**Love Never Ends**

1 Corinthians 13

Valentine’s Day, as celebrated in the US, is all about showing love to your significant other right? Although, I’m not sure that that is true, one thing does seem to be clear about Valentine’s day in the US, it definitely has a lot to do with money.

According to online statistics from two years ago…

1. Spending on Valentine’s Day in the US amounted to roughly $20.7 billion in 2019.

(MarketingCharts)

2. Valentine’s Day statistics show that around 61% of Americans planned to buy Valentine’s Day gifts for their partner in 2018.

(Statista)

3. American consumers spent $886 million on gifts for their pets on Valentine’s Day.

(MarketWatch)

4. A quarter of all Americans will go Valentine’s Day shopping for their loved ones.

(National Retail Federation)

5. Valentine’s stats show that 28% of American adults purchased flowers or plants as gifts for the occasion. 37% of those were men and 19% were women.

(The Society of American Florists)

6. According to Valentine’s Day sales statistics, Americans spent $1.8 billion on candy for this holiday.

(CNBC)

7. Red roses account for 69% of all flowers bought on St. Valentine’s Day.

(The Society of American Florists)

8. Some $5 billion is spent on jewelry for Valentine’s Day in the US.

(National Retail Federation)

9. Men spend up to five times more than women on gifts for Valentine’s Day.

(Bankrate)

10. Valentine’s Day sales statistics reveal that 85% of all Valentine’s cards are bought by women.

(Greeting Card Association)

11. Valentine’s Day retail data shows that more than 135 million Americans went shopping for the occasion in 2019.

(Finder)

12. US citizens are expected to spend $27.4 billion on Valentine’s Day in 2020. That equates to $196.31 per person.

(National Retail Foundation)

13. More than 32% of people celebrating the holiday opt for online shopping for Valentine’s Day.

(National Retail Foundation)

14. Valentine’s Day statistics for 2020 show that some 37% of single people feel pressured to spend more money on gifts than they would like.

(Barrons)

I don’t think there is anything wrong with buying gifts on Valentines Day as a symbol of your love for someone. But I do think that, even with all the money in the world, money can’t buy love. And if you are not demonstrating love, then trying to use money and gifts as a substitute probably does more harm than good.

So what is love? I thought February 14th would be the perfect day to try and get a grip on the definition of love.

First off, in the Bible there are, at least, four Greek words that are used for love, they are:

Agapeo: Unconditional love; the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation

Phileo: Love between friends

Eros: The sense of being in love; romantic love

Storge: Love of family; Parent/child, siblings, cousins, etc. In a very close family, agape is felt as well.

Even though the eros kind of love would probably be the most spicy and exciting to talk about and quite possibly the most fitting for Valentine’s day, I’m going to let you all work out your own definition of that today or tonight. Instead I want to look at the agape kind of love that the apostle Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 13, Paul writes:

13 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

The greatest commandment that God has for us is the commandment to “Love Him and our neighbor” basically with every inch of our being. If this is true then we better know what the definition of love is.

So let’s break it down…with dictionary definitions of what love is.

Love is “patient:”

Love is…**able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.**

Love is “kind:”

Love is…**having or showing a friendly, generous, and considerate nature.**

Love does not “envy:”

Love does not…**desire to have a quality, possession, or other desirable attribute belonging to (someone else).**

Love does not “boast:”

Love does not…**talk with excessive pride and self-satisfaction about one's achievements, possessions, or abilities.**

Love is not “arrogant:”

Love is not…**having or revealing an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities.**

Love is not “rude:”

Love is not…**offensively impolite or ill-mannered or have a startling abruptness.**

Love does not “insist on its own way:”

Love does not…**demand something forcefully, not accepting refusal.**

Love is not “irritable:”

Love is not…**having or showing a tendency to be easily annoyed or made angry.**

Love is not “resentful:”

Love is not resentful…**feeling or expressing bitterness or indignation at having been treated unfairly.**

Love does not “rejoice at wrong-doing:”

Love does not…**rejoice at illegal or dishonest behavior.**

Love rejoices with the “truth:”

Love rejoices with…**that which is true or in accordance with fact or reality.**

Love bears all things:

Love…**supports and carries the weight of all things.**

Love believes all things:

Love…**accept (something) as true; feel sure of the truth of.** In other words it gives the benefit of the doubt until proven otherwise.

Love hopes all things:

Love…**has an expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.**

Love endures all things:

Love…**suffers (something painful or difficult) patiently.**

After digging in to this word “love,” I understand why the Bible says:

“19 We love because he first loved us.”

1 John 4:19

I don’t know about you but I realize that I need a little heart surgery done in my life.

Are you with me?

Do you want to be a lover and not a fighter?

The only way for us to have our heart changed is to learn more and more how much God loves us.

Jesus is…**able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.**

Jesus…**has or shows a friendly, generous, and considerate nature.**

Jesus does not…**desire to have a quality, possession, or other desirable attribute belonging to (someone else).**

Jesus does not…**talk with excessive pride and self-satisfaction about one's achievements, possessions, or abilities.**

Jesus does not…**have or reveal an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities.**

Jesus is not…**offensively impolite or ill-mannered or have a startling abruptness.**

Jesus does not…**demand something forcefully, not accepting refusal.**

Jesus does not…**have or show a tendency to be easily annoyed or made angry.**

Jesus does not show…**feeling or expressing bitterness or indignation at having been treated unfairly.**

Jesus does not…**rejoice at illegal or dishonest behavior.**

Jesus rejoices with…**that which is true or in accordance with fact or reality.**

God…**supports and carries the weight of all things.**

God…**accept (something) as true; feel sure of the truth of.** In other words it gives the benefit of the doubt until proven otherwise.

God…**has an expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen.**

God…**suffers (something painful or difficult) patiently.**

This kind of love couldn’t be bought even if you had all of the $20.7 billion that was spent, on Valentine’s day in 2019.

This is what God does for us and we are to be evidence of His love to the rest of the world. This is the main battle that He wants us to fight. We are to be salt and light in the world, by loving others the way He loves us.

Now I know that this isn’t going to be perfect, but at the very least, we need to keep our eyes on the goal.

I think most of the time we define our love for others by comparing it to the way that others have loved us. And that isn’t always a bad thing, it just isn’t the most pure example of love. Before you can hit a target, we have to know what it is and what it isn’t.

If you don’t see yourself as very loving, there really is only one thing you can do about it.

Get to know how God has loved you. And let His love for you move you to love others.