

## Transcendent Love

Does love transcend physical death? Many who experience intense love for another ask this question and pray that it does. For the born-again Christian who will spend eternity in the ultimate loving atmosphere of heaven, it is perhaps a most uniquely relevant question. This is because love, God's unique divine love, exists in the heart of every true believer in Jesus. It is God's love reflected off the regenerated soul back to God and to all whose lives are touched by His grace. It is this returned love of His children for Him, which is the principal purpose of His having created mankind in the first place. As His children, we also love each other, again with His love, the only real love.

However, in the most blessed of His children there is a very special love between husband and wife. The Holy Spirit through Paul in Ephesians 5:24,24 directed thusly: "Therefore women should love their husbands as the church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it;" When this kind of love truly manifests, it is of course a supernatural unconditional love. This love is expressed and detailed most exquisitely in 1Corinthians13. It is when this love exists in a heart that the question of its transcendence becomes of greatest concern. The thought that it may end at the grave is disconcerting, and we seek assurance that this very special love will continue throughout eternity.

In Matthew 22:30 Jesus tells us "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage...." This must be a very important message because the Holy Spirit has chosen to repeat these words in Mark12:25 and again in Luke 20:35. Thus it is evident, that marriage, as one experiences it here on earth, does not exist in heaven. However, neither this verse, nor any other that I am aware of, speaks one way or the other regarding the transcendence of this love. Although the blessed union where the "...two shall become one flesh" (Ephesians 5:31) is broken due to the death and corruption of the flesh, love is not of the flesh, but of the soul and spirit. We are led to believe that we will retain our memories, and that even our bodies will be returned to us in uncorruptable

perfect form. Surely love, which is the purest most perfect form of Godliness anyone can have, must be the most deeply etched aspect of our memory and of the substance of our soul. Therefore it must also cross the barrier into heaven. We know that in heaven we will be united with, recognize and have memory of, those friends and loved ones who are also there. (2Samuel 12:23, Luke 16:22:30) Because of this, one could conclude that this special love, in fact all Godly love, which we now carry in our hearts, will be part of us forever. We can also expect that in our perfected eternal state, we will feel more powerfully and gloriously the love others have for us, as will our love be ever more profoundly felt by those we love. Why should it be otherwise? How could it be otherwise? Heaven's very atmosphere is love. God is love; God is in us here on earth, and will be in and around us forever. From the moment we committed to belief, faith, trust and obedience to our Savior, and we were born-again, His love has been in us. What we have done with that love, where and how we have used it, is an expression of the principal substance of our eternal being. How can it be otherwise than that we carry this into eternity?