**KINGDOM PRINCIPLE #2 IS LOVE**

**God is love**

“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.” (1 John 4:8) Jesus said to His disciples, "A new commandment I give to you that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know you are my disciples, if you love one another" **(John 13:34-35).**

“No force on the planet of earth is greater than the power of God’s love”

"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." **(1 Corinthians 13:4-7)**

 **Sacrificial Love (Eph.5:25) –** Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. We know that Christ made the supreme sacrifice for the church; He willingly laid down His life on the cross in order to purchase our redemption. The Lord surrendered all of Himself as He died for our sin. His love for the church compelled Him to endure the horrors of the cross, drinking the cup of God’s wrath and judgment, and die an agonizing death in our place. Such love is beyond our ability to comprehend, and yet He loved that much!

Men, this is profound and greatly challenging. Paul declared that we are to love our wives as Christ loved the church, being willing to give ourselves for her. Likely, under extreme circumstances, most husbands who love their wives would be willing to die in her place. We would put ourselves in harm’s way to ensure her safety and security; but, what about ordinary living? Do we daily express a sacrificial love for our wives? Do we place her needs and desires above our own? Are we willing to sacrifice our time and plans in order to genuinely show our love? In essence, do we love her more than life itself? These are sobering questions, but ones we must answer if we are to fulfill a biblical love for our wives. She must be more important than our desires, our goals, and our pursuit of success. In fact, our love for her must be second only to our love for the Lord. Are we showing our wives sacrificial love?

**Impartial Love (1 John 4:10, 19) –** Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [19] We love him, because he first loved us. The love of Christ is not based upon our love for Him, nor was it dependent upon our love for Him. He loved us while we were yet in our sin. Christ loved us when we had no desire to know Him, while we yet rebelled against Him, seeking to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. We now love the Lord because He first loved us. He chose to love us while we were yet unlovable.

Such an impartial love must be shown for our wives. We cannot love them only when things are going well in the relationship. We cannot reserve our love for our wives to times when she meets our expectations or supports every desire we may have. Even when life is difficult, (and it is for all of us at times,) we must show the same love and affection. We must be consistent in our love for our wives, regardless of the situation or circumstance.

True love is hard to find these days and even harder to keep. We have to make it through a lot of wrong friends to get to the right ones, and even then, it can still be difficult to tell if what you have is real. Just when you start to get comfortable, things can seem to head south. How do we cultivate true and lasting love? How can we tell it’s real, or when it’s just a waste of our time?

**I believe there are 5 attributes of TRUE and STRONG LOVE:**

**1. TRUE LOVE NEVER GROWS OLD**

It is not weakened by time but grows stronger and fresher with time. There is a saying that "Time is a great eater", it consumes all things but Eternity can’t eat out true love, either to God or man. True love shall be old, but it never waxes cold nor vanishes away.

Does love ever to grow old? No, it doesn't. For love is of God and God does not grow old; So, if God so loved us, we ought to love unreservedly the spouse and friend that He has given us to cherish and to hold.

True love is a holy, endearing principle from God's throne that finds a lodging place in the hearts of His people. We have true love for God when we walk after His commandments and frame our lives after it.

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. " **(1 John 4:7-8)**

**2. TRUE LOVE KNOWS NO DISTANCE**

It is not hindered by remoteness of place; love knows no local distance nor any boundaries. A friend in the farthest parts of the world, is as near to real affection, as he lodges under the same roof, and eats bread with us every day. Being out of sight shouldn't be out of mind for a real friend.

Distance is a test of love. Many will fail for those who can’t withstand it, but for those who can, there's only one answer **- TRUE LOVE**

**"Let all that you do be done with love." (1 Corinthians 16:14)**

**3. TRUE LOVE IS FRUITFUL**

True love is never closed in on itself, seeking its own interests. Instead, love goes out, seeking the good of the other.it does not confine itself to fine expressions and complements. Love without work is dead, and as that faith which justifies, so the love of a just person is justified by work. "Brethren, let us not love in word or in tongue, but indeed and in truth" **(1 John 3:18);** that is, let our deeds speak the truth of our love; it is an easy matter to say, but it is a great matter to do or to deed our love. Much love may be expressed by the tongue, but actions are the complement of love.

**4. TRUE LOVE IS FULL OF COMPASSION**

True Love is being afflicted in the afflictions of those we love; it is so far from departing from those that are burdened, that it bears a part of the burden with them; it weeps with those that weep **(Romans 12:15),** and causes us to remember those that are in bonds as bound with them, and those that suffer adversity, as being ourselves also in the body **(Hebrew 13:1-2).** Those who are of one heart share (their losses and enjoyments) in what befalls anyone.

True love does not make us blind, so that we cannot distinguish between the courtesies and discourtesies of our friends, but it makes us so clear-sighted, that we can easily distinguish between our friends and their discourtesies.

**5. TRUE LOVE IS NOT TIME BOUND**

"A friend loves at all times" **(Proverbs 17:17),** He is not ashamed to profess or express his love at any time. He loves his friend in good reports and ill reports, in honor and in dishonor, (if that dishonor didn't rise from his dishonesty). He is not ashamed of his friend’s outward condition. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." **(1 John 4:11)**

Deep within the human heart is a primal desire for love and relationship that echoes the passion of its Creator. These aspirations, that we tend to think are unique to the human spirit, mirror the heart-passion of God, our Creator, who actively seeks intimacy with his creation. This is reflected in His relationship with Adam as they walked and talked together in the garden **"in the cool of the day."** The effects called fear, guilt and loneliness was first felt when that relationship was broken because of Adam's sin, and there, for the first time, the voice of God was heard throughout the garden, **"Adam where are you?"** Ever since then, God has sought to bring man back into that cool of the day fellowship with Him.

The deepest longing of the human heart is to love and to be loved; we know it innately. Our hearts long for love and we want to love back. But this longing to love and be loved often gets people into trouble because they try to fill that longing with things that simply can’t satisfy. **St. Augustine wrote, “our hearts are restless until they rest in God.” The longing for love in our hearts is ultimately a longing for God who is love.**

How is it possible to say that our longing for love is a longing for God? A basic philosophical principle is that every desire we experience has a corresponding reality to fulfill that desire. When we are thirsty, there is drink; when we are hungry, there is food.

No one needs to teach us that we’re hungry or thirsty; we simply know it. The Word of God describes the only love that can ever truly answer this deepest cry of the human heart. It's found in **Romans 8:38-39,** "Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There it is - an infinite love. God wants you to experience that love more than you can imagine. Jesus said “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. The problem is that we all occasionally make the mistake of misdirecting our desire for love. It is called **“Selfish desire”** When we attach our desire for God to something finite, and particularly to something harmful, we are left empty and Every earth-love has ultimately either failed you or failed to satisfy you.

But there is a way, however, to taste God’s eternal love in the here and now. It is through seeking and knowing God. When we open our hearts to God’s love in intimacy, we experience a holy longing to be eternally united with the Lord. When we open our hearts to receive His love, our capacity to love Him and others expands.

The Bible tells us that **"God is Love" (1 John 4:8).** So, what does it mean that God is love? Love is an attribute of God. Love is a core aspect of God’s character, His Person. God’s love is in no sense in conflict with His holiness, righteousness, justice, or even His wrath. All of God’s attributes are in perfect harmony. Everything God does is his passion of love towards mankind, just as everything He does is just and right. God is the perfect example of true love.

There are three unique characteristics revealed to us in the Bible concerning the nature of God**. First**, **"God is spirit" (John 4:24).** The very word spirit also means **“breath,”** and breath is the evidence of life. Throughout Scripture He is called the living God. Paul said “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”,

**Second, God is light (1 John 1:5),** which is the opposite of "darkness." In Scripture "darkness" stands for sin, evil, death; ignorance and "light “stands for holiness, goodness, life, knowledge. Martin Luther labeled Satan "the prince of darkness." God is light, means that He is the sum of all Excellency**.**

**Third, "God is love" (1 John 4:8).** It is not simply that God "loves," but that He is Love itself. Love is not merely one of His attributes, but His very nature.

**1John 4:20** If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother or sister, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

10. We Love One Another Because It Demonstrates Our Obedience To God – v 21

21 And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

**John 13:34-35**

34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."