

Mature Love Defined Part 1

I. A God made in our image

- A. We often make the mistake of filtering the nature and character of God through our own experiential definitions. When considering that we have been, are created, and are fallen, it is very wrong to think that He is like us. The only way to move forward in truth is to study His character through the lens of His Word in the person of Jesus. (John 1:1-5 and 14, 14:7-9)
- B. One more very important fact about His love to understand is that He is love. He is not trying to grow in love. There is no weakness or immaturity in His nature.
 - 1. Our fallen sin nature is predisposed to making God in our image. (Rom. 1:20-25)
 - 2. He is the one who instructs us about Himself. (Ps. 50:16-21)
 - 3. We must look to him alone to gain an understanding of who He is. (Is. 40)

II. Patient (Long-suffering) (1 Pet. 2:20-25)

- Love suffers long... (1 Cor. 13:4)
 - A. When establishing the love of God, the theme of his Patience or long-suffering is undeniably one of the most listed characteristics of God's love. He has been and is proactively waiting on, and caring for us from the moment He dreamed us up.
 - B. Synonyms of Patient - Enduring, forbearing, uncomplaining, and constant.
 - C. Antonyms of Patient - Agitated, indifferent, frustrated, or intolerant.
 - 1. The patience of Jesus with His enemies (Mat. 26:66-68, 27:27-31, 27:35-44, Heb. 12:3-4)

Walking in Spiritual Maturity

2. The patience of Jesus with wholehearted believers (Luke 22:31-34, 54-62, Mark 16:7, John 21:1-19)

III. Kind (Steady in Compassion)

- Love is kind... (1 Cor. 13:4)
 - A. Kindness, according to the scriptures is expressed as a steady heart of compassion that is always ready to respond in truth and faithfulness in any situation. Jesus gave himself continually to healing the sick, which in their pre-miracle state had nothing to lean on except His kindness.
 - B. Synonyms of Kind - Affectionate, compassionate, friendly, and thoughtful.
 - C. Antonyms of Kind - Cold, cruel, harsh, mean, rude, and unsympathetic.
 1. Study of the Kindness of God - (Is. 54:7-55:7, Joel 2:11-13, Eph. 2:1-7, Tit. 3:1-7)
 2. The walked out Kindness of Jesus (Luke 5:12-15, 6:31-36, 17:11-19)