intellectual and emotional upheavals lies the love of God. According to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, the love of God, or *agape*, is “the deliberate assent of the will.”<sup>1</sup> This definition exhorts us to act in agreement with God. We willingly obey God’s command of love even if our emotions say,

“But, I don’t feel like it,” and our mind counsels us to be reasonable.

The love of God that reigns and rules our lives is best described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. For many years, I studied this passage of Scripture determined to fully follow its precepts. In the beginning, the description of love was so vast that I decided to concentrate on only one characteristic of love – love is never selfish. I don’t have to tell you that after two weeks I was completely

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defeated. I cried out to the Lord in despair, and I will never forget His response. He said, “You have no choice.”

After this, God’s command of love got easier and easier. The reason for this transition goes back to our definition – “deliberate assent of the will.” Once, in pursuing a project, I jokingly remarked, “Let’s do this deliberately, intentionally and on purpose.” That is what I also did about love. In spite of my inability and previous failure, I deliberately said, “I will.” At the time, I did not wonder if the Lord would help me. In fact, I did not think about it at all. I just understood that I must obey.

In John 13:34, Jesus stated, “A new

commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." This is the law of love that governs God's people. It is the principle of successful business relationships, of loyal friendships, and of happy marriages. There is no other law for God's New Testament people.

Often, in times of difficulty, we would prefer an alternate law – a law that allows anger, harsh words, and revenge. After all, we should be allowed to defend ourselves. Why can't we loudly declare, "This just isn't right? You can't do that to me." We want an eye for an eye, instead of the scriptural command, "Love covers a multitude of sin."<sup>2</sup>

It is amazing how defensive we are and how quickly we fight for our "supposed" rights. Without hesitation, we laud our ideas and contributions, campaigning for a promotion that, of course, we certainly deserve. Then, when our plan is thwarted, we complain bitterly or mourn so loudly that we cannot be overlooked. Whatever happened to the declaration of God's Word, "Love is not jealous or boastful or proud?"<sup>3</sup> Have we forgotten that love is "not touchy, fretful, or resentful?"<sup>4</sup> Has the Word of God changed?

No, the counsel of the Word of God is still the same today. It declares, "Love never gives up, never loses faith (and) is always hopeful."<sup>5</sup> It testifies that God's love "endures through every circumstance."<sup>6</sup> Oh, how precious is this love. It is always patient and kind.

Yet the good news, the beyond-belief news, is that God's love was poured into our spirit the day we were born again. We are not adrift, limited to bulldog tenacity and will power. God is in us, and when we decide to be ruled by His love, He will help us.

One of the most important factors in ordering our steps by God's love is our constant confession of this truth. For years, I said over and over again, "I am patient and kind." I said it so much that someone at my husband's office gave me a plaque with these words on it. This just added to my confession because every time I passed the plaque, I said it again. I wanted the seed of God's Word to bear fruit in my life.

This principle of confession is explained in Joshua 1:8. It tells us to keep the Word of God in our mouth,

meditating in it day and night. The word Hebrew word "meditate" means to "murmur, ponder, speak, study, talk and utter."<sup>7</sup> As we speak God's Word, we are enabled to practice its principles. The King James Translation writes that through meditation, we can "observe and do" all that is written.

So, here is step one. We decide! We will be ruled by God's love. After this, we speak the Scriptures continually, preparing our hearts to obey God's command. The Holy Spirit will help us. He will teach us about love and remind us of love's principles. As we obey, we can expect God's love to be reflected in our behavior.

God's love never fails. What a glorious expectation! I can be ruled by God's love and it will not fail. This seems impossible, but it is true. God has given us His love, and God's love in us will not fail!

<sup>1</sup>from G5368 <sup>2</sup>1Pe 4:8 NLT <sup>3</sup>NLT <sup>4</sup>PHILLIPS <sup>5</sup>NLT <sup>6</sup>NLT <sup>7</sup>H1897

### 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (Message)

Love never gives up.  
Love cares more for others than for self.  
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.  
Love doesn't strut,  
Doesn't have a swelled head,  
Doesn't force itself on others,  
Isn't always "me first,"  
Doesn't fly off the handle,  
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,  
Doesn't revel when others grovel,  
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,  
Puts up with anything,  
Trusts God always,  
Always looks for the best,  
Never looks back,  
But keeps going to the end.  
Love never dies.