

Staying On Course With God's Love

Digging Deeper

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*God's love always protects, always hopes, and always perseveres. It is a love that never fails.*

**1 Corinthians 13:7-8 NIV**

Each and every one of us lives a life that is full of difficult moments and hard times (John 16:33). When that happens, we may be tempted to go looking for a life boat that will take us far away from the situation we're in. Sometimes that boat does take us to something that is truly better, and looking back on it we can honestly say that we needed to make a change. But more often than not, the boat we climb into is as leaky as the one we were in and we continue to sink.

**When that happens, we need to stop and tap into the one and only**

**thing in this world that can keep us on course - God's love for us.**

God's love encourages, nurtures and affirms us. It always protects, always hopes, and always perseveres. It is a love that never fails. It will heal any hurt and fill any void in our life that tempts us to jump from one thing to another looking for happiness and satisfaction that never comes apart from Him (1 Cor 13:4-8).

When we know and truly believe that we are loved like that,

We become more **patient** with the time and effort it takes to work through difficulties because we know that God works for our good in all things (Romans 8:28).

We are able to **resist the craving for instant gratification** and wait on God's blessings because we know they are coming (Lamentations 3:25).

We stay **focused** on discovering and pursuing God's plan for our life because we know He has one (Jeremiah 29:11).

We take a **disciplined approach** to life and especially to hard times because we know God has given us the power and self-discipline we need to get through whatever we face (Matthew 28:20, 2 Timothy 1:7).

And we **no longer run away** when we don't get everything we want because we can see that God has given us what we need (Philippians 4:19).

Only a loving God can and will do all of that for us.

**When we truly accept and completely embrace that kind of divine love, our life becomes a model of consistency.**

We are **steady and immovable** in times of trouble (Psalm 46:1-3).

We remain **constant and firmly rooted** in God's truth in moments of doubt (James 1:6-8).

We are **clear** on what God wants us to do with our life and remain **committed** to following the path He has laid out for our us (Proverbs 3:5-6).

And we **do what God requires** of us to get through the really tough times because we know that with Him, all things are possible (Philippians 4:13).

God's love for us is deep and never changes (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8). When we embrace it, we live a life that consistently reflects what He wants for us, which just happens to be exactly what we need (Psalm 92:12-14).

**There are things we must do to be consistent in our walk with God as we travel through life.**

We must **make our life a life of prayer** and never stop praying or lose hope (1 Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 18:1). Prayer must always be our first step and never our last resort in whatever situation we face.

We must **read the Bible daily** and plant our life firmly on the promises of God (John 15:1-17).

We must be steadfast and immovable in our commitment to **serve others**, knowing that our labor is not in vain and will make a big difference in their lives (1 Cor 15:58).

And we must be in **constant fellowship** with other Christians (Hebrews 10:24-25). "Consistent love for other Christians is key to a healthy spiritual life because loving fellowship is God's prescribed environment for growth" (John Wimber).

**Living and loving like Jesus is a life that is consistently focused on giving and receiving God's love, no matter what the situation may be.** It is a life that leads to blessings, intimate relationships and real spiritual growth. It is what God wants for each and every one of us.

All we have to do is say yes.

## **Reflect**

Living and loving like Jesus is a life that is consistently focused on giving and receiving God's love, no matter what the situation may be.

## **Pray**

Heavenly Father, remind me each and every day how much you love me and care about what happens to me. Open my eyes to how consistently you work in my life to bring the good out of every tough moment I face. Show me the many blessings I have received and keep me firmly focused

on where you want me to go. Put your arm around me and give me the power and the self-discipline I need to get through every storm and every trial the world throws my way. And above all else, help me see that because you really do love me, I have everything I need to pursue your plan for my life and make a real difference in the lives of others.

Amen

## **Discuss**

Describe a time in your life when you took a disciplined, step by step approach to improving a job, a relationship, your finances or your health. How did knowing you are deeply loved by God help you through that? If you didn't do that, how would remembering God really loves you have made it easier to make those improvements?

Describe a time in your life when you jumped into or gave up on a job, a relationship or something related to your finances or your health and later regretted it. How might knowing you were loved by God have helped you avoid that mistake?

Would you describe yourself as disciplined, impulsive or overly cautious when it comes to making changes and improvements in your life? How would reflecting on God's love for you help you be more consistent and move steadily down the path God has laid out for your life?