

CHIEF MINISTRIES

February 2025

Greetings to all on this second month of 2025. This month is referred to as the month of LOVE! February is known as the month of love because it includes Valentine's Day, a day to express love and appreciation for loved ones. but February is also a time to spread love in your community, more importantly, Christ's love!. Yes it can happen in prison and it doesn't start with an outside ministry coming in,, It starts with YOU! Let's look at some of the ways and the biblical support for it.

We, human beings have an amazing capacity to both remember and forget. We remember every single little hurt we've ever experienced - but we forget the lessons those hurts taught us. And so, we end up needing to learn the same lessons over and over again. Sometimes that is how we end up in prison.

That's why we need to learn to pray like David: *"Teach us to use wisely all the time we have"* (Psalm 90:12 CEV).

Over the next few pages, we're going to look at three truths we often learn about life and relationships - but then too quickly forget. These three truths will help you focus your life and reduce overload. If you practice and apply them, you'll have a healthier life. You'll have a happier family. You'll have an easier time while behind bars and be ready to continue that walk when you get out. And if all of us would follow these truths, the world would experience more meaningful, committed relationships. So how is life and relationships fit into love, specifically God's love? Well!

The first truth: **The best use of life is love.**

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 14:1, *"Let love be your highest goal!"* (NLT) In other words, make love your number one priority. Make it your primary objective. Make it your greatest ambition. Make it your life purpose. Don't say, "One of the things I want in life is loving relationships." Don't just put it in your "Top 10." Make it number one! Why does God say to make love your highest goal? There are two reasons:

1. God says that love is what life is all about. The Bible says, *"No matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love"* (1 Corinthians 13:3 The Message). It is amazing to me that so often we act as if loving relationships are something we'll squeeze into our schedules - if we can. Instead of making quality time with the people in our lives a priority, we fit it into the margins. But for God, loving relationships aren't just an important part of life. God says loving relationships *are* life. Life is all about love.
2. God says you need to focus on love because love is one of the only things that will last: *"Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love"* (1 Corinthians 13:13 NLT). Do you want to leave a legacy after you die? Do you want to make a difference with your life? Do you want to make a positive influence on this world that outlasts you? Then you must fill your life with love.

Each day you're faced with one decision after another about how to spend your life. It's always right to choose love. You are most like Jesus when you choose love.

The second truth is: **The best expression of love is time**

1 Corinthians 13 is often called the "Love Chapter" of the Bible, where the Apostle Paul discusses the qualities and importance of love. In verse 13, Paul concludes his discourse by identifying three enduring virtues: faith, hope, and love. These are foundational to the Christian life, but he emphasizes that love surpasses the other two in significance.

- Faith refers to trust in God, belief in His promises, and reliance on His character.
- Hope reflects the confident expectation of God's future blessings, particularly the eternal life promised through Christ.
- Love is the selfless, sacrificial care for others that reflects God's nature (agape love).

Paul's assertion that "the greatest of these is love" points to its eternal and transformative nature. While faith and hope will reach their fulfillment in eternity (faith in seeing God and hope in receiving His promises), love is everlasting and essential to God's very being (1 John 4:8). This verse serves as a reminder of the priority of love in the Christian's life and its eternal value:

- Theological Significance: Love is central to God's relationship with humanity. It reflects His character and is the basis of the greatest commandment: to love God and others (Matthew 22:37-39).
- Ethical Guidance: Love guides how Christians should act toward each other, encompassing patience, kindness, and humility (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

- Eternal Perspective: Faith and hope prepare believers for eternity, but love is the enduring connection to God and others that will remain forever.

The application for Today's Society includes

- Relationships and Community: In a world increasingly divided by cultural, political, and ideological differences, love serves as the ultimate unifying force. It calls for empathy, forgiveness, and care, even in the face of conflict. *Example:* Acts of kindness and compassion toward others, regardless of differences, embody Christ-like love.
- Faith and Hope in Action: Faith and hope must manifest in love to have real impact. Faith in God should inspire action, and hope should motivate perseverance in love, even when it's challenging. *Example:* Charitable work, advocacy for justice, and supporting marginalized groups are practical expressions of faith, hope, and love.
- Love as a Countercultural Force: In an age that often prioritizes self-interest, love stands as a revolutionary force that places others before oneself, this is especially important in the prison system. This love is not merely sentimental but involves deliberate choices to seek the good of others. *Example:* Choosing to forgive someone who has wronged you, or disrespected you, or spoke lies to discredit you to the chaplain, bosses, or rank.
- Love in the Digital Age: With the use of tablets, people can interact with others worldwide. Christians are called to reflect love by promoting encouragement, avoiding harmful discourse, and engaging respectfully.

We've been looking at the truths you need to remember if you want to focus your life and strengthen your relationships. We've learned that the best use of life is love and that the best expression of love is time. Now let's look at the third truth:

The third truth is this: **The best time to love is now.**

Proverbs 3:27-28 says, "*Whenever you possibly can, do good to those who need it. Never tell your neighbors to wait until tomorrow if you can help them now*" (GNT).

Why is now the best time to express love? Because you don't know how long you're going to get the opportunity to show love. Circumstances change. People die. Children grow up and leave home. You're not guaranteed tomorrow. If you're going to express love, you'd better do it *now*. Charles Colson and George McGovern were at opposite extremes in the political spectrum. In fact, in the 1972 presidential campaign, they worked on opposite sides. But they both ended up with the same regret.

Colson wrote, "As I think back on my life, my biggest regret is not spending more time with the kids. Making family your top priority means going against the culture where materialism and workaholism are rampant. It means realizing you may not advance as fast in your career as some do. It means being willing to accept a lower standard of living, knowing that you're doing the right thing for your children, giving them the emotional security that they will draw on for the rest of their lives."

McGovern wrote a book about his daughter Terry, who died of alcoholism in 1994. After the tragedy, McGovern poured over Terry's diaries and discovered that he was not as good a father as he thought he'd been. While he was spending 18-hour days fighting for political causes, Terry was at home writing in her diary that she missed her daddy but that he probably didn't miss her because he probably didn't care about her. McGovern wrote in his advice to parents, "Show more love to your kids by spending more time with them, especially during the adolescent years—no matter what it costs your career. That way neither of you will have regrets. "I'd give everything I have for one more afternoon with Terry, just to tell her how much I love her and have one more of those happy times that we used to have all too infrequently."

The question is not *if* you're ever going to regret a frantic, overloaded, stressed-to-the-limit lifestyle of poor choices. The only question is *when*. When it's too late? After your family has fallen apart? After your children are grown? Look around at the people in your life. The time to love them is now.

That's worth repeating: The best time to love is *right now*. How would your life change if you lived out this truth each day before ending up in prison? Don't be discouraged, God says it is never too late to start. He is always there with His arms wide open to receive you back. So, make that commitment today and start your love life without regrets right where you are at!

As a Christian in prison, you have a unique opportunity to reflect Christ's love and make a meaningful impact on others within the prison community. Despite the challenges of your environment, you can demonstrate Christ's love through intentional acts of kindness, compassion, and faithfulness. Here are practical ways they can do so:

1. Live as a Witness of Christ's Love

- **Exhibit Christlike Behavior:** Model integrity, patience, and kindness in daily interactions. Avoid conflicts and promote peace.
- **Be Humble and Non-Judgmental:** Treat others with respect, regardless of their background or past, showing that God's love is unconditional.
- **Share Testimonies:** Share how faith in God has transformed their lives to inspire others to seek Him.

2. Encourage Fellowship and Community

- **Start or Join a Bible Study Group:** Gather with other Christians to study the Bible, pray, and encourage one another.

- **Lead Prayer Circles:** Offer to pray with others, especially those struggling with fear, guilt, or loneliness.
- **Build Relationships:** Befriend those who are isolated, providing companionship and a listening ear.

3. Provide Emotional and Spiritual Support

- **Offer Words of Encouragement:** Speak life and hope into the lives of others through scripture, kind words, or affirmations.
- **Be a Peacemaker:** Mediate conflicts and promote unity by reminding others of God's call to love and forgiveness.
- **Comfort the Hurting:** Offer a shoulder to cry on or a comforting word to those dealing with loss, rejection, or despair.

4. Share the Gospel

- **Use Opportunities to Evangelize:** When others are curious about your faith, share the message of Jesus Christ with gentleness and respect.
- **Distribute Christian Materials:** Share Bibles, devotionals, or tracts with those seeking to know more about God.
- **Answer Questions with Grace:** Be ready to discuss faith-related topics and point others toward God's love and forgiveness.

5. Serve Others Practically

- **Help with Daily Tasks:** Assist fellow inmates who may struggle with literacy, legal paperwork, or navigating prison life.
- **Share Resources:** Share what you have, whether it's snacks, hygiene items, or time, demonstrating generosity.
- **Offer Help in Learning:** Teach skills, help others study for exams, or tutor in areas where they have expertise.

6. Show Forgiveness and Grace

- **Forgive Offenses:** Demonstrate God's love by forgiving others who hurt or mistreat you.
- **Extend Grace:** Avoid retaliation and instead respond with kindness, even in difficult situations.

7. Advocate for Justice and Fairness

- **Support Fair Treatment:** Stand up for others if they are treated unjustly, ensuring that love extends to advocating for their dignity.
- **Promote Unity:** Encourage others to focus on common ground rather than divisions.

8. Intercede Through Prayer

- **Pray for Fellow Inmates:** Lift up the needs of others, including their families, emotional struggles, and spiritual growth.
- **Pray for Prison Staff:** Ask God to guide and protect correctional officers, chaplains, and staff.
- **Pray for Transformation:** Pray for the prison community to experience God's love, peace, and revival.

9. Use Talents to Glorify God

- **Express Creativity:** Use talents like art, music, or writing to encourage and uplift others with messages of hope and faith.
- **Serve as a Mentor:** Share wisdom and life lessons with younger or less experienced inmates.

10. Reflect Love Through Consistency

- **Be Dependable:** Keep promises and commitments, building trust among peers.
- **Be an Example:** Maintain a positive attitude and faith in God, even in tough circumstances, as a testament to His sustaining power.

Biblical Foundation

- *John 13:34-35:* "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another."
- *Matthew 5:16:* "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Christians in prison can be powerful instruments of God's love behind bars. By living out your faith through acts of kindness, humility, and service, you can shine Christ's light in a dark place and inspire transformation in the lives of your fellow inmates. I had met many of you when Chief was incarcerated and he always shared what he had, whether it be food, support, discipleship, guidance, knowledge, prayer for you or your family, and encouragement to many of you as he walked in the same place. As many of you may remember, he planned to return to minister in the prisons after his release, because he knew and saw the needs. Many of you have shared how his walk was an inspiration to you even now, 4 years (next month, March) since his promotion to Heaven. You may not think you are making an impact, but, I guarantee you, there are those watching, those you may never know about that your walk IS an influence to them and their walk, either **to** or **away** from God! How do you want to be remembered? Just food for thought! ☺

As always stay in peace and keep Him first!

Blessings and God's love as you walk this journey with Him!

Ms. Chief (aka Ms.G)

If you want to know more about CHIEF Ministries or would like to be a part, please go to www.chiefministries.com

Christ's Heart In Every Felon



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