

# GLAD TIDINGS

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

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## LOVE BEARETH ALL THINGS

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**J**ohn reminds us that love must be manifested “in deed and truth”, not merely by words of the tongue (I John 3:18). Love is “active” good will towards others. We must therefore look at what love “does” and “do” it.

Paul, by inspiration of God, gives us many facets of true love in action. For example, “love suffers long...doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own...rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth...” (I Corinthians 13:4, 5, 6). One additional positive action of love is that it “beareth all things” (I Corinthians 13:7).

The Greek word translated “BEARETH” is “STEGEI”. The word means to “cover”, “conceal” or “hide”. However, It is used by Paul in other New Testament passages conveying the idea of *restraint*. To the Thessalonians he writes, “We could no longer *forbear*...” and therefore “sent Timothy... to establish you and to comfort you concerning your faith” (I Thessalonians 3:1). Paul could

“no longer *forbear*” but sent Timothy to “know your faith” (I Thessalonians 3:5). A third time Paul uses the Greek word when he writes to the Corinthians regarding his liberty or right to be supported with wages by the brethren in Corinth “Nevertheless we did not use this right ; but we *bear all things*, that we may cause no hindrance of the gospel of Christ” (I Corinthians 9:12).

How does Paul’s use of the Greek word to convey “forbearing” or “restraint” have any connection with the word’s possible definition of “covering”, “concealing”, or “hiding” something? An illustration is useful. A roof “covers” a house in one sense, “hiding” its contents. but it can also be viewed as “holding back” or “bearing” against the intrusion of rain water. In both views, the idea of protection comes to mind.

Love acts in a way to protect others. Your husband or wife may tell you a secret, that he or she would be embarrassed for others to know. Will you be “talebearer” or a “faithful spirit”? “He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; But he

that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter” (Proverbs 11:13).

Peter exhorts us to manifest “fervent love” towards one another “for love covereth a multitude of sins” (I Peter 4:8). Does love therefore ignore sin or try to sweep it under the rug? “Let him know, that he who converteth a sinner for the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins” (James 5:20). Love converts sinners from their sin, instead of ignoring or hiding the sins.

In the work of converting the sinner from his ways, love will forbear bitterness. We who love in deed and truth will “bear” with this person who has sinned or even has sinned against us as we work to bring them to repentance. It is possible to react to the sinner with hatred or love. “Hatred stirreth up strifes; but love covereth all transgressions” (Proverbs 10:12).

Love will not retaliate when wronged, but will bear with the sinner, and be ready to cover the sin with forgiveness.