

Page I volume 83

VOLUME 83 OCTOBER 2013
IMITATORS OF LOVE (part two)

Greetings in the name of the Beloved Lamb of God—Christ Jesus, the Righteous!

As always, our prayer is that this letter finds you blessed in every area of your life and finds you walking in all of His promises which are always yes and amen!

Well, by the time you receive this edition of the Living Logos newsletter, I will likely either be in transit to India or will have already arrived there...

Again, my itinerary is to fly out of Atlanta on Friday, October 4th and arrive in Bangalore on Sunday, October 6th. I will fly domestically from Bangalore to Madurai on Thursday, October 10th, and will then fly from Bangalore to Chennai on Monday, October 14th. My flight out of India will be in the early morning of Saturday, October 19th... I remind you of this to ask you to please keep this itinerary on your calendar and pray for the Lord's will to be done in every place I set my foot. May my mouth be used to speak the oracles of God and may my hands be used to deliver the Lord's power and manifold wisdom into the lives of whosoever I lay them on. The Lord is faithful who also will do it! Amen!

I am so excited about this trip in that I know how fruitful it will inevitably be! I plan on giving you a detailed description of what transpired in next month's Living Logos. So be on the lookout for it in the beginning of November.

Again, thank you to everyone who supported me on this trip. I really appreciate everyone's faithful and gracious gifts towards it. May an abundant harvest be returned to each of you for your financial support! Like I said last month, you are indeed going with me so this harvest will be yours as well! To God be all the glory forevermore!

As for this month's teaching, I want to begin this month sharing with you a profound revelation that the Lord gave to our Sunday Afternoon Fellowship within the past few months.

We began around April during these Sunday gatherings, talking about the wonderful love that God has for us (refer back to Living Logos volume 79 "Faith in His Love"). Well, the Lord then led us to begin studying the love of God towards us from a different slant than we are used to hearing it. We began studying His love for us by looking at some scriptures where God tells us how to love other people.

Someone might ask, "How is studying verses that teach us how to love other people going to teach us about God's love for us?" The answer is simple, but let me answer that question by asking you a question: **Would God give us a standard for loving others that He Himself is not already walking in?** In other words, would God tell us to do something that He is not already doing? The answer to those two questions are—Of course, He wouldn't! Our Heavenly Father commands us to treat our brothers and sisters a certain way because He wants us to imitate Him! He wants us to forgive, to do good, and to have compassion on our fellow man because this is how God acts towards us. So, in essence, you could say that everything God admonishes or commands us to do in His Word can be summarized in one statement—*Be like Me*.

MIMICKING THE FATHER

This is verified in Ephesians 5:1 when the Apostle Paul gives us what I believe to be the most concise statement of truth concerning our role and responsibility on the earth... He said, "Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children."

You know, there are not too many things that can bless a parent more than when their child attempts to mimic them. At a young age, our kids will repeat what we say. Many times they will want to do what we do vocationally when they grow up. They simply just get interested in what we are interested in because of their love and admiration for us. Then when they grow up, what a joy it is to any parent when their child follows their footsteps by maybe choosing the school that their parents went to or following the same career path that they did. Now, of course, this is not always the path that our children are to take, but when it comes to our Heavenly Father, following exactly in His footsteps is always a good idea. My point is that it pleases any parent to either seeing their young child doing their best to be like their daddy or seeing their grown up children making the mature decision to be about their father's business.

So how about the Lord? Do you reckon Father God is pleased when His children begin to imitate Him? I guarantee you that this ministers to His heart as it does to any of us who are parents here.

But, you see, why this statement is what I believe to be all of the commandments rolled up into one is because ultimately everything God has told us do in the Word of God is a reflection of what He is already doing. In other words, in all of His commandments and admonitions, he is saying, "Sons and daughters, just be like me."

For example, when we walk in love in general—which is the royal law—we are simply mimicking our Heavenly Father who is love. Paul actually explains this in the next verse (Ephesians 5:2) when he says, "And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us..." What the Apostle was saying was that walking in love is essentially imitating the Lord because He practices the same towards us.

As a matter of fact if you back up to chapter 4 and look the admonitions that Paul gave the church of Ephesus, you will find

how the Apostle Paul was leading up to this truth in chapter 5 and verse 1.

LOVE CANNOT LIE

He begins by telling us in verse 25 to put away lying and to speak truth with our neighbor. Why do you reckon telling the truth and not lying is so important to the Lord? Why do you suppose it was important enough for the Holy Spirit to inspire Paul to write this? You got it... It is because He does not (more accurately, cannot) lie! It is not part of His nature! It is a complete violation to the truth that He is!

In fact, we are told earlier in Ephesians chapter 4 to speak the truth *in love* (verse 25), signifying that speaking the truth is what love does. **Now you can speak the truth and not do it in love, but you cannot walk in love and not speak the truth.** If you lie, you are not walking in love towards the one you are lying to because the majority of the time someone lies they are thinking only of covering up something and protecting themselves.

And know this—this is the reason that God cannot lie... It is because He *is* love! He is faithful to what He has said. So if the Lord makes you a promise, He will surely bring it to pass because He loves you that much!

LOVE HAS ANGER

Then in verses 26&27 we are told how love knows how to channel its anger... When someone does something that angers us, we have to see the root cause of that hurtful action which is the devil. We must understand that flesh and blood is not who we are wrestling against but that it is the devil who is behind the scenes inspiring the offense. Then we can truly be angry and sin not. We sin when we focus our anger on our brothers and sisters—allowing ourselves to become bitter, resentful, offended, and unforgiving towards them. However, it is okay to be angry when that anger is channeled towards the devil.

And this is what the Lord does as well... He knows who the real enemy is and His anger is aimed at him. **His anger and hatred is towards the sin and not towards the sinner.** And why does He hate sin and the kingdom of darkness so much? It is because He loves us so much, and sin and Satan are seeking to steal, kill, and destroy us. Therefore, He does not let the sun go down on His wrath against all ungodliness. Why? It is because He loves the sinner and hates the sin—all because the sin hurts the ones His love is poured out on, namely you and I.

Even in the Old Testament, the Lord was expressing His nature of love towards the children of Israel...

You see, this is one of the reasons that the Lord gave them the Law. We know from Paul's epistle to the Romans that one of the main purposes of the Law was to reveal sin and cause His people to cry out for a Savior. But another reason that the Lord gave them commandments was for the same reason any good and loving parent gives their kids commandments. Why? It is because they love them and they know the effects of those actions on their children! For instance, they tell them to look both ways before they cross the street because they are ultimately protecting them. Now the world might say that disciplining our children is wrong and detrimental to them but, hey, who do you think is really loving their children the most—God or the world? I guarantee you God loves His children much more! So when He says, "spare the rod and spoil the child" we can understand, knowing that He is the epidemic of love, that this is what love does... It will make every attempt to eradicate the sin before the sin yields the death.

But my point is that love is not passive and all-embracing. It does not just overlook the thing that is killing the one it loves. Love will seek to expose and remove that thing that is working death in the object of its love.

Friends, we have embraced what we call a "seeker-sensitive" type of love that is absolutely ungodly. When we ignore the absolutes and sweep the truth under the table all because we don't want to offend, we are no longer walking in the pure love of God. But it is much better to speak the truth in love with the risk of offending than to ignore the darkness and watch the person continue to not walk in all of their God-given potential or even experience death in an area of their life.

LOVE DOES NOT STEAL; LOVE GIVES

Then in verse 28 we see yet another reflection of God in the form of a commandment towards us... "Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give to him who has need." Actually, there are two aspects of God's loving nature contained in this verse.

Number one, God tells us not to steal... And why does He command us not to steal? It is because He does not steal! But why do so many in the church today attribute the characteristics of a thief to God. For example, the majority of the church today blames God for taking their health to teach them something, stripping them of their finances to humble them, or "taking" their loved one because He needed another angel in heaven. But is this true? No, because if God were taking things from us then He has become the thief and contradicting His standard for us. So we should clearly see why the Lord is against stealing? It is because the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy and He is ultimately against us imitating the devil!

So how do we imitate God and not the devil? The answer is by doing what the second half of this verse says—being a giver! That is who God is! So if you want to imitate God, you need to learn to be a giver! This is revealed in John 10:10 when after

Jesus described the thief, He then described God's nature by saying He had come to give life and life more abundantly.

Then Paul tells us in this verse what the whole purpose of our secular job is... It is that we may have something to give to him who has need! Wow! That means that our whole attitude for working should be so that we can have enough to bless others with. And why? It is because this is who Love is! God is a giver and that is what He lives to do! Selfishness only works for itself so that it can gather more into its own barns; love works because it wants to have more to give! Therefore, God wants us to "live to give" like He focuses on supplying all of our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus! Thanks be to God!

THE WORDS OF LOVE

Then verse 29 tells how we need to watch what we let come out of our mouths by focusing on how our words are affecting those who hear them. Paul says that our words are not to tear down but to build up. Our words are to impart grace to the hearers, not condemnation.

Again, is this not what God's Word does for us? It builds us up, it edifies us, it feeds our spirits, and it imparts grace to us for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. In this verse, God is saying that He wants our words to have the same effect on others as His Word does on us. Now that, my friends, is an awesome and wonderful responsibility!

You see, there are different ways in which we can hear God's Word. Some only hear it through the filter of condemnation, but this is not how God spoke it. His Word was intended to minister to us the same way as Paul said here our words are to minister to others...

1. None of His words are meant to "corrupt." This means that nothing He says to us will ever yield death. They always produce life. His words will always lead to our fruit being fresh and flourishing.
2. All of His words are good and are for necessary edification. This means all that He says is good, beneficial, and edifying. It will always build up and benefit the hearer and will never leave the person thinking—"What was the point of Him telling me that?"
3. His words always impart grace to the hearers... He said over in Colossians that our words should always be with grace. This is how God talks. Do you Greetings in the name of our Great God and Savior- Jesus, the Holy Lamb of God!

We pray that this 83rd edition of the Living Logos finds you experiencing all the riches of His glory!

All I can say is- WOW! What an incredible trip I had to India! It was phenomenal! Everything that happened and to see the incredible faithfulness and grace of our Lord was absolutely amazing! There were never any meds necessary. There was never a delay or a bump in the road (Of course, I am speaking figuratively because India definitely has delays in traffic and bumps in their roads☺). But God was simply faithful the whole way through! So thank you all for your prayers! They were felt; I can assure you!

Before we delve into the things that happened on my trip, allow me to tell you about some things that happened before and after the trip itself...

First of all, after I returned on Saturday evening, October 19th, we had our regularly scheduled Sunday Afternoon fellowship the next day. Well, we have prerecorded song playlists that we have compiled and worship to on our Sunday gatherings, and I had one originally picked out, but just felt impressed to change it for this week's service. So, unbeknownst to me, I selected a sequence of songs that at the end of the last song track, the singer said, "Lord, we thank you for what has happened in the past two weeks." Amen! I'm sure that P&W leader never imagined that what he said five years ago would be prophetic over the two week trip I just returned from and the service we would be holding on that specific Sunday in 2013! Hallelujah! That's gotta be God!

Now let me share with you a prophetic Word that I received the week leading up to my trip... While attending a pastor's luncheon here in Macon, I was prayed for by the ministers in attendance and then a minister of the gospel stood up and felt compelled to give me a verse of Scripture. It was Acts 9:31 which reads- "Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied."

At that moment, and now in hindsight, there were 3 major points in this verse that confirmed to me the validity of that prophetic word... Number one, notice that there were 3 geographic regions that were mentioned in this passage of Scripture- Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. Why is this significant? It is because I also was traveling to 3 geographic regions during my trip to South India- Bangalore, Madurai, and Chennai. Number two, one the points of emphasis in this verse is that they were walking in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. And the ministry of the Holy Spirit became a huge point of emphasis during my trip in that I was led to teach on Him to the pastors in Bangalore (close to 5 hours), the students in a bible school in Madurai (close to 2 hours), and last but definitely not least, the students in Chennai (close to 6 hours). And thirdly, notice that at the end of the verse it says, "they were multiplied." You see, multiplication denotes discipleship- which was the purpose and intent of this entire trip. The Lord gave me a statement recently regarding that of mathematics and the Great Commission... He said, "Evangelism uses addition; discipleship uses multiplication." Friends, while evangelism is certainly important in that we are first and foremost to introduce the sinner to the Savior, Jesus did not say to go into all the world and make "converts." He said to go into all the world and make "disciples." This is the great commandment! And the awesome truth regarding discipleship is it actually has a multiplying effect on the church. And you do not have to be a math major to

understand that you can get to much larger numbers quicker when you use multiplication rather than addition. Amen.

So I say all of that to say that the Lord has been in it all- from before I left to after I have returned! Praise His Holy Name!

So as I thought about how I could describe the many wonderful things that happened on my trip, I realized that one newsletter (with the accompanying teaching) would not be sufficient to give a detailed report. So what I want to do is spend the next few months going into detail on what transpired in each individual location. But this month, let me begin by giving you a brief overview of what transpired. However, before I do this, I would like to express my gratitude to a few people...

First of all, I want to thank my wife and son who willingly sacrificed me for these 13 days to do the work of the ministry. Shannon, I especially appreciate all of the sacrifices you made to basically be a "single mom" during my 13 days away from home. Great will be your reward as well, for when we are willing and obedient, we *will* eat the good of the land!

Secondly, to all of you who supported me on this trip, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for sending me! I want you to know that your support went to some especially good ground because God did so many great and mighty things and these works are going to continue to have a ripple effect even now that I am gone. So be assured that great will be your reward and mighty will be your harvest as a result of your graciousness! Of this my soul knows very well!

And, last but definitely not least, I want to thank my dear friend- Trinity Elisha. Trinity sacrificed his leave time from his job to travel and be with me from beginning to end- all the way from Bangalore to when I was dropped off at the airport in Chennai (at 3:00 am, mind you). He did all of this at his own cost (which God supernaturally provided for him, by the way). Trinity, words cannot express how thankful I am for you and for your sacrifice to come by my side and be a "Timothy" to me. Thank you for taking all the pictures you did, for always desiring to carry my things, and for never complaining and serving the Lord our God with joy and diligence. What a blessing you are to me! You are my friend!

Finally, as for my trip itself, I can definitely say that the Lord took me to new heights during this trip! I have never been used in so many ways before in my life... The teaching/preaching anointing that I experienced there was at a much different level than anything I have experienced thus far. Also, I was used more in the gifts of the Spirit than at any other point in my walk with God in that on several different occasions the gifts of prophecy, word of knowledge, and word of wisdom flowed so accurately to everyone I ministered to. I saw many people immediately healed, one woman was delivered from demonic possession, and like I said, I experienced the anointing of God in my teaching to where time and time again I had to ask the people to write things down for me because fresh manna was being poured out from heaven right on the spot.

I ended up speaking corporately for around 33 hours in my 13 days! (And that does not include all the other one on one ministry and teaching that occurred). And the amazing thing about this is that I never got a raspy voice or a scratchy throat. I never even got tired or fatigued. It was awesome and I give all the glory to God for everything *He* did!

Like I said, in the coming months I will go into more detail of specifically what happened but I definitely do not want to sacrifice the teaching part of these Living Logos newsletters. So as for this month's teaching, I want us to continue with the subject that we began last month of being Imitators of Love...

Just to recap, I made the point last month that the Lord would not give us a standard that He is not already living by Himself. Therefore, if He is walking in the reality of the commandments that He gives us, then we can look at certain Scriptures that teach us how we ought to walk and see a perfect reflection of the Lord Himself.

We began in Ephesians 5:1- which I consider to be the best summarization we have in the Scriptures of all of the other commandments and admonitions that He gave us- "Be therefore imitators of God as dear children." We saw how simply imitating Him is the fulfillment of every other way that He taught us to conduct ourselves, and then we proceeded to back up to last few verses in Ephesians chapter 4 and look at how those verses that teach us not to lie, not to steal, etc. can actually teach us about the nature of our Heavenly Father. If you did not get a chance to read last month's Living Logos, you can go to our website @ www.treydickerson.com and get it.

Now this month, I would like us to continue this study by looking at another very familiar passage of Scripture that has been traditionally used to illustrate love's behavior regarding us towards one another- the great love chapter, 1 Corinthians chapter 13.

These verses have been traditionally used at many marriage ceremonies to instill in the marrying couple how they are to love the one they are marrying. And certainly 1 Corinthians chapter 13:4-8 was written to teach us how to love one another. But, again, I want us to turn this around and teach these verses from the same perspective that we have been looking from in order to teach us the characteristics of God Himself.

Do the Scriptures not say that God is love (see 1 John 4:8)? This means that in all of these characteristics where we are told love is this and love is that, we could actually substitute "God" for the word love. So I encourage you that as we go through these verses, read them as so...

"God suffers long and is kind, He does not envy, God does not parade Himself, He is not puffed up; God does not behave rudely, He does not seek His own, He is not provoked, He thinks no evil; God does not rejoice in iniquity, but He rejoices in the truth; God bears all things, God believes all things, God hopes all things, God endures all things; God never fails..."

You see, these verses give us a clear description of the Lord's character and reveal to us who He truly is (i.e. His nature). In other words, if you want to know the Lord's characteristics, then all you need to do is look at this love chapter. So let's go through these characteristics one by one and learn about the loving and caring nature of our Heavenly Father...

GOD'S CHARACTERISTICS

- **“(God) suffers long”**- The words “suffers long” come from the Greek word “makrothumia.” The word “makro” means “long” and the word “thumos” means anger or wrath. Therefore, this word describes someone who is “long” to getting angry (i.e. someone who takes a long time before they explode). It is for this reason why I think the best description of this word is a stick of dynamite that has an extremely long wick. Why? Because the person who possesses “makrothumia” can get “burned” a lot before they will “go off” (i.e. explode) on someone. The Word of God teaches us that God is slow to anger and abounding in mercy. Thank God that He does not have a short fuse! He puts up with a lot in us because this is what love does. It is patient and not quick to get angry. So the Lord tells us to suffer long with others because He certainly is longsuffering towards us.
- **“and (God) is kind”**- Notice that God is not only longsuffering with us but He is also kind in the midst of it! In other words, He will still pour out His kindness in our lives while He is waiting for us to repent of our mistakes. What an awesome God we serve! You see, even the “select elect” out there who actually believe God is patient and longsuffering have a hard time believing that God remains kind in the midst of our continual stumbling. They might think that He is longsuffering, but they see Him as tapping His foot while He is waiting on us to change. But no! God changes not! Therefore, He is still doing good and being kind even while He is waiting on us to live up to our potential. This is one of the reasons why Paul said that it is going to take all of eternity to reveal to us all the riches of God's kindness towards us (Ephesians 2:7).
- **“(God) does not envy”**- Now this one is a little easier for us to swallow because certainly God has no reason to be envious of anything we have, for all that we have was given to us by Him. But we need to consider another description of this word “envy.” It also describes a desire to deprive someone of something they have. In other words, envy not only wants to possess something someone else possesses; envy also wants to deprive the one they are taking from. But God is not like that! He desires to add to us, not take away from us. We sing songs in the church today like “He gives and He takes away” but that is not completely true. Although Job did in fact say that, he did not say that with the understanding that Satan was the one who came to steal, kill, and destroy from him. Again, the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy from our lives, but love has come to add to our lives, and to add more abundantly (see John 10:10)!
- **“(God) does not parade (Himself), (He) is not puffed up”**- You know, if I were God and the majority of my creation were not believing in me and were disobeying me, I would probably reveal the greatness of my power and the brightness of my majesty to them so they would believe and obey, but that is not what love does... God refuses to parade Himself and make believers out of all mankind. You see, God is not going to make people believe in Him. He is a gentleman. He forces Himself on no one- which is what love does. Love gives someone a free will. It does not make others do anything. It, out of love towards its object, gives it the choice to serve. And if this were His motive- to draw attention to Himself- He would be self-seeking and, therefore, not walking in love. What humility Love has! And that is the truth: Love is humble! Love does not seek attention because it does not think more highly of itself than it ought to think.
- **“(God) does not behave rudely”**- Some examples of “behaving rudely” would be to cut in line, to interrupt, or to get pushy. God is not like this! As we just made the point of, He is the Ultimate Gentleman! Just think about it... The Holy Spirit guides us through a little witness in our hearts and if we do not listen, He is not going to get pushy. He will allow us to make our own decision because He believes in our free-will. For instance, how many times have you ever had God interrupt you? Very few times if any, I'm sure. That is because He is not rude. Love will always prefer someone else and will not behave rudely. So thank God that we serve a God of love Who gives us a free will! He lets us choose Him, and does not make us choose Him. While He stands at the door and knocks, He waits for us to invite Him in and does not beat down the door. But, again, this is what love does- It does not behave rudely (i.e get pushy, interrupt, etc)!
- **“does not seek (His) own”**- This statement is along the same lines as what we have just been saying- He does not parade Himself and is not pushy because He does not seek His own. He is always seeking our welfare and not His own. Even when He gave us commandments He was seeking what would benefit us. So many read the Ten Commandments from a doom and gloom mentality, like God is just trying to control us. But when God tells us what to do He is not doing it for His own benefit, but for our benefit! Why? Because this is what love does! It does not seek its own. So even when He tells us what to do and what not to do, He is ultimately seeking what is best for us. Just like any good parent tells their kid what to do and not to do because they love them, God tells us, His children, what to do because He is seeking what is in our best interest. He seeks our own, not His own.
- **“(God) is not provoked”**- The great thing about God is that He is not easily provoked. However, many believe otherwise. They think that they are bothering God or that they can anger Him by asking for certain things or by asking for too many things at once. But again, this is according to our own experiences and we are basing this on how we would act. But God is not like us (thank God)! He is not easily irritated or angered. He is far more patient and kind than we could possibly imagine! No, He doesn't carry a chip on His shoulder or get irritated easily. We do not have to worry about God waking up on the wrong side of the bed, so to speak. He is not touchy, grumpy, or even in a bad mood. He

loves to hear from you! He is honored when we turn to Him with our every need!

- **“(God) thinks no evil”**- Wow! This statement becomes so powerful when we consider it from the perspective that we are looking at in these verses- God thinks no evil! You see, in Psalm 139 we are told that His thoughts towards us cannot be numbered, but while many Christians might embrace that truth, what they doubt is that those thoughts are good thoughts. They believe that He might be considering them but that it is from a critical viewpoint. But what this verse is saying is that love does not think evil. And didn't Jeremiah say, “For I know the thoughts I have towards you, thoughts of good and not of evil, of peace, to give you a hope”? He is not thinking evil about you! He is focusing on the good in you! And why? Because He loves you so much! You see, this fact that we are constantly on His mind should reemphasize to us that He greatly loves us! Why? Because when we fall in love, one characteristic of that love is our minds become filled with that other person. We think about them all of time when we are at the height of that love. And why are we thinking so much of them? It is because they are in our heart!
- **“(God) bears all things”**- This word “bears” means “to cover or protect.” You see, one very important characteristic of love is that it seeks to cover or protect the object of its love! In other words, being love, the Lord covers our mistakes! God is not going around telling others what we did wrong with the intent of making a spectacle of our sins. No, He covers our sins, seeking to protect us from the reviling accusations of others! The book of Proverbs tells us that “love covers a multitude of sins.” So you could say it this way- “God covers a multitude of sins!” This is why He will never reveal to you the sins and shortcomings of other people unless it is to help them escape those vices. But how many believers believe God has given them the “gift of discernment” when all that they really have is a knack for criticism and fault finding? Sure, God will reveal an issue in someone else but it is always done in love in order for you to help them through prayers or a word of encouragement to escape the corruption that can follow the issue. No, the Lord bore all of our sins! We should understand that He will certainly step in front of an accusation for us because He stepped in front of all of our sins for us! That is the gospel truth!
- **“(God) believes all things, (God) hopes all things”**- Love is always willing to believe the best about someone else. So we can understand that God is always putting good intentions with our actions. He gives us the benefit of the doubt. It is certainly not that He is ignorant of what is in our hearts, but He chooses to believe in us! This is what love does- He believes the best in us! So many people think that God focuses on our failures and is down on us, but that is not true. The exact opposite is true... He believes in us! He focuses on what He created us to be and what we are capable of instead of where we are currently falling short. He is a faith God and this means that He trusts us! This is such an awesome expression of God's love- that He trusts us! But not only does God believe in us, He also has an expectation of us being successful (i.e. hopes). Again, Jeremiah 29:11 says that God knows the thoughts that He thinks towards us- thoughts to give us a future and a hope. God is optimistic because love is optimistic! In other words, God will not quit expecting us to do the right things and make the right decisions. He is not like man who sometimes considers other people to be too far gone. No, God will not give up on people! So the moment the devil tries to lie to you- telling you that God is through with you- just meditate on this awesome truth... God is optimistic, not pessimistic.
- **“(God) endures all things”**- The Greek word used to translate “endures” literally describes “staying under power” or the ability to bear up under the pressure to quit on someone or something. You see, love has a supernatural ability to bear with people. It is not easily aggravated or quick to forsake someone who is irritating them. And this is how God is towards us! He can endure a lot more of our mistakes than we think He can. He does not easily fly off the handle and quit on us. As 2 Timothy 2:13 says, He is faithful even when we are faithless. So see your God this way- see Him as He is in truth, able and willing to endure all of your mistakes and failures and still love you extravagantly!

Friends, our God is absolutely everything He admonishes us to be- not only in this love chapter, but also in all of His Holy Word. Yes, His standard for us is Himself! So if you want to read the Bible for the first time all over again, just read it from this viewpoint- seeing every way that He desires for us to treat one another as the way He already is treating us. This would bring new life to your Bible study and would also help you to see what a good and loving God that we serve! Amen!?!

Selah!

Victoriously,

