

9 HABITS for HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Part 1 - Love: The Habit That Impacts Everything Else Galatians 5:22; John 15:1-5

Pastor Mark Hartman
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Galatians 5:22-23 "But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will produce this kind of **fruit** (results) in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control." (NLT)

John 15:1, 4-5 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear **fruit** by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear **fruit** unless you remain in me. ⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a person remains in me and I in him, he will bear **much fruit**; apart from me you can do nothing." (NIV)

Every positive trait that impacts our character and our relationships emerges from **love**.

I Corinthians 14:1 "Make love your **greatest goal**."

I. IF THE GOAL IS LOVE, WHAT IS LOVE?

Misconception # 1 - Love is primarily a **feeling**.

Misconception # 2 - Love is **uncontrollable**.

A. Both of these ideas are correct about **infatuation** but not about actual love.

B. The Bible uses four words for love:

1. **Eros** is the idea of sexual love.
2. **Phileo** is the idea of brotherly love or **friendship**.

3. **Storge** is the affection of a parent for a child and children for their parents. It is Phileo love on a higher level.
4. Agape means a **selfless** kind of love, an endless and unconditional kind of love that is demonstrated by the character qualities of God. It is love at the highest level. It is love brought to **maturity**.

*1 John 4:8 (NIV) "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God **is** agape."*

C. Agape love is the act of loving others like **God** loves.

D. How do we grow a God kind of love in our relationships?

1. We develop agape love by making **decisions** to do so.

*Colossians 3:14 "Beyond all these things **put on** love, which is the perfect bond of unity." (NASB)*

2. We develop agape love by taking **actions** to do so.

1 John 3:18 "Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions." (NLT)

E. Love is actually a commandment that is demonstrated by a **commitment**.

II. THE "**LOVE HABIT**" OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS. (1 Corinthians 13:7-8)

1 Corinthians 13:7-8 "Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails."

A. "Always" has the idea of **consistency**. The key to success in anything that lasts is consistency. It is a person consistently making the decisions and taking the actions of authentic love.

B. Relationships that last consistently **protect** the people you love. (...love always protects...)

1. We protect our relationships by defending them and in sharing the **hurt**.

*Proverbs 17:17 "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for **adversity**."*

2. We protect our relationships by **carrying** those we love.

Galatians 6:2 “Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ (the law of love).” (NIV)

C. Relationships that last build a lasting **trust**. (...love always trusts...)

1. Four things that grows trust:

- a. We keep our **promises**.
- b. We do not take wrongful advantage of another.
- c. We do the right thing even when no one is **watching**.
- d. We do these things **consistently** over time.

2. *John 15:13 “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”*

3. Trust is built when we die to **self** for each other.

D. Relationships that last keep feeding **hope** to the friendship. (...love always hopes...)

1. Hope: the desire and search for a future good, that is difficult but not impossible to attain with **God's help**. (American Heritage Dictionary)

2. **Fous** on the positives instead of the negatives.

3. Have a willingness to **forgive**.

Colossians 3:13 “Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”

4. Choose to look to the future when the present is **doubtful**.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 “For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

E. Relationships that last refuse to **quit** (...love always perseveres...)

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Notes:
