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## Love Is In the Air (or is it?)

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It is that time of the year when the hearts of those in love begin to scramble to find that “just right” special something for their significant other. The stores are amply supplied with enough flowers, gifts, chocolate, and beautiful cards (with the heartfelt words of those who can put things far better than we) that should be sufficient for us all to rise to the top of the list of those we love. I suppose my lovely bride is correct in that many (she *may* be including herself) would not receive these wonderful reminders of love if it were not for the calendar telling some that it’s time to show your love in a small way. We often get so caught up in things that we neglect to let our love known from time to time. Let us consider some we are to love and how we are to make that love known.

### Our Love for God

God through Moses had instructed Israel “*thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*” (Deut 6:5). Not only were they to love the Lord, they were to show or display this love by keeping His word in their heart, teach their children (family) all of His ways and keep these commands ever before them, “binding them” (figuratively) “*for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates*” (Deut 6:8-9). These verses are the basis for the Jewish practice of wearing phylacteries, small leather containers having a parchment with a number of Biblical verses upon it. Orthodox Jewish homes have a *mezuzah*, a small box attached to the doorposts which contains various Scripture quotations (James Smith, The Pentateuch, Collage Press). This same command is brought forth in the New Testament with our Lord answering the question of one desiring to know the greatest command. “*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment*” (Mt 22:37-38). We would do well to show our love for God. Love shown for the Father’s love, providence, and care. Love shown for the Son’s love, example, sacrifice, and His preparation to bring us

home. Love shown for the Spirit's love that brought us God's word that instructs and guides us, as well as His help with our infirmities (Rom 8:26).

#### Our Love for Others

Loving those who love us back is not a difficult thing to do. Loving those who may not feel this way toward us is a taller order to carry out. Jesus said to His disciples *"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends"* (Jn 15:12-13). Jesus not only laid His life down for His friends, but for the whole world (1 Jn 2:2). His love was not limited to only those who loved Him, but for ALL. This was clearly seen by His love for the souls of them who were responsible for His death. *"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"* (Lk 23:34). Stephen also displayed this love for even they who were responsible for and carried out his death (Acts 7:60).

It would do us all good to recall Paul's inspired words to the Corinthians and put them to practice. *"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails"* (1 Cor 13:4-8a).