

# Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



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## Love Suffers

The world looks for love but cannot find it, because it fails to appreciate a little-known fact about love: It will cost you dearly.

“Love suffereth long” (1 Cor. 13:4, ASV).

This is the opening line in Paul’s famous soliloquy on love in 1 Cor. 13. Most modern translations render this phrase, “love is patient,” which correctly captures the meaning of the Greek original. But the more archaic American Standard Version’s rendering (based on the King James Version’s “charity suffereth long”) draws attention to a key feature that is missing in our modern conception of love, namely, *love suffers*.

To a generation that views love as a mushy emotion that makes us feel all tingly inside, this revelation is jarring. But until we grasp the role of suffering in love, we don’t have a clue what love is. That failure will doom us to a lifetime of disappointed dreams and broken relationships.

Actually, it doesn’t take a theologian to figure out that love involves a willingness to endure a considerable amount of pain. Take, for example, the young mother of toddlers who spends day after dreary day changing diapers, washing clothes, cooking, cleaning, doc-

toring skinned knees, refereeing fights, administering discipline (to seemingly no useful purpose), ad infinitum. Add to this the criticism of her feminist sisters who think she is wasting her potential by choosing to stay at home with this chaos. Yet she perseveres in this role, refusing to feel sorry for herself or regretting her decision to be a full-time mom. Why does she subject herself to this thankless role? Simple: Because she loves her children! *Love suffers*.

Or consider the young couple who gets married (because they love each other, naturally), then discover that this marriage thing doesn’t deliver the romance they thought it would. He learns that he must sacrifice some of his “guy” time to spend with his wife, and she figures out that she needs to get involved with her hubby in activities she really has no interest in. At first, these changes are painful and hard to accept. But they stick it out and eventually reach a state of equilibrium in which both find a closeness and fulfillment quite unlike what they first expected. How did they make it work? Each was willing to give

up their own interests for the sake of the other. *Love suffers long*.

People who go into relationships expecting to satisfy some personal longing usually do not find it. When the relationship requires sacrifice, they walk away disappointed. What they thought was love was really nothing more than selfish desire. And selfishness is a lousy foundation to build a relationship upon.

We can never know the real meaning of love until we see it as something we *give* rather than *receive*. And the costlier the gift, the deeper the love that motivates it. This principle has no better example than the Biblical story of God sending His Son to die for us. “God so *loved* the world that He *gave* His only begotten Son” (Jn. 3:16). “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who *loved* me and *gave* Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). How do we know that God and Jesus love us? Because their *love suffered*.

As Paul’s soliloquy on love goes on to describe, love has many attributes. But it all begins with the understanding that “love suffers.”

– David King