

The image features a dark blue background with a complex, glowing network of white and light blue lines that resemble a web or a neural network. In the lower portion of the image, an open book is visible, its pages glowing with a soft blue light. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

Love...

The Call of Always

“Love....,

...It always protects...

1 Corinthians 13:7 (NIV)



“Always”

If something always happens, it happens
at all times.

If it has always happened, or will always
happen, it has happened forever or will
happen forever.

Wow!



What Comes To Your Mind?

- I am not able to ALWAYS do anything.
- Just being pretty CONSISTENT is a challenge.
- But, my sinful nature does NOT alter the gold standard of behavior, “Christ-conditioned Love”.
- “ALWAYS” Emphasizes The Need To Take Love Seriously, For Commitment, For Grace, And For The Sanctifying Work Of The Holy Spirit.

Paul Is Driving Home His Point.

Occasional spirituality is not good enough.

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. 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. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (NIV)

“Always” is the Gold Standard



Always Protects

- The word Paul uses for “protects” is literally the word for “roof.”
- Christ-conditioned Love requires us bear with whatever we must in order to cover another person with protection.

1 Peter 4:7-8 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

“Putting Up With”

- In 1 Corinthians 9:12 , an autobiographical section, Paul writes, *“If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.*
- In this light, “always protects” might better be translated “love puts up with anything.”

Jesus' Love Covers a Multitude of Our Sins

- Don McLaughlin writes, it is as though Jesus says:

“I wrapped my life around you, sin and all, so tightly it was like your sin showed through my skin. People would actually judge me by your sin. But, I loved you too much to have it any other way, even though it meant being convicted... and suffering the death penalty for the sins you committed.”

Romans 5:17 (NLT2)

For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.



Titus 3:3-5 (NLT2)

Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But—“When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.

One of The Most Powerful Phrases In All of Scripture: “But God...”

- It occurs 61 times in the NIV translation of Scripture.
- In every instance that I found it was either Good News for believers and seekers of God or Bad News for those in rebellion against God.
- We should take note of repeated words.

For Paul, “Always” Is The Repeated Word.

- “Always” does not convey optional; it is a lifestyle.
- The culture, in which we live, desperately needs someone to live out Christ-conditioned love.
- Paul is talking about how we are going to – cover, protect, put up with, bear with others...ALWAYS!



It's Not Hard When It Is Someone We Love.

Irvin Berlin wrote a song for his wife entitled, "Always."

Days may not be fair Always

That's when I'll be there Always

Not for just an hour

Not for just a day

Not for just a year

But Always

I'll be loving you, Always

With a love that's true Always

When the things you've planned

Need a helping hand

I will understand Always,..

Always

Now, let's listen to the words of Jesus
on loving all the other people.



Luke 6:32-35 (NLT2)

“If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return. “Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked.

Matthew 5:43-47, MSG

You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that.”

But we want to ask,
“Even if they are doing so and so...”



No “Even Ifs...” Only “Especially Whens...”

- We must protect our Family, Physical and Spiritual.
- We must protect our Neighbors.
- We must protect the Vulnerable.
- We must protect our Enemies.
- We must protect those who offend us, “Especially when it’s a Democrat and Republican.”
- Righteous indignation is not an excuse.

Shouldn't We Be Angry At Sin?

- Yes! Let's start by being angry at our own failings, our own hypocrisy, our own sins. Confess and repent about our own sins as publicly as we detail the sins of others.
- Then, when you feel called out of love to point out the sin that is ravaging someone else, love them enough to suffer with them in their struggle with sin as Jesus suffers with you.
- Jesus said, "I am with you always..." "I will never leave you nor forsake you."
- "Love always protects."

Watch the following Video!



We must go to the side of the accused.

We will find Jesus there!



Let's Pray This Prayer

Dear Abba, thank you for the protection you have provided for us ever since we were conceived in our mothers' wombs. You have surely covered us from more harm than we could list in our wildest imagination. By the sacrifice of Jesus, you have covered every sin we have ever committed and will ever commit. Thank you Jesus for wrapping our sins, that have surely offended you, in your body that hung on the cross. Now we ask that you empower us by your Spirit to be able to love in way that always protects, and covers the offenses that we encounter. Help us to answer your "call of always." We pray in the protecting name of Jesus, Amen