

How to Stay in Love

I. LOVE IS THE MAIN THING

Love is the New Commandment, it is the Great Commandment. Jesus calls it “My Commandment.”

Phil 1.9 NLT I pray that **your love will overflow more and more**, and that you will **keep on growing** in knowledge and understanding. **10** For I want you to understand what really matters, so that **you may live pure and blameless lives** until the day of Christ’s return. **11** **May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character** produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

A. Love is the Holy of Holies

1 John 4:16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Love is the state of intense feelings of deep affection. God’s LOVE is supernatural, uncreated, infinite, endless. It is the place or dimension of miracles, of unlimited resources, redemption and creativity.

B. How do we “live” in love?

1 John 4.7 ESV Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** **In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.** **10** **In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.** **11** **Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**

APPLICATION: Love **gives life** to its enemies. Love **transforms** enemies into friends. Love **makes peace**. Love **forgives**. Love **takes the initiative**.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

APPLICATION: Do you see the Trinity. Father, Son, Holy Spirit all live as Giver and Gift. The Holy Trinity is **perfect society, perfect family**. By faith, we receive the invitation to live in COMMUNION with this unending, unconditional LOVE. With God and each other!

16 **So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.** 17 By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.

NLT 16 ... God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. 17 And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

18 Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. **If we are afraid**, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love.

II. FIRST LOVE – Keep It Alive

Rev 2.4 NIV Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.

First love, the crazy, intoxicating, transforming love we feel in the beginning.

Fools can fall in love, but only those who keep their hearts can stay in love.

June 1965, I met Anne. We were 14. 50 years. How do you stay in love?

A. Rehearse it.

In the 90's I started traveling more. How did I guard my heart? In some dark hotel in Europe or Africa, I would rehearse the wonder of first meeting. The special times. Our wedding. When she sacrificed so much for me and the children.

I tried not to leave with unresolved conflict. I had to dwell on the good things and let go of the bad.

It's the same in our relationship with God.

Ps 92:1 NKJ *It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
2 To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning,
And Your faithfulness every night,*

Thanksgiving brings us back to the King and the Kingdom.

B. Refresh it

Daily focus of the heart

Simple Routines:

Matt 6.9 ESV Pray then like this:

“Our Father in Heaven, *IDENTITY*
hallowed be your name. *FAMILY NATURE*
10 Your kingdom come, *REALM – R,P,&J in HS*
your will be done, *CULTURE*
on earth as it is in Heaven. *TRANSFORMATION*
11 Give us this day our daily bread, **TOMORROW (no*
anxiety, above the substance <realm>)
12 and forgive us our debts,

13 as we also have forgiven our debtors. *ROYALTY*
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. *SUBSTANDARD*

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

III. COMMUNION IN DIVINE NATURE

Explanation of open communion

Pray for and distribute the bread and cup:

BREAD:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.

CUP:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.

By the mystery of this bread and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

DISTRIBUTION:

Examine ourselves,

1 Cor 11.27 NIV Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty

of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. **28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.** **29** For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. **30** That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. **31** But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.

With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God.

Bread:

1 Cor 11.23 NKJ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; **24** and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; **this is My body** which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Cup:

1 Cor 11.25 NKJV In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "**This cup is the new covenant in My blood.** This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

COMMUNION & PARTICIPATION IN THE DIVINE

2 Pet 1.3 ESV His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, **4** by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become **partakers of the di-**

vine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

*We have been **divinized** by Jesus Christ, invited into the Trinity family! Love is the felt realization of the numinous presence of God not only all around us but also within us.*

God is there all the time, waiting.

But, like God's forgiveness, God's will to share the divine aliveness with us can't activate until we invite it.

It is the heart-stopping understanding that despite our shortcomings, despite our seeming insignificance to most of those around us, the God who dwells in unapproachable light dwells within us.

GREAT LOVE!

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