

The central theme of one of my favorite movies, The Princess Bride, is that of the search for True Love. The two young people in love in this story held this ideal up as the ultimate quest throughout their trials and tribulations. They sought a pure, unwavering love that would never fade and die. Of course, these two found True Love in the movie, but was this just romantic fiction? Can True Love really be found? Everybody wants to receive it, but unfortunately not everyone wants to give it out! Our 'self' so often gets in the way.

We might consider for a moment what is meant by True here. This is something that goes beyond just telling the truth; we can better relate it to the trueness of a rifle barrel, which must be straight or the bullet misses the target. To me, True means being steady, something that we can depend totally on. With True Love we are free from worrying; we have confidence that it is always there (unless we kill it ourselves). Paul, of course, is talking about True Love in 1 Corinthians 13, and in the passage that describes the characteristics of this love he ends with the powerful phrase: "*Love never fails.*"

We may make the mistake of thinking that True love is always something romantic or sexual, but in reality it exists on a much higher plane. Any of our relationships can be True or False. The Bible talks about True Love in the friendship of David and Jonathon and the feelings of Ruth for her mother-in-law Naomi. We should work this example into our own lives. For instance, parents should be "true blue" and be utterly faithful with regard to our children, loving them beyond themselves.

Of course, God Himself best defines the idea of True Love. In Revelation 19:11 the Word of God is pictured as a rider named "faithful and true" who sits on a white horse. God is the master of True Love, for He "*so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16)." There can be no love truer than that.

We all have a tremendous need for this True Love. I remember that in an earlier relationship in my life I never felt sure about being loved. It was a bit like walking out on an ice covered pond and feeling like it would break without any notice and suddenly plunge you into the frigid water. This introduces an uncertainty in life that is difficult to live with. I remember wondering if anyone had ever really loved me or ever could love me in the deepest sense of True Love. I do know now that it is a great thing when you are blessed with it. The ideal may be God, but we can get acceptably close here on earth to it.

There is an incredible feeling of wonder when you realize that someone loves you; this is especially true in the case of God's love. This awe extends to the fact that Christ actually came to this earth to lead us back to God, dying and being raised so that we, each, individually, might be able to live. We need to re-read John 3:16 and replace the word "you" for the word "world". It is not hard to worship God when we understand the full extent of this love.

We use the word "crooked" when we think of those who work at cheating those they come in contact with. Unfortunately, we are all somewhat out of "true" in the sight of God. God spoke through the prophet Amos to show how he had built His people like a wall, using a plumb line to make sure it was straight. After a time, God applied the plumb line again and the wall was terribly out of line. But God accepts us as though we were True if we are in Christ. God accepts us as His sons (Romans 9:25-26), and His people if we are True. Christ accepts us as His friends and His brethren (John 15:14-15, Hebrews 2:11) if we are True. This means we must put God first and be faithful to Him unto death.

We sometimes think in terms of being a "soul-mate" with someone because we fit together so well in our thinking. In this sense we are "joined at the soul", and we see that this is what God wants from us as well. We must agree with Him about our love for Goodness with all of our hearts. This is at the core of True Love. Let's share it with each other.