

Love Never Fails

I Corinthians 13:8

The phrase “love never fails” forms the theme of this entire series. Other translations put it “Love will last forever” (NLT) or “Love never comes to an end” (GWT) or “Love has no end” (BBE). These words are in the form of a promise, and there are various shades of meaning.

I. Agape love never ends by expiration.

Paul has just stated that “love endures all things” and here it “never fails.” The word used by Paul (*ekpipto*) is often considered the antonym or opposite of “endures” (*hupmeno*). The love of God never quits, never ends, and never fails, a repetition given for emphasis. God told us “*Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love*” (Jer. 31:3). When your heart overflows with His love, you will love others in the same manner – you won’t quit on them.

II. Agape love never collapses in confrontation.

There are some who wrongly believe that anytime there is confrontation, love is absent. The opposite is true. “*For whom the Lord loves He chastens (disciplines)*” **Hebrews 12:6**. Love is too strong to leave people alone, and it is too abiding to abandon when in trouble. Paul gives instructions for discipleship in Galatians 6 to those who are mature in their love.

III. Agape love never gives without gratification.

The prophet said of Christ: *He shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied* (Is. 53:11). “*It is one of the beautiful compensations of life, that no person can sincerely love another without ultimately helping himself*” Ralph Emerson. Love redounds for one’s own good. “*You will find as you look back on your life that the moments that stand out above all else are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love*” **Henry Drummond**.

IV. Agape love never tarries apart from transformation.

When people experience God’s kind of love there comes a change from the inside/out. When we know the love of Christ, “*we are filled with all the fullness of God*” (Eph. 3:19). John gives us a glimpse of magnetic love: *We love Him because He first loved us* (I Jn.4:19). God’s love takes a person and transforms him/her by the power of unconditional love. “*What a man desires is steadfast love*” (Proverbs 19:22). This desire is met in Jesus Christ.

V. Agape love never rules aside from regeneration.

Faith in Christ brings about a new heart, a new life, a new beginning—regeneration to us. “*I pray you will be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love*” (Eph.3:16-17). By our love that everyone knows that we are His disciples (Jn. 13:35). “*The best testimony that Stephen bore was his last: not when preaching and working miracles, but when he pleaded for his persecutors; for then he most resembled the Lord Jesus in patience, forgiveness and love.*” **Robert Chapman**