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L.O.V.E.

By God And Richie Heinlein

(In God I Trust And Write)

For the last while, I have been thinking about the word LOVE. What does it mean? This is a fairly deep question and it bears talking about. I am sure that it means many different things to many different people. As you will see, this is a spiritually charged and somewhat unusual topic the way it will be delivered in some ways. I am going to take an acronymic tour and relate it to life, marriage, and of course the bible in many ways.

I have been married for nearly 6 years now to my wife Bonnie. She is quite the lady in all the right ways. Except for a very scant few things, we don't have any relational issues. A few things could always be better

and that is how most if not all relationships work. Inside life, marriage, and abundant life in Jesus Christ, there are a lot of parallels and some of that will be discussed in the sections below.

L = Language

And now, we travel to the first letter of our tour which is the letter “L”. “L” stands for language. Love (at one of its roots) is communication. Saying and doing what is loving in a sincere manner goes a long way in any relationship—especially in a marriage. Every person seems to have a

way they love and a way they need to be loved. When love languages are not in agreement, there needs to be an understanding and it is hard for most people. I personally don't understand why tone is all-important to most people. Perhaps it is that anger or negativity is perceived and not there. However, perceptions can easily be correct. I personally will take most people at face value (what they say). However, sometimes tone can show the true emotions of people. If one doesn't have true discernment in every case misunderstandings happen. Language on every honest level possible is the key to many harmonious days. One of the hardest things about this is the next

part. Sometimes you have to come to a person's own level of understanding on this love language in order to be effective.

The Bible States:

^{1Co 9:19} Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.

^{1Co 9:20} To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.

^{1Co 9:21} To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.

^{1Co 9:22} To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

^{1Co 9:23} I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

^{1Co 9:24} Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

^{1Co 9:25} Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

^{1Co 9:26} Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air.

^{1Co 9:27} No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Here, Paul is teaching how to show Christ at whatever level that he needs to in order to show Christ's love effectively. This is no easy task as before this, he talks about what he could have as a man of God properly and he is telling his audience that he feels compelled to teach by sacrificial example and showing no judgment (quite the opposite) to anyone who preaches while wanting or desiring the things mentioned. This is namely a living, a wife to share in ministry, or any other perks that could be his. Paul is compelled to have those things not matter to him much. Paul even talks in loving tone to his readers.

I believe personally that this is very important practice when a person is in a culture that for the time being especially

that being prudent and careful not to offend a host is needed to show Christ effectively.

In fact, my wife Bonnie wrote a poem (unbeknownst to me) before I really got this article started.

Bonnie's poem States:

Love Is—

Love is making the one you love feel special.

Love is caring for others besides yourself.

Love is making someone happy when they are down.

Love is telling that special someone how much you care for them.

Love is caring for all of God's creation.

Love is taking the time out to help someone in need.

Love is having someone around when you're feeling down.

Love is all of these things and more.

Bonnie's heart is right on the money when it comes to love language. I am pleased to have her as my bride.

O = Omnipresent

The second letter of our tour is “O” “O” stands for omnipresent. Omnipresent means always there. God’s love is omnipresent. God is not a fair-weather God. We shouldn’t be fair-weather Christians, husbands, wives, or friends. When our love for each other is not always there, then relationships tend to break over time. For example, in a marriage there could be adultery, extreme selfishness etc. Our relationship with God can suffer as well because our love wanders from the God who truly loves us and always wants and hungers for the most pure relationship with us as He can get. In a marriage it is good to remember this passage:

The Bible States:

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

Eph 5:24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

Eph 5:26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,

Eph 5:27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Eph 5:28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Eph 5:29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—

Eph 5:30 for we are members of his body.

Eph 5:31 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

Eph 5:32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Eph 5:33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

In this passage of scripture, Paul is explaining the harmony of a good marriage is much like the harmony that should and must be between us and Christ. When we marry our spouse, our spouse owns our body and we own theirs. They become one flesh and needed to be treated as one unit. The love between the two will never die in a

wonderful marriage that God creates (when God is in the center)

For the spiritual aspect of this, I will show you another couple of scripture passages.

The Bible States: (This is A Classic—but extremely true):

Jn 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Jn 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

In this passage as Jesus speaks, we see that God went to great lengths to set us free

from judgment even though we don't deserve it (but by God's decree).

The next passage of scripture hits the point home because it is so profound.

The Bible States:

Ro 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Ro 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Ro 8:30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Ro 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Ro 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Ro 8:33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

Ro 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Ro 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

Ro 8:36 As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

Ro 8:37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Ro 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death
nor life, neither angels nor demons,
neither the present nor the future,
nor any powers,
Ro 8:39 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.

In this passage, we see that Paul sees the omnipresent love of Jesus Christ. Paul is right, for those who have salvation because of their faith in this saving grace and believe and confess Christ, there is nothing that separates. Even those who are not saved yet experience God's tender invitation to this gift. God is always offering it to whoever will believe and have faith in Him. This will lead us to the next part of the tour.

V = Victory

The third letter in the tour is “V”. “V” stands for victory. This means in simple terms, winning. This may sound like (and is) a very great thing. However, victory in Christ and what God calls successful in this life are of terms of His own not ours. This is a hard concept possibly to think that we don't control what victory really is. True victory comes by faith in Him who saves; not our successes or failures here on earth. God will use either one. With either one faith is the victory.

The Bible States:

1Jn 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

1Jn 5:2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.

1Jn 5:3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

1Jn 5:4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

1Jn 5:5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

1Jn 5:6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And

it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

^{1Jn 5:7} For there are three that testify:

^{1Jn 5:8} the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

^{1Jn 5:9} We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son.

^{1Jn 5:10} Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.

^{1Jn 5:11} And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

^{1Jn 5:12} He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

The result of the faith in Christ that saves is definite and true. Death, by God's decree, will have to give in to its master.

The Bible States:

^{1Co 15:35} But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?"

^{1Co 15:36} How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

^{1Co 15:37} When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. ^{1Co 15:38} But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.

^{1Co 15:39} All flesh is not the same: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another.

^{1Co 15:40} There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another.

^{1Co 15:41} The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

^{1Co 15:42} So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;

^{1Co 15:43} it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;

^{1Co 15:44} it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

^{1Co 15:45} So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being” ; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.

^{1Co 15:46} The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual.

1Co 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

1Co 15:48 As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.

1Co 15:49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

1Co 15:50 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

1Co 15:51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—

1Co 15:52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

1Co 15:53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

1Co 15:54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

1Co 15:55 “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”

1Co 15:56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

1Co 15:57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Co 15:58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Paul and John pretty much say the same thing. Paul talks more about the faith aspect and John talks more about literal testimony by God’s own spirit and then us

who believe and that they agree. Victory and spiritual blessing are there for those who order their lives by faith in Jesus Christ. Spiritual abundance is one of the things that happen in God-centered life. What's much more is the knowledge of where the literal destination of faith is. Heaven is our home. On the way there, many problems arise and the faith that believers have in Christ must be present in order to guide us through any obstacle effectively in the spirit. When we don't have this faith in some circumstances especially, we tend to panic, or get disoriented mentally and spiritually. This mustn't be for harmony and peace to be the norm.

E = Enervating

Our last letter in this tour is “E”. “E” stands for “Enervating”, meaning tiring or fatiguing. Do you ever get tired of loving people because they get you down (mistreatment, misunderstandings, frustrated with people? With God out of your spiritual picture and definitely not in the center, that’s exactly what you will get. Even if you “love” much without Him, there isn’t the kind of spiritual bond that God considers righteous. Love is a commitment to God and each other. By God’s decree, we are commanded to love. However, if we are not careful our marriages and our other close relations will be suffering—much more our relations with God Almighty. God is always looking at us

with the kind of love that never ceases. We are the ones that fall short of our goal. If God is not at our center, all of our human effort to love God and each other will fall short. God sustains us. We can't sustain ourselves.

The Bible States:

And now I will show you the most excellent way.

^{1Co 13:1} If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

^{1Co 13:2} If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

^{1Co 13:3} If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

^{1Co 13:4} Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

^{1Co 13:5} It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

^{1Co 13:6} Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

^{1Co 13:7} It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

^{1Co 13:8} Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

^{1Co 13:9} For we know in part and we prophesy in part,

^{1Co 13:10} but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

^{1Co 13:11} When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

^{1Co 13:12} Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face.

Now I know in part; then I shall know fully,
even as I am fully known.

^{1Co 13:13} And now these three remain: faith,
hope and love. But the greatest of these is
love.

Paul is talking about a God-centered love
that is unshakable in Jesus Christ. When
we have that kind of love, enervation won't
happen to the point where giving up on any
relation (God definitely included) is an
option.

On the contrary, this is what God promises
us in another scripture.

The Bible States:

^{Isa 40:1} Comfort, comfort my people,

says your God.

Isa 40:2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the LORD'S
hand
double for all her sins.

Isa 40:3 A voice of one calling:

“In the desert prepare
the way for the LORD;
make straight in the wilderness
a highway for our God.

Isa 40:4 Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.

Isa 40:5 And the glory of the LORD will be
revealed,
and all mankind together will see it.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

Isa 40:6 A voice says, "Cry out."
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All men are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the
field.

Isa 40:7 The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the LORD blows on
them.

Surely the people are grass.

Isa 40:8 The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God stands forever."

Isa 40:9 You who bring good tidings to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.

You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem,
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

Isa 40:10 See, the Sovereign LORD comes
with power,
and his arm rules for him.

See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.
Isa 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

Isa 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the
hollow of his hand,
or with the breadth of his hand marked off
the heavens?
Who has held the dust of the earth in a
basket,
or weighed the mountains on the scales
and the hills in a balance?

Isa 40:13 Who has understood the mind of the
LORD,
or instructed him as his counselor?

Isa 40:14 Whom did the LORD consult to
enlighten him,
and who taught him the right way?
Who was it that taught him knowledge
or showed him the path of understanding?

Isa 40:15 Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket;
they are regarded as dust on the scales;
he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.

Isa 40:16 Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires,
nor its animals enough for burnt offerings.

Isa 40:17 Before him all the nations are as nothing;
they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing.

Isa 40:18 To whom, then, will you compare God?

What image will you compare him to?

Isa 40:19 As for an idol, a craftsman casts it,
and a goldsmith overlays it with gold
and fashions silver chains for it.

Isa 40:20 A man too poor to present such an offering
selects wood that will not rot.

He looks for a skilled craftsman
to set up an idol that will not topple.

Isa 40:21 Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the
beginning?

Have you not understood since the earth
was founded?

Isa 40:22 He sits enthroned above the circle of
the earth,

and its people are like grasshoppers.

He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,
and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

Isa 40:23 He brings princes to naught
and reduces the rulers of this world to
nothing.

Isa 40:24 No sooner are they planted,
no sooner are they sown,
no sooner do they take root in the ground,
than he blows on them and they wither,
and a whirlwind sweeps them away like
chaff.

Isa 40:25 “To whom will you compare me?
Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One.

Isa 40:26 Lift your eyes and look to the
heavens:

Who created all these?

He who brings out the starry host one by
one,

and calls them each by name.

Because of his great power and mighty
strength,

not one of them is missing.

Isa 40:27 Why do you say, O Jacob,
and complain, O Israel,
“My way is hidden from the LORD;
my cause is disregarded by my God”?

Isa 40:28 Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.

Isa 40:29 He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.

Isa 40:30 Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;

Isa 40:31 but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah here is explaining in a poetic form that because God is all powerful, He is the source of our strength and what strength it is!! God is prophesying through Isaiah of John The Baptist coming as well (the forerunner and the town crier for Jesus' coming earthly ministry.) Because Jesus came the way He did, enervation in love and ministry to God and each other is easily

avoided because of the truth and faith we share.

God is the sustaining force to our strength and love for Him and each other. None of us should ever feel enervated by this world's obstacles to the point of no return or even remotely close. When God is at the center of our marital, parental, sibling etc. relations, then the sky is the limit for a tight family unit. When hearts are right with God in the same respect then God will fully work our lives to His will (of course), to our spiritual benefit and growth, and our physical lives will be rich in opportunity to show Christ fully to everyone.

The Bible States:

1Jn 4:7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

1Jn 4:8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1Jn 4:9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

1Jn 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1Jn 4:11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1Jn 4:12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1Jn 4:13 We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

1Jn 4:14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

1Jn 4:15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.

1Jn 4:16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

1Jn 4:17 In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.

1Jn 4:18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

1Jn 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

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

1Jn 4:21 And he has given us this command:
Whoever loves God must also love his
brother.

If we truly are Jesus-Centered, then we will
never grow enervated of love—God = Love.

This ends our L.O.V.E. tour. Just
remember God's promise of strength and
ability to help us to love Him and each
other. God's love is a language that is
omnipresent, always equals victory and is
never enervating, it does energize us to be
what He wants us to be and what we
should and must want for ourselves; a God-
centered and loving people who obey His
decree to spread the gospel or good news
of salvation. We are to be a people that are

never afraid of obstacles of this life to the point of forgetting who our strength is in.

God Bless You. Be Safe.