



# Becky Combee Ministries, Inc.

Suzanne Williams Photography

## Love Never Fails

We used to sing this little song “Love, love, love, love / Everybody talking about love, not living it / Love, love, love, love / Somebody ought to live love.”<sup>1</sup> I was thinking about this song during the night and chuckling to myself because I know who “the somebody” is that ought to walk in love. It’s you and I in the body of Christ. It’s we who have received the love of God in our heart. We must walk in love. We must pour this love, His love, into the lives around us. We must exemplify Him on the earth. We are imitators of God!

We are commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ to love one another. If we love one another, Jesus said, that all men will know that we are His disciples.<sup>2</sup> Through God’s love in our lives all men will know that we have surrendered to Him. I wonder what they know and understand when we fail to imitate Him and demonstrate His love. Will our loud, angry words call men to Him? Will words of criticism and judgment cause men to bow at His feet? When we push and shove to get ahead, selfishly representing only ourselves, will they see Jesus “high and lifted up” for their needs? If we jealously resent their promotion and prosperity, will they turn their hearts to our Lord

in surrender? The answer is obvious. There are works of the flesh that do not, cannot, and will not represent our Lord. The day we were born again, God poured His love, His very love, into our spirits. When we allow this love to lead us, we make a difference in our world.

I love the definition of God’s love from Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. It declares that God’s love is “the deliberate assent of the will as a matter of principle, duty and propriety.” This love is not based on emotions, feelings, passions, or sentiment. It is a decision. We decide to follow Jesus. We decide to be longsuffering when people provoke us. We choose to be compassionate and forgiving when they challenge us. This loving behavior is God’s will for our lives.

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This great love of God is a “fruit” that is rooted in the recreated spirit of every believer. Our spirits were recreated, or made new, when we received Jesus as Savior and Lord. This new spirit received God’s nature. His nature is love. The Apostle Paul referred to the love of God, which is now in our spirits, as a fruit because it grows and is perfected when we allow it to dominate our words and our actions.<sup>3</sup>

The fruit of love is revealed in our lives with at least nine other manifestations. God’s love in



us is accompanied by joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. When I think about these characteristics of our new spirit, I am reminded of an illustration of love given by another teacher, which always gave clarity to me. He referred to love as an orange and each of these other attributes as a section of the orange. When all these sections are bound together, they represent the fullness of the love of God.

I believe each section of the orange unfolds as love is honored. I can't imagine experiencing "joy, unspeakable and full of glory"<sup>4</sup> without walking in God's love. I can't believe that God's perfect peace, peace beyond comprehension, would envelop our lives if love did not control our decisions. Acts of kindness and goodness would not flow from our spirits unless beckoned by God's love and compassion. Longsuffering is improbable and self-control impossible without the

hand of love guiding our behavior. Certainly everything we need, everything we desire, rests in God's great love. Love is the key!

Every locked door opens when the key is turned. In the same manner, the love of God in our lives is the key that turns the hearts of men toward God. The overwhelming effectiveness of this key is reflected in the words of the Apostle Paul. He declares "Love never fails."<sup>5</sup> This unflinching love cannot be idle or lazy, hesitant or delayed, temporary or limited. It must be genuine. It must be continuous. It must be fervent. Then and only then will it succeed. It will influence men and draw them to our Lord. Then it will never fail!

<sup>1</sup> Unknown Author

<sup>2</sup> John 13:35

<sup>3</sup> Galatians 5:22-23

<sup>4</sup> "Joy Unspeakable" Words & Music by Barney E. Warren, 1900

<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:8

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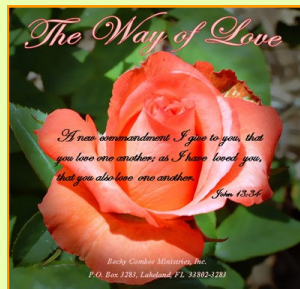
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## 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

*J.B. Phillips New Testament*

<sup>4</sup> This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience - it looks for a way of being constructive. It is not possessive: it is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance.

<sup>5-6</sup> Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage. It is not touchy. It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad with all good men when truth prevails.

<sup>7-8a</sup> Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has fallen.

<http://www.ccel.org/bible/phillips/JBPNT.htm>