

SOME VALUES OF LOVE AS AN ETHICAL PRINCIPLE

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Love gets us past legal minimums of do's and don'ts. It provides a basis for going beyond the call of duty, takes into consideration other people's differing preferences, watches out for negative effects on weaker brothers' behavior, and concerns itself with good and better, not just with good and bad. Love fosters a concern for enhancing the quality of other people's lives, not just with the rightness or wrongness of specific behaviors relative to some standard.

Love makes various performance levels acceptable, thus introducing some relativity. It may lead a wife to stay with an abusive spouse without implying that everyone in that circumstance should do so to avoid guilt. Love can give people undeserved chances (grace) without implying that everyone must do so all the time. Love can understand how a young girl who had been raped would not have to carry a child to term, even while another such girl might find it within her strength of faith to bear the child. Love can take readiness into account and honor progress without relinquishing perfection as the standard.

Love integrates with the interpersonal character of ultimate reality and the nature of the Christian faith.

Love avoids self-centeredness and egocentrism.

Love addresses both omission and commission.

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