

him and he would give Jesus the whole world. No pain, no cross, no rejection, no agony of feeling abandoned by the Father. Here was a quick fix that looked very appealing. But Jesus chose to remain loyal and went through the tough time, the hell of the cross, that our love might be rock solid, richer that it could ever have been if he'd gone for some shallow convenience.

What a wonderful love we have to draw on when we come to the end of our tether. When all I can see is a way out, Jesus offers me his love so that I hang in there. Love simply doesn't grow when you bailout. If you feel like quitting,

don't listen to the devil's lie, ask Jesus to wrap you in his love that in his strength you will be able to remain loyal, that you will hang in there. Love never gives up.

It doesn't give in either, but continues to aim for the love Jesus has empowered us to live, as we each deny ourselves – selfishness is one of my great love killers – and seek to live the love we have, as we seek to be all that Jesus has dreamed possible.

So lasting love; extends grace, expresses faith, expects the best and endures the worst.

Let us pray.
Dear God I need to feel your love. Put your love into every room in my heart. Fill my mind, my life, my body, my hands, my feet with your love. Jesus, thank you for loving me. Thank you for dying for me. Thank you for remaining loyal that I might be forgiven. Thank you for the promised Holy Spirit. I don't understand it all but I want to be filled with your love and to learn to love as you do. I want to learn to offer grace, to express faith, to expect the best, to endure the worst, to your honour, glory and praise. Amen.

27 June 2010
THE SECRETS OF LASTING LOVE
40 Days of Love



Today we're looking at a great quality of love; it never quits. In 1 Corinthians we read; "Love never stops being patient, never stops believing, never stops hoping, never gives up." (1 Cor. 13:7 GW) So what's the secret of lasting love?

Loyalty is a quality of love, and essential quality that is continually being eroded. Difficulties, disagreements, differences, discord, disappointment, dead-ends, depression, delay, doubt, demands, difficulties are all daily working at eroding love. How can we daily work at developing a love that is lasting?

Here are four daily habits that can help.

First, lasting love extends grace.

No relationship will make it without grace. Without forgiveness, mercy, patience, acceptance. And this is always a gift. I'm reminded that grace is: God's riches at Christ's expense. Grace is a gift the other person doesn't deserve, but it is freely given with no strings attached.

So "Love never stops being patient" (1 Cor. 13:7 GW). Or as the Message paraphrase puts it, "It puts up with anything." The New Century Translation says, "It patiently accepts all things." The New Jerusalem Bible translation says, "It is always ready to make allowances."

Will people make mistakes? Of course. Will that be frustrating? Sure. Which means we are all in need of grace,

of a love that we don't deserve.

The second key to lasting love is that it expresses faith.

"Love never stops believing" (1 Cor.13:7b) The NIV translation says, "Love always trust." Or the New Living Translation says, "Love never loses faith." Trust is one of those key ingredients to love. If we love somebody we trust them, we believe in them.

So one of greatest gifts Jesus has given us is the gift of forgiveness. When I make a mistake, which I'll inevitably do, I go grow trust by confessing to what I've done, and hearing from you those wonderful words; 'I forgive you'.

I'm sure the devil wants these things to drive us apart, but thankfully in

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Reaching Out with the Love of Jesus that All my Know, Worship & Grow in Christ

Jesus they can be used to draw us together as we take the risk of exposing ourselves, of being vulnerable and honest.

Unfortunately if I condemn the other person I'll just be creating an atmosphere of fear where trust can't grow. If I'm scared I won't open up, I'll withdraw and put up a facade I think will appease you.

Lasting love believes. Believes in Jesus' who creates an atmosphere of love and calls his community of faith to do the same, beginning at home.

So there is no room in love to be cynical, a wet-blanket, thank God Jesus comes and creates an atmosphere of love as he reveals his heart and soul, as he trusts us revealing himself.

I know when people have expressed belief in me I've been empowered to risk new things. When I've been told it can't work, you've got to be joking,

no way, then I've stopped and shrivelled up. Love never stops believing.

And that believing starts with Jesus, especially when you're relationship is struggling, believe Jesus is still able to work miracles and trust in his love for you to get you through.

'Love always expects the best.'

The third key in this verse is; lasting love expects the best.

"Love never stops hoping." (1 Cor. 17:7c GW) The Living Bible translation, 'Love always expects the best'. The Message paraphrase, 'Love always looks for the best.'

What are you expecting from other people? Love expects the best. It looks at what people can be. It supports, it encourages,

it motivates, it expects the best.

So I don't change people, expecting them to do better with my nagging. I can't expect to change bad habits into good habits if all I do is tell people that they're bad. Jesus didn't come telling us how bad we are, but he comes to show us in him what we can become. In Jesus this isn't wishful thinking, or just positive thinking, it is backed by Jesus' power and authority.

What amazing potential we have for change. I mean if positive thinking can help people change, just imagine what can happen when we involve Jesus in whole process. Just imagine what can happen when we invite Jesus to send the Holy Spirit and we love using his power and authority. The sky's the limit.

Nothing will be impossible. Expect relational miracles, we have Jesus on our side. Love expects the best, and then treats people accordingly.

If I expect the best but treat people as failures then there is a breakdown in my faith. Treat people how you want them to be and they change. That's simple psychology. Just imagine what's possible when we treat people how Jesus wants them to be, using his power and authority. Which he has promised us. Not simply to fix what we don't like, but so we can go out, sent just as the Father sent Jesus. I reckon we might have the power to change the world.

Who do you need to expect the best from?

Love never stops hoping. It extends grace. It expresses faith. It expects the best. And the four key to lasting love; it endures the worst.

Love endures the worst. Lasting love is persistent. It is determined. It is diligent. It is resolute. It is almost stubborn in its insistence that it will not give up. It

will not give up on the person, on the relationship.

The Bible says; "Love never gives up" (1 Cor. 13:7b GW). NLT, "Love endures through every circumstance." NIV, "Love always perseveres" The Message translation, "Love never looks back but keeps going to the

'Love never gives up.'

end."

Will you feel like giving up? Yes, but don't do it. Don't sacrifice love for some cheap imitation which won't last anyway. Adam and Eve quit on God for what they thought was better, but it soon evaporated and they were much worse off.

Love never gives up, I'd call that loyalty. You're not a fair weather friend, because you know often it is the hardest, most difficult times is when a

friend is needed. Sporting teams have heaps of followers when they are winning, but they scurry off when the team starts losing. Just when loyalty is needed.

I read this week; "when God wants to make a mushroom, he takes six hours. When God wants to make an oak tree, he takes sixty years. Do you want your marriage to be a mushroom or an oak tree?" In an instant world we forget the importance, that the richness that comes through hanging in the there, through the rough times. Loyalty can't be brought over a fast food counter, it grows and matures in the tough times. The times we're tempted to quit but we don't.

That's one of Jesus' great qualities; loyalty. Hanging on the cross the temptation was to quit. To avoid the pain, go back to heaven and enjoy life. The Devil tempted Jesus at the start of his ministry to simply bow down and worship