

Let us bow our heads; If we need to use the Recovery Procedure as found in 1 John 1:9, let us do so at this time that we might be in fellowship. (pause) Father, we thank you for the privilege and opportunity to study your word and for the freedom that you have provided for us here. Furthermore, we express our appreciation to God the Holy Spirit who will enlighten us regarding the message this evening. We as priests pray this through the person of our Lord Christ Jesus, our High Priest, Amen.

Human and Divine Love:

What is True Human Love?

True love is not lust, feeling or attraction! From the so-called romance movies coming out of Hollywood these days, one would assume that romance naturally begins with attraction leading to sexual sins. Can love begin with an action that is totally devoid of virtue and a sense of responsibility? To the contrary, unrighteousness and sin cannot be components of true love.

Now, let me tell a little story to illustrate how feelings cannot be the basis for true love. A certain young man and woman previously unknown to each other go on a hike through a beautiful forest. Both enjoy the scenery, and their feelings begin to dominate their mentality. There is little discussion! That evening, they dine with candlelight seated aside a window from which they are able to view a beautiful lighted gorge. She overwhelmed by all the feelings of the day states, "This has been the most wonderful day of my life." Later as the clock strikes midnight and the cuckoo emerges, the man also carried away by his feelings and the animation of the young lady, puts her hand into his and utters those magical words, "I love you" and proposes. She responds ecstatically and shouts, 'Yes, yes!' Since feelings and emotions come and go, can this be true love? What do they know about each other? How much humility and virtue do they possess? Is she willing to accept his authority and leadership? Is the man a virtuous, responsible, and wise individual?

Though feelings and emotions may be responders to true love, they in themselves do not constitute true love.

Regarding attraction, a young man sees the most beautiful woman his eyes have ever beheld. Her symmetry is stunning, her eyes sparkle with radiance; her facial bone structure is fascinating; her gleaming white teeth are aligned perfectly; her smile inviting; her upper torso pulchritudinous. Everything about her beauty is par excellence. She returns his stare and wonders if this man descended from the Trojan prince, Paris. He is tall and brawny with reddish curly hair; his smile is confident and relaxed. She wonders, "Is not this the most handsome creature I have ever seen?" They meet and instantly fall in love allegedly. Can true love be obtained in an instant? Is true love based on the physical appearance of one's body! Though physical attraction may be a stage leading to true love, it is not true love.

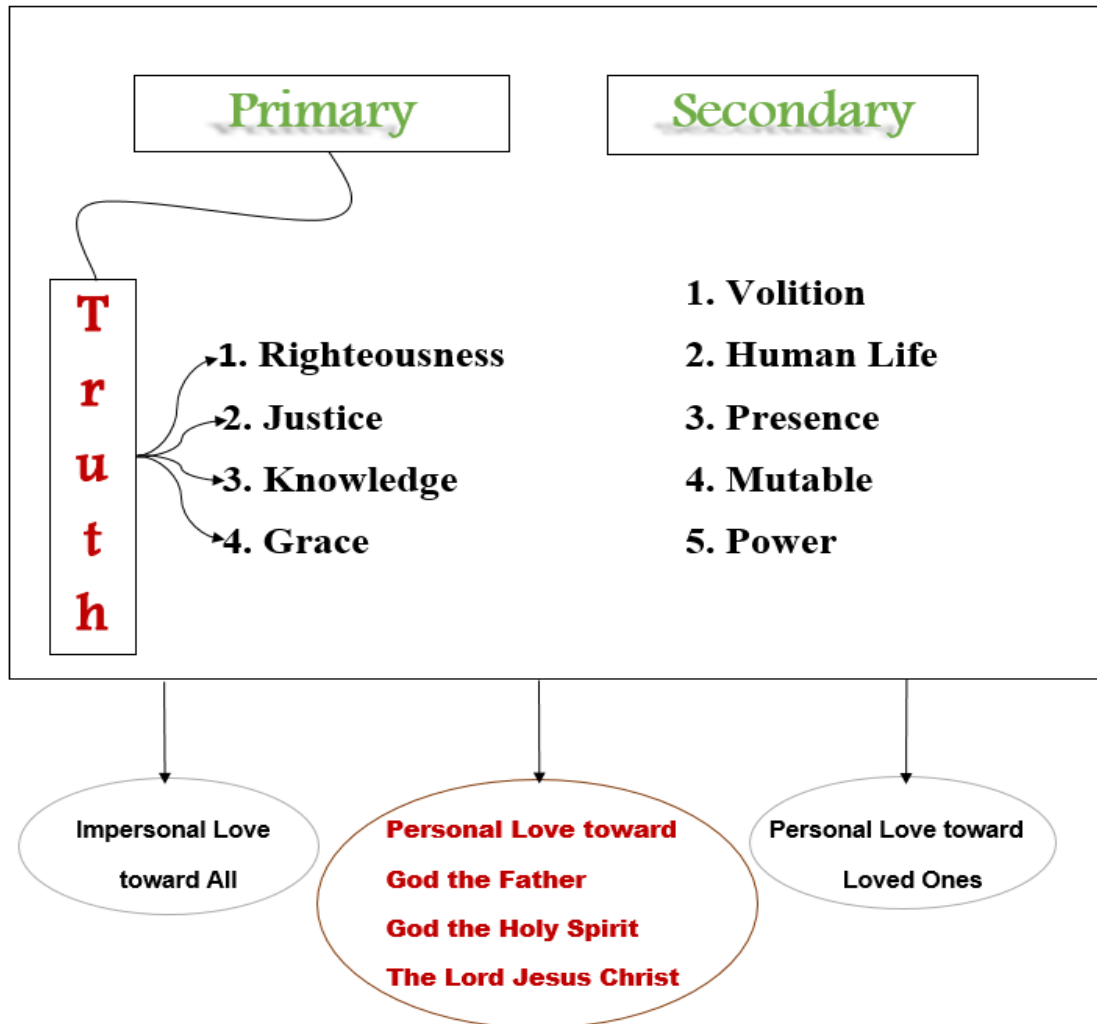
Rather, I maintain that true human love is in the soul and has four major components namely knowledge, righteousness, justice and grace. These four give the human being capacity for love which capacity is acquired through the person's willingness to learn and accept truth. For the unbeliever, there must be the understanding and acceptance of the Laws of Establishment, along with his understanding and ability to forgive in grace (The unbeliever's capacity to forgive is limited whereas the Christian with maximum doctrine has unlimited capacity to forgive in grace.). For the believer, there must be a complete understanding of God's love since true Christian love is patterned from God's love; there must be knowledge of the object of one's personal love; there must be a virtuous righteousness in the soul which is expressed in thinking, motivation, decisions and actions, a righteousness that is never in conflict with grace. (Self-righteousness based on legalism is condemning and critical and has no part in true love. You know the type for example an unbeliever who is vainly proud of his morality or the Christian who is always bragging about all the deeds he is doing allegedly for the Lord.); there must be an understanding of justice and even the proper function of jurisprudence, and how it is applied to circumstances and people. Lastly,

there must be the understanding and the application of grace. If not, true love does not and cannot exist.

Regarding the need for grace orientation, let me tell you a little story. When I was living in Korea, a middle-aged Korean lady told me a sad story about her marriage-life. She said that when she was a young woman, she and a handsome young man fell deeply in love, and a short time later fell out of love. This superficial love ended halfway through their honeymoon and never again was she loved by him. Obviously, this man saw some flaw or sin in his wife or alleged failure and so not being able to forgive her in grace, his superficial love ceased, and when his love ceased so did hers.

In summary, true human love must have four primary components and a number of secondary components which come through learning and understanding truth as delineated in the Scripture. If these components exist in a human, he has capacity for love. If not, he doesn't.

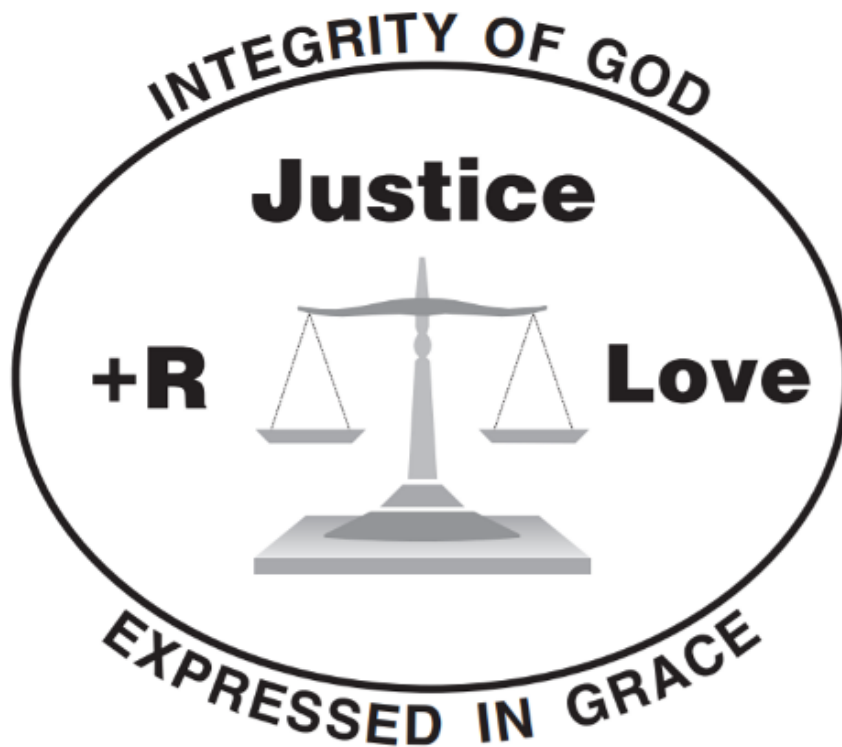
COMPONENTS OF TRUE HUMAN LOVE



What is divine love? Before we answer this question, let me show you how R. B. Thieme Jr. progressed on this subject as a pioneer on this subject via some diagrams. For most of his ministry, he used what he called the Essence Box. Then toward the end of his ministry, he added other diagrams.

THE ESSENCE BOX

RIGHTEOUSNESS	OMNISCIENCE
JUSTICE	OMNIPOTENCE
SOVEREIGNTY	OMNIPRESENCE
LOVE	IMMUTABILITY
ETERNAL LIFE	VERACITY



What the righteousness of God demands the justice of God executes through the love of God expressed by the grace of God.

When the Colonel taught 1 Corinthians 13 in the series called ‘Spiritual Dynamics’, he began defining the Greek word agape as ‘virtue love.’ (S.D. 1615-1640) Later, he added more attributes (characteristics, components) to the composition of love such as righteousness, justice, omniscience, and grace. These, he referred to as primary characteristics of love. (Spiritual Dynamic’s series, lessons 1730-1778).

The Composition of Divine Love has components:



Most would say that divine love is one of ten attributes. The remaining nine being righteousness, justice, eternal life, sovereignty, immutability, veracity, omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. Then, there is grace which is another attribute or simply the policy of God. If these are all separate and distinct attributes, then each has its own definition. If that is the case, then righteousness, justice, omniscience and grace cannot be used to define love. Thus, love cannot be defined with any meaning of substance. Love by default can only be defined in terms of feelings and emotion.

In order to properly understand love, it is not one of the 10 attributes of God, but an attribute superior to the other nine. In other words, the other 9 are attributes or characteristics of God's love. Only in this manner, can love be understood.

The Love of God is a Composition with many Components; four of these components are primary components namely omniscience, righteousness, justice and grace and the others are secondary components.

1. Omniscience: To love there must be knowledge
2. Righteousness and Justice: love must have virtue
3. Sovereignty: love makes decisions
4. Eternal life: love has life
5. Omnipotence: love must have power
6. Omnipresence: love must have presence
7. Immutability: God's love never changes; human love either increases or decreases.
8. Veracity: love must be truthful. God is truth; we must learn truth.
9. Grace: God's love is freely given, and undeserved by the recipients.

To properly understand God's love, we must realize that love is not one of 10 attributes, but an attribute superior to the others. Only in this manner, can God's love be understood.

The Components of the Love of God as seen in Scripture:

1. John 3:16, **“God loved the world so much”** His eternal love which includes his **omniscience** which always (because of **eternal life**) knew every sin of human history. This information as it were, was relayed to His **righteousness** which then demanded that all these sins be judged. To carry out this demand, the **sovereignty** of God made a decision to give his son **“so that He gave [from birth to the cross] his uniquely born son.”** On the cross, the **justice** of God the Father then punished the humanity of Christ for every sin in human history. To accomplish this judgment required the power of the Father’s **omnipotence**. Because of the work on the cross, His love was able to offer salvation in **grace**, **“so that anyone who believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”** This gospel message is **veracity** which is also a characteristic of God’s love.
2. Psalm 33:5: **“He loves righteousness and justice, and the earth is full of His love.”** If the earth is full of the love of God, one should be able to see this love. If love is one of ten attributes, love cannot be seen. However, if love has characteristics, then one can see the love of God. For example, when the **righteousness** of God demands blessing for a particular nation based on the information from his **omniscience**, the **sovereignty** of God tells his justice to bless that nation in **grace**. To put this into operation takes the **omnipotence** of God. This can be seen. When the **righteousness** of God demands the destruction of a particular nation or nations, the **justice** of God executes this judgment. Thus, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah can be seen in history. If one should examine a snowflake through a microscope, he can easily see the beautiful design which comes from God’s omniscience. In God’s grace, he provides for the evil as well as the good etc. The characteristics of God’s love are evident on this earth.

3. Hebrews 12:6 states, **“For whom the Lord loves** [Omniscience, righteousness, justice, sovereignty, omnipotence and grace are all involved], **he punishes** [warning discipline] **and scourges** [intensive discipline] **every son whom he receives.”** The **omniscience** of the Lord knows just when to administer corrective discipline to the believer. He knows when to administer warning discipline and when to place the believer under intensive discipline. This information is passed on to the righteousness of God which demands punishment for the failing believer, and what the **righteousness** of God demands via his **sovereignty**, the **justice** of God executes via his **omnipotence** in **grace**.
4. 1 John 4:19. **We** [the mature believer with the following components of love: righteousness, justice, knowledge of God and His plan, grace orientation, maximum truth in the soul, power namely operates under the two power options] **and only we love** [reciprocating God’s personal love] **God because He himself first loved us** [in eternity past from all the components of His personal love directed toward our imputed righteousness].

We started this subject explaining human love since it is probably easier to understand and accept. Even though we began with human love, God’s love eternally preceded it. Furthermore, God’s love is the pattern for true human love. I hope the Christian will be able to understand the importance of understanding love as a composition with many components (characteristics, attributes). Also, I encourage all to listen to R. B. Thieme Jr.’s series on Spiritual Dynamics, Lessons 1717 to 1800 regarding this subject.

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Based on the scholarly work of R.B. Thieme Jr.

I recommend downloading 'THIEME'S BIBLE DOCTRINE DICTIONARY' from this website: rbthieme.org