

## Chapter 12: "Tell My Boys That I Love 'Em"<sup>1</sup>

### Life Application Verses:

**.Love. 1 Corinthians: 13.** <sup>1</sup>If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. <sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup>does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, <sup>6</sup>does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; <sup>7</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup>Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of* prophecy, they will be done away; if *there are* tongues, they will cease; if *there is* knowledge, it will be done away. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part; <sup>10</sup>but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.<sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. <sup>12</sup>For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. <sup>13</sup>But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love. **.Love.**

**L**ove. Songs about Love are like the stars in the Heavens! We have beautiful poems of Love, there are movies about Love, and we Love our soul-mates. Love is a wonderful thing; if you doubt it, look at what God says about Love in 1 Corinthians 13. Even more powerful, think for a moment about the Gift God gave us in Jesus on the Cross! That is Perfect Love. That is Love in Action. Love that cannot be comprehended fully in our Earthly Good, but only in our Heavenly Minded acceptance of Faith in The One and Only Son of God! **.Love.**

**.Love.** It was a hot day in Montgomery, Alabama. It was 90 degrees, 90% humidity, and stuffy in the very air you breathed. I was at my desk at the college where I teach and had been working on updating teaching materials since the early morning. My body was tired and my eyes needed respite from the constant reading, typing, and consideration of how my students would interpret and understand the materials I was preparing. At some point, I desperately needed to get up and walk about a bit, so I decided to walk up to the mailboxes to check mail and get my eyes and mind off the matter-at-hand. About half way there, my cell phone rang (I have the 'old style ringer' app on the phone). It was my wife. My mother had been taken by

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<sup>1</sup> Written before my mother left this world.

ambulance to the local hospital in our home town. She had just turned 80, and had been suffering from a terminal illness that affects the brain. There's a long name for it, but suffice it to say it is like a heart-breaking form of dementia with failing balance and other effects that causes myself and the family great sorrow. She was having chest pains and she thought that God was about to tell her, "Mary, it's time to come in!" My dad said that she had a beautiful smile on her face when she told him, "Tell my boys that I love 'em." After some tests at the ER, they found that she had a "touch" of pneumonia, a result of the disease that is destroying her mental ability to function. As one of three sons, my heart was heavy, sorrowful, yet giving Glory to God for this woman of 80 years and wife and mother of 61 years. I gave thanks to God because I knew that He desires to show her that Heavenly Home He has prepared for her, but I asked My Lord, "God, I know this is the way our lives unfold, from birth to Going Home. But, I'm not ready yet. Just a little longer, if You will allow it." And God honored that Prayer. **.Love.**

**.Love.** Like the story that could be told by countless families all over the world, Love is an influential force. Personally, I think of Love as THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FORCE in our world. IN the midst of hatred, murders, abuse, drugs, famines, racial tensions, hurricanes, death, and a litany of other horrible and tragic events that can and do happen in this time of turbulence, LOVE is the ultimate influence on our lives across all human existence. Whether in the family or in our caring for others, Love stands at the pinnacle of life. I think that's the essence of Heaven. Love. It must be like leaving this world and arriving at a place where Love surrounds us, hugs us, and causes us to have a perpetual smile on our faces as we are in the Presence of the Most High and Holy God. Heavenly Minded Love, Earthly Good Love. Holy Perpetual Love. **.Love.**

**.Love.** In the Life Application Verses, Love is defined by comparing it to ALL things in this world. In fact, it opens with: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal." When you read this verse, what comes to mind? Let me point out something in the verse that may be overlooked: noise. Hold on while I consult my friend, "Web" Webster. 'Web' defines noise as: loud, confused, or senseless shouting or outcry; one that lacks agreeable musical quality or is noticeably unpleasant; any sound that is undesired or interferes with one's hearing of something; and/or irrelevant or meaningless data or output occurring along with desired information. This last part of the

definition is profound: noise is irrelevant or meaningless data or output occurring along with desired information. Love. **Love ≠ Noise.** Love is antithetical to irrelevant or meaningless data or output; Love is relevant, meaningful, lasting, Eternal, the root existence of a Holy and Loving God, what my Mom and Dad gave us three boys for 61+ years (my dad is 84 at this writing). Love is not like a noisy gong or clanging symbol! It desires to perfect the human heart so that our minds are in tune with God's Heavenly Minded Will so that we might live Earthly Good in all things on this side of our Heavenly Home. Love is precisely Heavenly Minded; it is precisely the root of Earthly Good. **.Love.**

**.Love.** When I got the message that my mom had said to my dad, with a smile, "Tell my boys that I love 'em", I felt as if I were little again, hearing her voice around the house, and singing in the Choir of the Churches we attended. She was ready for Home as she thought that this might truly be her final day on Earth. In an act of Heavenly Minded love, she wanted her children to Earthly Good know, that she had loved them from the very first moment she had seen them. My mom and dad are of like mind; they love and have loved their boys, and today they love the grandkids and great-grandkids as God intended—from the Heart. The noise of the world fills our ears; it desires to distort our minds, cloud our relationship with God, and hide the Salvation in Christ Jesus from the lost souls of this greedy world. In contrast to the noise, my parents gave us boys Love that has endured. **.Love.**

**.Love.** To hear "Tell my boys that I love 'em" caused reality to invade my senses. It's not the reality of hopelessness, but a realization that if God was ready for my mother to leave this place of tragedy, she will be in a place of Perfect Love in the twinkling of an eye. As in 1 Corinthians 13, "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known." God already knew my Mom fully and my mom will one day be fully known when she stands before Christ the King. When that day arrives, my family—like so many others—will be in need of the Grace and Mercy of God as we experience the most heart-breaking event in life. That Grace is explained throughout the Holy Scriptures and is captured so Heavenly Minded in the lyrics of *Your Grace Finds Me* by Matt Redman (Used with permission): (Read these words Prayerfully) **.Love.**

**.Love.** It's there in the newborn cry, It's there in the light of every sunrise  
There in the shadows of this light, Your great grace

It's there on the mountaintop, there in the everyday and the mundane  
There in the sorrow and the dancing  
Your great grace, Oh, such grace  
From the creation to the cross, There from the cross into eternity  
Your grace finds me, Yes, Your grace finds me

It's there on a wedding day, There in the weeping by the graveside  
There in the very breath we breathe, Your great grace

The same for the rich and poor, the same for the saint and for the sinner  
Enough for this whole wide world, Your great grace, Oh, such grace

From the creation to the cross, There from the cross into eternity  
Your grace finds me, Yes, Your grace finds me

There in the darkest night of the soul, There in the sweetest songs of victory  
Your grace finds me, Yes, Your grace finds me

Your great grace, Oh, such grace; Your great grace, Oh, such grace

So I'm breathing in Your grace, And breathing out Your praise  
I'm breathing in Your grace, Forever I'll be  
Breathing in Your grace, And breathing out Your praise  
I'm breathing in Your grace, Forever I'll be  
Breathing in Your grace, And breathing out Your praise  
I'm breathing in Your grace, Forever, Forever

Your grace finds me, Yes, Your grace finds me **.Love.**

**.Love.** When I listen to this beautiful song, I hear over and over the lines: "It's there on a wedding day; There in the weeping by the graveside; There in the very breath we breathe, Your great grace." As these words flow through my mind, I don't hear noise, but the Beautiful and Majestic Grace and Love of God in our lives if we would but tune our ear to His Voice. I think when my mom said to my dad that he should tell her boys that she loved them, she was quoting 1 Corinthians 13 in the vernacular—meaning, her love was manifested in God's Heavenly Minded Love through years of Study, Prayer, and Earthly Good. Her words, while not the exact verbiage of the Life Application Verses, demonstrated God's Love to her three boys. Please read these verses again, but think about your own family, friends, and those who do not

know the Love of God. Is the absence of Love one of the major tragedies of life? **No! The absence of love is not one of the major tragedies of life, it is THE MAJOR TRAGEDY of life.** The most absolute tragic event in life is to not know the Love and Saving Grace of God in Christ Jesus. From that Love emanates all love and to miss the Gift of God that passes all understanding is the major tragedy of our existence. When my mom said, "Tell my boys that I love 'em", I heard the Voice of God saying to a lost and dying world, "Tell My people that I love 'em." Why? Because my mother loves and adores God as a Heavenly Father, she loves her boys in the same Holy Love given to her by the Father. **Read and Listen** again to 1 Corinthians 13.

Allow it to flood your Soul and see the Face of a Loving God: .Love.

**.Love.** <sup>1</sup>If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. <sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup>does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a *wrong suffered*, <sup>6</sup>does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; <sup>7</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup>Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are tongues*, they will cease; if *there is knowledge*, it will be done away. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part; <sup>10</sup>but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. <sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. <sup>12</sup>For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. <sup>13</sup>But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love. **.Love.**

**.Love.** As I reflect on this event, I still have tears when I think of losing my mom one day. At this writing, my mother is Home with God, Jesus, The Holy Spirit, and the Angels, but I knew in my heart back then that God would send His Appointed Angels to come and take my mom Home—maybe tomorrow, next week, a year from now. As I write this through the tears, I think of the verses of another song that pictures God as a caring Father for those who have accepted the most precious Gift of all: to be Saved out of this world and into Eternal Life as lived by my mom and dad as Christ-centered Christians. I can see my dad in the verse that speaks of a 'sunburned face and weathered hands' as he worked all his life to provide for his

family. He never complained; he just did what he knew needed to be done and God Blessed him. I can see my mom as she 'pulled tangles loose and untied knots in shoes with a mother's joy.' They both have always been living examples of God's Love in action. Their love does not boast about how they love us boys, the grandchildren or the great-grandchildren; their love is a "know fully just as I also have been fully known" mirror of God's Love applied to life as a married couple of some 61+ years. The song, *I Picture God That Way*, by Jamie Slocum, gives me an image of God's Hands at work in our lives—His Love applied to His Children. These verses give me a living memory of my mom and dad as they serve The One True God: (Used with permission) **.Love.**

**.Love.** A sunburned face and weathered hands, He stretches out the nets again.  
Steps among the twisted lines, And works them out in his good time.

Sometimes I picture God that way, Untangling all the mess I've made  
Unraveling my lines so I can fish again one day, Sometimes I picture God that way.

Her tender hands pull tangles loose, From gum in hair to knots in shoes.  
With her quilter's skill and a mother's joy, She frees the little girls and boys.

Sometimes I picture God that way, Untangling all the mess I've made  
Unraveling my kite so I can fly again one day, Sometimes I picture God that way.  
I Picture God that way.

Sometimes I picture God that way, Untangling all the mess I've made  
Unraveling my darkest nights, To weave a brand new day.  
Sometimes I picture God that way.

Sometimes I picture God that way, Untangling all the mess I've made  
Unraveling my life so I can fish again, Sometimes I picture God that way  
Untangling all the mess I've made, Unraveling my kite so I can fly again one day  
Sometimes I picture God that way. **.Love.**

**.Love. What is love?** Can we as Earthly Good beings in the Love of God explain it in terms of words we use? Or is Love a more complete part of our lives when we live it daily in the Love of our children, wives, husbands, and God in Christ? Love is an action verb. It is what it is because it has action in living it. Hug a child who hugs you back and feel the bond between the two of you—that is Love; that is the action between you and God in Christ! **.Love.**

**Question of Curiosity:**

**.Love.** How much love is enough in our lives towards our wives, husbands, children, and our God? Read 1 Corinthians 13—the answer is in there in the Love of God. **.Love.**

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**"May the power of your love, Lord Christ, fiery and sweet as honey, so absorb our hearts as to withdraw them from all that is under Heaven. Grant that we may be ready to die for love of your love, as you died for love of our love." ~ Francis of Assisi ~**

**"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ~ John 3: 16 ~**

**"God Loves each one of us as if there were only one of us." ~ Augustine ~**

**"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." ~ Romans 8: 37-39 ~**

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**My Prayer For You:**

**.Love.** Lord, I offer up to my Brothers and Sisters in Christ Your Words in Prayer: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are* tongues, they will cease; if *there is* knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love." Oh God, that we would hear and live these words while there is still breath in our lungs. That we would stop a moment in our business of life and hug that wife, husband, child, grandchild, or even a friend—to show the LOVE of GOD in CHRIST JESUS to that person we love and care for or about. While there is still time, O Merciful God, burden our hearts to Love one another. In the Blessed name of Jesus Christ, Amen. **.Love.**

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No matter how you write it, Love is God's constant throughout Eternity!