

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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THE RISK OF LOVE

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God instructs us to love one another, and has in detail revealed how that love should be manifested. We should love others as our selves (Matthew 22:39). If we love we will exhibit such qualities as longsuffering and kindness, while refraining from envying and boasting (I Corinthians 13:4-7). Determining to act in regard to another's well-being is not easy, but such action is necessary if we love as God has instructed. It is also risky.

You risk the possibility of being taken advantage of when you are longsuffering toward others. The fact that you refrain from quick retaliation in the face of evil may give one the impression that he or she can wrong you with impunity. Yet, such restraint may be the needed ingredient to cause one to see your goodness and turn from such evil.

Longsuffering is one of the ingredients in God's love and goodness that should lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4). However, in the face of his longsuffering, God risks the possibility of man exercising his free will and not turning to him. Yet, God re-

mains longsuffering today to all men (2 Peter 3:9).

You risk getting ahead in your career if you are not out there promoting your own accomplishments. But love “vaunteth not itself”. It is not “puffed up” (I Corinthians 13:4). Boasting as a means to make others see legitimate talent never ingratiates one with his fellow man or God. Boasting to hide the lack of talent is a sure way to an embarrassing exposure in the spot light of truth. It takes time, but the cream does come to the top. Talent will prove to be the best spokesman, not a boastful tongue.

God always resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble (I Peter 5:5, James 4:6) He promises to exalt the humble in due time (I Peter 5:6). Manifesting true love, you risk not being noticed at the time you think you should be noticed. But bite your boastful tongue. God will exalt the humble and those manifesting true love in His time.

By loving, you risk hearing “I told you so”; or “Your problem is that you are so naïve”. But love authored by God still demands the

one who loves to “believeth all things”, and to “hopeth all things” (I Corinthians 13:7). This is not to say that true love makes you gullible. However, love demands that we put the best connotation upon the actions of others we see or hear about. It causes you to give another the benefit of the doubt. One may prove himself to be dishonest, but because you love him, you do not first assume that he is dishonest. You may appear before the world as foolish, holding the bag of empty hopes, but such is the risk of love.

The risk may be too great for the world to follow the way of love. Too many people will disappoint you, and run over you. So, man in his wisdom does not want to look so foolish, and therefore will not love as God directs us. But for those who love others because they serve God, there is no real risk. For love never goes unnoticed or is ridiculed before God's throne, because love is of God (I John 4:7). The risk of love that is involved in loving others, is the same risk that God takes in loving all men. In His time, He nor loving people will appear foolish.