

APPLICATION

- To persevere in something means that you remain steadfast and keep doing it in spite of difficulties or delays in achieving the desired results. In order to keep steadfast in something, it requires that you really believe it or believe that it will work.
- Can you think of a situation in the past in which you did not keep on acting in love because you were not sure it would work?
- Are any of these situations ones in which you could pick back up the challenge to love and renew your commitment to persevere?
- Does hearing, "love never fails to have an effect" make you think twice about giving up on a disappointing situation or relationship that you are in right now? If so, persevere! It will have an effect!

Prayer

Father, thank You that You love us. Thank You that You show charity and good will towards us. Thank You that You persevere and do not give up on us. Help us not to give up hope, especially for others but to always hope as You do for us. Help us to truly believe that love is powerful and will have an effect so that we can persevere in love towards others as You do towards us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Freedom Groups were created with the belief that we are all on a journey through life and that our heart's desire is to be free to be all that we can be. Yet there are many setbacks, heartaches and road blocks along the way. Trying to overcome the issues we face in life by ourselves just does not work. We are all the same, no one is different. We need others to help us successfully walk our journey to freedom. Everyone is invited on this freedom journey. Join in!



Love Never Fails

NOTES

WARM-UP

- What is something you thought would last much longer than it did?
- What does it feel like when something ends or stops working much sooner than you thought it would?
- When you purchase products, do you buy the extended warranty?

WORD

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails. 1 Cor. 13:4-8a NIV

In the summer of 1995, my whole family went on a big week-long vacation with everyone from grandparents to grandchildren. Our chosen destination was a large beach house in the Outer Banks of North Carolina which was rented a year in advance. By the time our vacation arrived, Hurricane Felix was brewing in the Atlantic and making a run directly for the Outer Banks. Only one day after we arrived, they issued a mandatory evacuation for the whole region. It was a nightmare. We spent hours sitting on the interstate without even moving an inch. To make matters worse, we had a screaming one year old in the car with us. Once we finally got back home, we discovered that Felix did a dramatic u-turn and went back out to sea. There was very little damage from the storm. We evacuated for nothing! We didn't get vacation insurance so we were still responsible for the whole week's rental on the house! Wouldn't it be nice if we could get insurance or extended warranties on our hopes, dreams and even relationships and not just on products and vacations?

1 - Expectations sometimes fall short.

Our vacation was a very big disappointment and failed to live up to expectations! There are many things that fail to live up to our expectations. It would be wonderful if a failed vacation was the worst disappointment we ever faced. What are some things, or maybe someone, that failed to live up to your expectations?

2 - Love never fails.

Love never fails! 1 Corinthians 13:8a

According to 1 Corinthians 13, true love does not fail. I have heard people say "love failed." Biblical love does not fail. Instead, we fail to keep on loving. Sometimes others fail to keep loving us. The Bible defines love as an action. Therefore, love is largely a choice. According to the Bible, love is a choice to be patient, to be kind, to not be rude, to not be self-seeking, to not be easily angered, to keep no records of wrongs, to honor, to always hope, to always protect, to always persevere. Truly, these loving actions do not fail. They work! The problem is that we fail to keep on doing them because of disappointments or frustrations. We often begin to keep a record of wrongs and we begin to get angry. In other words, we stop loving. What are some other ways we fail to keep on loving?

3 - Love never fails to have an effect.

The original Greek word for "love" in 1 Corinthians is "agapha" meaning love, affection, benevolence, charity, and good will. The word for "fails" is "ekpiptw" meaning to drop away, to lose, to become inefficient, to take none effect/to be without effect, to fall powerless. So the Bible is saying that love, benevolence, charity and good will towards another will never be powerless or fail to have an effect. Can you share a time when you saw this type of love change a situation? Did the change come quickly or did it take perseverance, which is one of the characteristics of love?